

ISU Centers of Excellence (CoE) Guidelines

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I. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to present to the ISU Members and the skating entities that may be interested in becoming an ISU Center of Excellence (CoE) a general picture of the concept and functioning of the ISU CoE initiative, as well as the standards that a CoE is expected meet.

Chapters 1 and 2 of this document outline an ISU CoE by definition, purpose, and objectives. They also set out the expectations for the structure and collaboration needed within the network of ISU CoEs and with the home Member Federations.

Chapters 3 to 5 outline the specific attributes of a Center and services provided in more detail. Each section gives a brief explanation, followed by specific examples of what would meet the standard practice expectations of a Center in delivery of services and what a Center could strive to achieve under best practice. As defined further in the assessment grid (Annex 2), the level of service provided by a Center can span from “fair” to “excellent”. The ISU recommends that a Center falls along this spectrum but is continuously reaching for a higher level of service. Therefore, referring to the standard practices, a skating entity would be actively working to improve with best practices in mind. Note that the standard practices do not imply minimum standards, which would be defined as part of the ISU CoE evaluation process.

Finally, the document concludes with Chapter 6 where guidance is given in regards to the leadership, management, and operations of a Center including sections on marketing and financial stability.

The document may also serve as part of an assessment tool for the ISU to recognize a skating entity.

1. Introduction

a. Definition and purpose

An ISU Center of Excellence (Center) is an ISU-recognized skating entity that provides high quality facilities, skating services, coaching and training activities, research and innovation, and overall environment, servicing high-performance and long-term developmental areas of Skaters, Coaches, Officials, and experts while engaging with multiple ISU Members.

Centers may act as ISU development centers in assisting the ISU with the execution of certain ISU development activities or contributing to ISU development projects when it is required. Centers are encouraged to share knowledge and good practices, and come up with new ideas or creative alternatives when they see a need or gap in the development field of skating sports.

The ISU Center of Excellence label (CoE) is a quality label that is awarded to selected skating entities for a period of four years. It serves to identify as a worldwide network that engages Skaters, Coaches, Officials, and experts of the skating world towards a better fulfillment of their personal and collective development goals and ambitions.

Centers are selected through an open application procedure. All existing skating entities sharing the above mission statements are eligible to apply, provided that their application is also endorsed by the concerned ISU Member in the country where the entity is located. There are minimum standards that the qualified entities are expected to meet. The quality of the offered services by the Centers is monitored by the ISU.

Centers are expected to carry out a series of activities that are defined in the CoE Program (Section 2c) during the period of being labelled as an ISU CoE in addition to or in conjunction with the Center's daily activities.

b. Objectives

The ISU CoE initiative is designed with the following objectives in mind:

- to maximize the benefits of existing and available top-quality skating entities around the world to better serve ISU development objectives, as currently stated in the ISU Communication 2310. In particular, the ISU CoE contributes to:

- increasing the participation numbers and improving the quality of Skaters, Coaches and Officials engaged in competitive international Figure Skating and Speed Skating.
 - increasing the number of ISU Members able to develop Skaters who are competitive at the international level and at the level of qualifying for ISU Events and ISU disciplines at the Olympic Winter Games.
- to foster international cooperation and share best practices among the skating community;
 - to leverage resources and various development efforts to achieve better development outcomes;
 - to enhance the capacity-building of ISU Members and serve ISU Members' needs which otherwise could not be fulfilled properly.

c. Benefits and restrictions

Recognition and quality assurance — ISU CoE is a quality label which brings recognition and prestige to the awarded entities. All of the Centers should have attained a set of ISU standards in the related areas such as facilities, services, performance, etc. Therefore, the label may also serve as a quality assurance for the services offered to the ISU Members and the skating community in general.

Global networking — Centers form a global network which can enlarge the outreach of each Center in the skating community. Centers can benefit from being a part of the network in sharing experience, expertise, and good practices, participating/co-organizing ISU CoE projects, and cooperating with each other.

Promotional opportunities — ISU acknowledges Centers via the ISU website and other media outlets owned by the ISU when necessary. The Centers are authorized to use ISU CoE logos in line with the ISU CoE branding guidelines. The Centers are entitled to carry out activities described in the ISU CoE Programme (as defined in Sections 2a and 2c) and may issue corresponding certificates with the ISU's prior agreement.

ISU support — Centers may receive ISU's support in recruiting and sending industry experts to the Centers for related ISU CoE activities. Centers may also receive ISU financial support either via direct contribution or via organization of ISU-funded (fully or partially) projects (e.g.

seminars, workshops, camps, research projects, etc.). In addition, when it concerns activities in the ISU CoE program, Centers are supported via ISU coordination and facilitation.

Centers are independent and self-sustained skating service entities located in different parts of the world. An ISU CoE certification does not entitle the entity to funding for capital improvements nor salary reimbursements of employees responsible for the daily operations. Being an ISU CoE does not enable ISU funding in any facility building or renovation.

Centers are required to attain and maintain ISU CoE standards, as well as to carry out ISU CoE projects and activities which may require a certain level of commitment from the Centers in terms of facilities (e.g. extra ice time availability, etc.), coaching expertise (e.g. ensuring availability of Coaches, etc.) or other expertise possessed by the Centers including general time and effort.

d. Monitoring

As described above, the Centers form a network which is monitored at the ISU level. Please refer to Section 2d which outlines the quality assurance of the CoE network.

Each Center runs independently and sustainably. The monitoring of the individual Centers from the ISU takes place continuously and especially when there are ISU CoE projects or activities carried out at one or more Centers. Depending on the exact project or activity, the monitoring often takes the form of providing general guidelines and necessary coordination, or enabling smooth operation of the project or activity.

2. Structure and services

a. The ISU CoE network

1. Definition

The ISU CoE network consists of ISU-recognized skating entities around the globe. The network may also include organisations or institutions that the Centers are in collaboration with for different purposes. Skaters, Coaches, Officials, and experts of the Centers are essential components of such a network, as well as the involved stakeholders which may interact with each other via either daily operations of the Centers or ISU CoE activities.

2. ISU level

At the ISU level, the ISU Council is the ultimate decision-making body. It sets the direction of the ISU CoE initiative and approves the budget required for the proper running of the ISU CoE network as a whole. Since the ISU CoE is an ISU development initiative, it is subject to the governing principles and structure of the ISU Development Program.

The steering of the ISU CoE network and central coordination of ISU CoE activities is crucial. The ISU CoE Project Group outlines the focus of CoE initiative/program, allocates necessary budget and provides overall guidelines/supervisions. The ISU CoE Project Group establishes and executes CoE application/screening/selection and evaluation procedures. Assisted by the Project Manager, the Group monitors ISU CoE activities and takes care of the implementation and assessment of ISU CoE activities.

In the event of any conflict between the Centers in relation to the ISU CoE program or any specific ISU CoE project, the ISU could moderate and facilitate to find an agreeable and mutually beneficial solution.

3. Branch level

Typically, there are several Centers in each of the two Branches of Figure Skating and Speed Skating. The Centers of each Branch and their related organizations or institutions function as a sub-network, sharing Branch-specific knowledge and good practices. Due to the different natures of the sports, there can be different types of ISU CoE projects under

each Branch. The ISU plays a coordination and facilitation role in Branch-specific ISU CoE actions when it is needed.

4. Tools of collaboration

There are 4 types of tools of collaboration to maintain an effective ISU CoE network:

- Meetings and workshops: Via regular online meetings and workshops, the Centers, per Branch or across Branches, exchange ideas and share their concerns, discuss ISU CoE projects planning and implementation, etc. When conditions allow, face-to-face ISU CoE workshops may be organized (e.g. annual ISU CoE workshop in person).
- ISU CoE Program and CoE calendar: An annual (or bi-annual) CoE Program will be put in place encompassing all the services/activities to be offered by the ISU CoEs to the skating community. A corresponding CoE calendar will be set up, including major events/activities organized independently by each CoE. The CoE Program and the CoE Calendar will be published and updated on the ISU Development page of the ISU official website.
- ISU CoE common projects: By working on a common ISU CoE project, the Centers collaborate as a team, bringing actions, expertise and inspirations to the skating community.
- ISU eLearning Platform: The ISU eLearning Platform can serve as an online space for the Centers to host webinars, virtual camps or other educational live events. The Platform can be an additional tool to connect the Centers and the Skaters/Coaches/Officials/experts involved in the ISU CoE activities. It may also enable the ISU CoE online community-building and knowledge-sharing of the Centers.

b. Structure of an individual Center

Each Center is independent and autonomous; hence its structure mainly depends on its own identity and operational needs. As a general standard, a Center is expected to:

- Have specific focuses and expertise on one or several ISU Disciplines when it comes to training, coaching, research and innovation.
- Possess sufficient infrastructure and appropriate people and management resources to participate and commit on ISU CoE activities

- Maintain good cooperation and communication with its national federation;
- Be part of a local network with related institutions and have the capability to develop alliances when necessary;
- Be available to accommodate international participants for training, coaching or other activities under the ISU CoE umbrella;
- Respect the ISU values and follow the ISU ethical standards as well as other ISU policies or regulations that may apply in ISU CoE activities.

More precisely, a Center is expected to fulfil a series of requirements and standards which are described in Chapters 3–6.

c. ISU CoE Program - Services offered to the ISU community

In accordance to ISU Missions, ISU Development objectives, with the consideration of the needs of ISU Members and the diversified portfolios of the Centers, an ISU CoE Program will be established to outline various services that the Centers can offer to the ISU community/skating community.

Following the principles of ISU Development Program, the ISU CoE Program is composed of a series of training, coaching, research or development activities primarily targeted to Skaters, Coaches and Officials, yet with the possibilities of extending the program to administrators and/or ISU Event organisers. Independent from the Center's own program, the activities in the ISU CoE Program are either additional or integrated whenever possible to the Centers' existing ones. There may be different themes of services corresponding to the priorities and focus areas defined by the ISU.

The Centers may choose from the Program what they would like to offer to the ISU community/skating community. As a part of the ISU CoE requirements, and based on its capacity/specific features, each Center is mandated to organize a minimum number of (to be defined) activities in the agreed time frame. The quality of the executed activities by the Centers will be monitored and evaluated.

As an example, a CoE Program could be composed of:

- Theme 1 — Talent Development
- Theme 2 — Coaching the Coach

- Theme 3 — Competency of Officials
- Theme 4 — Capacity-building of ISU Members
- Other ISU-approved themes

An example of a CoE activity portfolio could be:

- Training camps for talented skaters from smaller ISU Members (including both short term and long-term stays)
- A series of educational seminars for Coaches and Officials
- Research topics that are considered important for skating sports development and performance
- Online workshops/webinars (in conjunction with ISU eLearning)
- ISU Members capacity building workshops
- Transition programs that aim to attract athletes and/or coaches from other sports or disciplines towards skating on ice
- Development projects that are considered appropriate to be conducted by the Centers or in cooperation with the Centers
- Competitions organized to expose Skaters to regional/international competitions
- Other ISU-approved activities

d. Quality assurance

The Centers shall demonstrate their commitment to excellence in delivering ISU CoE activities and in their daily operations. The ISU monitors the quality of the ISU CoE Program to be delivered by the Center. The monitoring may take the form of:

- Verification of the profiles of coaches and experts engaged in the ISU CoE activity
- Evaluation of the materials applied and delivery methodologies of the ISU CoE activity
- Assessment of the overall environment and outcome of the ISU CoE activity

For quality monitoring and assurance purposes, the Centers are required to submit the following to the ISU:

- Standardized evaluation forms completed by the participants of the designated ISU CoE activity
- An annual report including these key performance indicators (KPIs):
 - the number of international participants in the ISU CoE activities taking place at the entity in comparison to the capacity of the Center
 - the number of ISU Members involved
 - the level of coaches/experts and their availability
 - ice time committed to ISU CoE activities
 - measurable results VS the objectives defined in Chapter 1
 - Level of contribution to the capacity building of developing ISU Members
 - Level of satisfaction of the participants
 - For each KPI, there can be a target and the Center's performance is evaluated against the targets. In case of not being able to reach the targets for a consecutive period of time, the Center could lose the ISU CoE status, unless there are uncontrollable or justifiable reasons that have caused such a situation.

In addition, the ISU may send observers to the Centers randomly during the execution of the ISU CoE activities or collect training materials from the Centers. The ISU shall also systematically and holistically compare the overall performance of Centers with one another on a regular basis and prepare for the next ISU CoE cycle at least 6 months in advance.

e. Collaboration/integration with home Member Federation

Located in the territory of an ISU Member, a Center is naturally a component of the skating structure of its home country. As outlined in Section 2b, it is a requisite for a Center's application to be endorsed by its national federation and to enjoy a trouble-free working relationship with the home Member Federation. However, depending on the geographical

location and the particular sport/skating structure of the country, there can be different types or degrees of collaboration/integration between a Center and its home federation.

Generally speaking, the following types of integration may represent the global situation:

1. A Center is fully integrated into the national federation's structure, being directly under the supervision or management of the federation in terms of its funding, program organization/execution, daily operation, HR, etc.
2. A Center, being an autonomous skating entity, is partially integrated into its national federation's organizational/operational structure. Domestically, for example, the Center could be an accredited national training center or provide national/regional-wide skating services on behalf of the national federation; it may receive funding or other forms of support (e.g. expertise) for certain activities organized for or in collaboration with the national federation. This is not an exhaustive list of examples of this type of integration.
3. A Center, being an affiliated entity of its national federation, is totally independent in its activity and only has interactions/cooperation with the federation when required or necessary.

Accordingly, the degree of collaboration between a Center and its home federation may vary:

- 360 degree – Being the operational arm of the federation's training and/or development division, the Center has a 360-degree collaboration with its federation. It follows the overall national program and executes the designated tasks, although it may take its initiative in its areas of expertise and propose/organize specific training, development, or other activities.
- 180 degree – Being a partner of its national federation, the Center has a close collaboration in areas such as talent identification, training camps, and various development or other activities. Nevertheless, the Center develops and organizes its programs and remains independent in its daily operation.
- Ad hoc – The Center works with the federation mostly on an ad-hoc basis. They collaborate with each other on mutually agreed activities without a strong partnership.

Whatever the type of integration and degree of collaboration between a Center and its national federation in its daily work, it is highly recommended that a Center should keep regular and effective communications with its home federation about the ISU CoE activities the entity is engaged in. It may occur that certain ISU CoE activities (e.g. Coach internship or Officials seminars) require the involvement of the home federation as well as other ISU Member Federations. Consequently, a close collaboration between the concerned Centers

and their home federations as well as other ISU Members (when situations call for it) would become mandatory for the required period of time.

f. Contract

The ISU and Centers aim to build up a fair and mutually beneficial cooperation to achieve the ISU CoE objectives collectively. In order to lay out rights and responsibilities of each party, there will be an ISU CoE contract between the ISU and each respective Center. The contract is binding for both parties in terms of support, coordination, and commitment from the ISU, as well as standards, services and cooperation expected from the Center. The contract is to be valid for an entire ISU CoE cycle (e.g.4 years) or timeframe where the parties are engaged. For a new ISU CoE cycle, there will be a new contractual process based on the new application procedure and outcome.

In parallel and when necessary, the ISU may enter into an agreement with the hosting ISU Member Federation of a Center to assure mutual understanding of the cooperation between the ISU and the Center located in the Member Federation's territory. Such an agreement is not mandatory but would serve as an additional document to the contract between the ISU and the Center. This document could be an MoU or in another format agreed upon.

When deemed necessary and as an alternative of the above, a three-party contract could be put in place among the ISU, the Center entity and the hosting Member Federation, especially when the concerned Center requires close collaboration of the hosting Member Federation in executing ISU CoE activities or delivering expected services.

3. Facilities

a. Generic and sport-specific facilities

Centers should provide Skaters and Coaches with access to generic and sport-specific facilities adapted to high-performance training. Furthermore, they should strive to optimise the quality, completeness, and availability of these facilities.

In particular, Centers are expected to provide access to at least one ice rink conforming with the standards of dimension, ice quality, and environment required for ISU Events in the discipline for which recognition is sought.

Availability at the facilities should be sufficient for the training needs of elite athletes, on a daily basis and year-round, as well as for the organisation of CoE activities.

Centers should operate principally at a single, stable location within close distance to the different facilities it uses. They may, however, use other facilities on an ad-hoc basis, for instance during scheduled maintenance of the rink.

Centers should have secured long-term access to the facilities at which they have their activity, i.e. for a period covering at least the duration of recognition as an ISU CoE.

Standard practices

- For figure skating: enclosed ice rink (min. 56m length by 26m width).
- For speed skating: enclosed standard 400m speed skating oval with ISU-compliant padding system.
- For short track: enclosed ice rink (min. 60m length by 30m width) with ISU-compliant padding system.
- Promote high-performance; athletes are provided with adequate access to the facilities but may share access with public groups practicing the same sport at a lower level or for leisure.
- Basic sport-specific and general training space and equipment is available for at least one ISU discipline with minimal other amenities.
- At least one indoor open space (e.g., gymnasium or multipurpose hall).

- A strength and conditioning center offering standard equipment (e.g., free weights, squat cages, treadmills, bikes).
- Equipment for sport-specific discipline training is procured as required.
- Basic changing rooms with wet room amenities (e.g. showers).

Best practices

- For figure skating: enclosed Olympic-size ice rink (60m length by 30m width).
- For speed skating and short track: combination with access to or close availability of a short track or an oval, for variety in training and practicing multiple disciplines.
- Provide a fully integrated training environment with space and equipment adequate for high-performance training on and off the ice, warm-up/cool-down, and recovery.
- Sport facilities equipped with connectivity and audiovisual technology for remote training.
- Some sport facilities meet international competition standards; the venue is capable of hosting select national and international events (e.g., for speed skating and short track: ability to host limited world cup competition).
- Facility maintenance and upgrades are performed regularly and in a manner that minimizes downtime and inconvenience. A plan for equipment refurbishing and/or replacement is in place.
- Quality changing rooms, exclusive to participants (i.e., not shared with the general public), with wet room amenities (e.g. showers); resident participants are supplied with individual locker storage.

b. Food services

Nutrition is an important aspect of high-performance training. Adequate measures can optimise performance, reduce the risk of injury, and avoid other health issues. Accordingly, Centers strive to implement these measures to the largest extent possible. They offer options for participants to have their meals at the training location or nearby. They seek to educate participants on nutrition and to promote healthy eating habits. They also watch for the appearance of health issues, such as nutritional deficiencies or eating disorders, educate the

athletes to be aware of the signs and symptoms, and provide access to specialists who are able to help.

Standard practices

- At least one canteen or restaurant within a 15 minutes' walk from the training location. Lunch and dinner are served. Freshly-made, warm dishes made with quality ingredients are available.
- Dedicated eating space at the training location where participants can bring their own dishes. Equipped with a microwave oven to reheat the dishes and accessible drinking water.
- Connection with sports nutrition specialists who can work with individual athletes on meal plans or health issues.

Best practices

- In-house canteen or restaurant with meals designed for athletes by sport nutrition specialists and coordinated with professional chefs.
- Meal options compatible with diverse dietary restrictions (e.g., gluten-free, lactose-free, vegetarian/vegan, halal, kosher, etc.).
- Courses and workshops by sports nutrition specialists as part of the curriculum (e.g., education sessions on nutrition for performance and introduction to the Relative Energy Deficiency Syndrome); availability for private sessions to discuss individual cases and provide advice or referral to medical specialists.
- Vending machines or kiosks within the training venues, close to where the athletes need them after their workout, offer recovery drinks and snacks, such as protein shakes or energy bars.

c. Accommodation services

Non-local participants of Center activities or programming require options for accommodation. At minimum, a Center is required to provide information to participants on accommodation locations in close proximity to the entity that are safe, clean and convenient, as well as providing information regarding public transportation. The Center should strive to make the accessibility to the activities and programming easy and hassle free.

Standard practices

- Provide information on accommodation locations within reasonable traveling distance for short and long term stays.
- Accommodation options are all safe, clean and secure (including evacuation procedures).
- Accommodation options provide amenities including wifi/internet connection, basic in-room communication, spacious rooms and proximity to shops and outdoor spaces.
- Options are appropriate for the needs of young/developing athletes and older/more mature athletes.
- Public transport information is made available, suitable to the user's needs.

Best practices

- Onsite accommodation, either attached to or within comfortable walking distance to the Center, is provided for short or long term stays (eg. residency).
- Provide financial support to the participants through means of but not exclusive to discounts, funding, or full coverage of accommodation.
- Organization offers transportation options to the Center daily.
- In-room kitchenette, fridge and microwave.
- Residency provides accessibility options that cater to users with disabilities.

4. Performance

a. Coaching

An ISU Center of Excellence is required to have some level of coaching services to offer to athletes. At minimum, a Center is required to provide face to face coaching to participants and provide sport specific training programs that reflect the development level of the athlete(s) involved. Online supported coaching may also be a viable option. The coaches have at least the minimum requirements of the sports certification or a minimum number of years of experience at the high performance level. According to the discipline and aligned with the lead coach, a certified strength & conditioning coach, specified skills coaching, and mental performance coach are also available to participants. The coach to athlete ratio is set at a manageable level for quality instruction. The Center must require coaches to be educated in and practice safe sport.

Standard practices

- Quality face to face coaching is available as well as a training program provided (online supported coaching may also be a viable option).
- Coaches are employed by or have a working relationship with the Center.
- Coaches possess a basic sport performance background.
- Coaches meet a minimum level of coaching certification or a minimum amount of years of coaching experience depending on the country of the Center.
- Coaching options are appropriate for the needs of young/developing athletes and older, more mature athletes.
- Certified strength and conditioning coaches provide team training.
- There is specified skills coaching i.e. choreography and artistic coaching.
- A mental performance coach is available and provides training according to the level of the athlete(s).
- A manageable athlete to coach ratio is maintained.
- Coaches are educated in safe sport practices.

Best practices

- Coaching staff possess a diverse background in high performance sport and an understanding of the appropriate age and stages of athlete development.
- World class experienced coaches with a history of podium performances are available for each training group.
- Staff is composed of experienced, Masters and PhD strength and conditioning experts and mental performance coaches providing individualized and team training, programs influenced by the latest technological research, developments, equipment and lab analysis.
- Appropriate administrative support is available to the coaches.
- An average 4:1 (figure skating) or 8:1 (shorttrack and speedskating) athlete to coach ratio is maintained.
- Coaches meet the highest level of credentials and/or experience that the country of the Center has in place.
- The organization has sport specific and educated support staff managing the Center's coaching program.

b. Performance analysis

For long term participants, it will be important to analyze performance and physiological adaptations to training. To meet the standard practice, a Center is required to provide access to performance analysis and physiological testing on-site or off-site. The Center's coaches will have the ability to use the results from the analysis to adapt the training programs as necessary and to benefit the performance of the participants. There is technology available for the coaches to apply in the daily training environment like video analysis. Finally, a repository or database for the data collected is implemented which is secure and has limited access for privacy protection.

Standard practices

- Performance analysis is conducted at an off-site location; recorded data is transferred to the central repository and the results are analyzed by the coach.
- The Center's coaches have the ability to use the data to adjust training programs.

- Performance analysis allows for the basic management of athletic training data.
- Performance analysis is used to identify and measure a limited range of performance indicators.
- The Center hosts a central repository or database of collected relevant information; the repository's access is limited to onsite use and provides tools that allow coaches to mine data.
- Repository/database has standard security and privileges in place to protect personal athlete information.
- Some daily training environment technology is available when needed.

Best practices

- Performance analysis is conducted on site and allows for the complete management of athletic training data and is configurable to different athlete fitness levels, from entry level to high performance.
- Professionals assess the data and give recommendations on how to adjust the individual athlete's training program to maximize their performance.
- Performance analysis is used to identify and measure a wide range of performance indicators that provide a better understanding of how success can be achieved at all levels of performance.
- Provide privileged access to athlete information databases to effectively perform competitive analyses and athlete assessments.
- Repository provides basic and historical information on a wide variety of national/ international sport disciplines, as well as competition results and high performance studies that can be easily accessed for reference.
- Repository has standard security, privacy and access privileges in place to protect personal athlete information databases.
- Professionals are consistently analyzing individual athlete's data so that improvements and insights are gained in sports medicine, exercise physiology and athletic performance.

c. Medical supports for performance

Medical supports include basic health, sports medicine, sport psychology and paramedical services (massage, physiotherapy, chiropractic therapy, osteopath therapy, acupuncture, etc). At minimum, the majority of the listed services should be available on a pay for service basis onsite or in close proximity to the Center.

Standard Practices

- Provide part-time health services composed of licenced physicians encouraging overall health.
- Medical care is reactionary; evaluation, management and treatment is practiced post symptoms.
- Provide basic rehabilitation equipment needed for sports injury recovery i.e. treatment tables and some necessary equipment.
- Provide assessments and treatment methods based on current evidence-based research and the facility offers traditional treatment techniques.
- A sport psychologist professional is available for consultation focused on personal athlete development and high level performance.
- Has appropriate devices for emergency care according to current safety standards, and well trained staff in CPR manoeuvres and emergency protocols.

Best practices

- Focus is on performance medicine.
- Medical and paramedical staff is composed of dedicated, full time experts.
- Medical care includes a proactive, performance focused, multi-disciplinary approach to injury prevention, evaluation, management, treatment and rehabilitation of athletic injuries/illnesses.
- Provide top level rehabilitation equipment needed for sports injury recovery.
- Cater to Paralympic medical needs in providing equipment adjustments and para-specific medical services.

- Provide the most up to date assessment and treatment methods based on current evidence- based research studies.
- Offer traditional treatment techniques paired with several specialized areas of therapy.
- Sport Medicine staff is composed of fully qualified and experienced professionals with expertise in a multitude of sports disciplines.
- Has an external network of specialists necessary to provide comprehensive care for the athletes.
- Provide access to sport psychologists focused on optimising mental and emotional skills, techniques, processes that lead to positive personal development and high level performance.

d. Sport science

Sport Science consists of physiological testing and monitoring by trained professionals with the ability to support and conduct research. A Center is required to have some level of sport science support and services to offer to participants. To meet the standard practice, a Center is required to have available a physiologist or access to a university sport science department that can provide support in testing, monitoring and research. All training, development and performance should be supported by sport science. Center coach-developed training plans, therefore, should be based on research and evidence, developed with the support of a physiologist when needed.

Standard practices

- Provide a basic performance environment where athlete performance and physical state can be monitored with basic equipment.
- Provide a performance training environment where athletic performance and physical state can be tested and improved.
- Programming adheres to research and evidence based practices related to appropriate age and stage of development principles.

Best practices

- Provide top level rehabilitation equipment needed for sports injury recovery.

- Provide a high performance training environment where every aspect of the athletes' physical state and athletic performance is planned, tested, monitored, improved, from their technical efficiency to their physiology, to the effect of environmental changes.
- Sport Science staff is comprised of dedicated, full-time experts.
- High performance environment offers biomechanical video and motion analysis as well as computer evaluation of performance outputs.
- High performance environment provides physiology testing through periodized annual planning and cycle-based plans that include competition, practice and training schedules, tapering strategies, and volume intensity fluctuations.
- Both laboratory and sport specific field tests are available for monitoring purposes.

5. Support services

a. Participant support

Centers should provide participants with the necessary support in their efforts to come for a short- or a long-term stay. This may include assistance with the following:

- Travel arrangements
- Immigration processes (e.g., visas, residence permits)
- Finding and securing suitable accommodation
- Obtaining essential living services (e.g., health insurance, bank, phone)

They may also provide resident athletes with ancillary career support, such as:

- Assistance obtaining and managing financial support
- Providing direct financial support through scholarships
- Assistance with career and transition planning
- Assistance with personal issues (e.g., relationships, addiction, abuse)
- Provide talent management services
- Support in managing athlete's relationship with the relevant sports institutions
- Organisation of the logistics of competitions and outside training camps (e.g., travel arrangements, accommodation)

Standard practices

- Basic assistance with travel arrangements (e.g., itinerary from nearest international airport using public or own means of transportation, referral to taxi services and hotels).
- Basic assistance with immigration processes (i.e., documents describing generally the process are readily available and referral to the appropriate authorities).

Best practices

- Manage immigration processes on behalf of the participants (e.g., directly applies for residence permits with the relevant immigration authorities).
- Provide career and transition planning services (e.g., mentoring, workshops); transition specialists are available to the athletes.
- Provide selected athletes with resources and expertise to assist them with personal issues (e.g., addiction, relationships, abuse, mental health).
- Provide professional development programming for the acquisition of skills and knowledge for personal and career development, encompassing a variety of facilitated learning opportunities (e.g., workshops, conferences, webinars).

b. Education

Centers must strive to offer athletes solutions allowing them to combine their education and their sports career as efficiently and effectively as possible.

To that end, they must at least develop partnerships with middle and secondary school institutions so that they can offer education programs adapted to the requirements of training, travel, and competition, all the while allowing the acquisition of standard education credits required for degree completion. As an example, this may take the form of the opportunity to follow at least a part of the classes remotely. The best-in-class solution would be for the CoE to offer its own education program at the training center, including a counselling service to guide the athletes in their choice of career and education.

For the post-secondary, Centers may have developed partnerships with reputable institutions delivering special benefits for resident high-performance athletes, such as early registration, tuition vouchers, or access to academic and career counsellors.

Standard practices

- Partnered with a middle and secondary school institution contributing to the standard education credit requirements required for diploma completions.
- Programming is flexible in accommodating the training, travel, and competition demands for high-performance track athletes.
- Has established relationships with distance education providers that facilitate access to high-quality remote learning opportunities.

Best practices

- Full-time, part-time, and online learning options are available.
- Provide on-site, required academic programming for middle and secondary school, contributing to the standard education credit requirements required for diploma completions and the qualifications necessary to pursue post-secondary education.
- Has established relationships with reputable post-secondary and graduate institutions providing access to counselling to advise students on their career and education options.

c. Youth and pathway development

Centers should have a framework in place for youth development programming that includes research-based, age- and stage-appropriate training, designed to fit their physical, mental, and developmental needs. Notably, training should combine foundational components of athleticism with sport-specific movement promoting the long-term development of the youth. Further, programming should provide seamless transitions between developmental, high-performance, elite, and competition stages.

Standard practices

- Coaches consider the age characteristics of their athletes when planning programming; training is designed to fit the basic needs of the youth.
- Youth training combines general athletic development with minimal sport-specific movement.
- Ensures the development of fundamental movement skills.

Best practices

- Advanced framework/pathway in place for youth development programming that includes research-based age- and stage-appropriate training.
- Coaches recognize the age characteristics of their athletes when planning programming; all training is designed to fit the physical, mental, and developmental needs of the youth.

- Provide a solid foundation for youth ensuring the development of fundamental movement skills, physical literacy, knowledge and attitudes needed to engage in a wide variety of activities with poise and confidence.

d. Research and innovation

Participants are supported through a Center by research and innovation that acts as an enhancement to their training programs and performance. Research conducted and innovation is implemented with a focus on high performance athletic advancement. The research conclusions are measured frequently and adapted to training programs as necessary. Innovation implementations are evaluated for effectiveness regularly. Research and innovation are peer reviewed and supported by government, businesses and academic institutions where appropriate.

Standard practices

- Both laboratory and sport specific field tests are available for monitoring purposes.
- Perform research and innovation off-site in an auxiliary location.
- Work with top athletes and modern equipment to collect data and analysis in regards to high performance athlete development.
- Investigate the identification of risk factors, prevention of performance related injuries, leading to the development of prevention strategies.
- Short-term plans are in place for integrating improvements and new technologies in regards to athlete performance.
- Focus is specifically on advancement of elite performance.
- Contribute to improving human performance and learning through high performance focused innovation.
- Conclusions of research and innovation are measured frequently demonstrating project impact and contribution.
- Research and innovation is supported by an academic institution.

Best practices

- Work with elite athletes and state-of-the-art equipment to collect data, analysis and insights that challenge current thinking in the field of elite performance modalities.
- Provide an on-site research and learning environment which enables the effective study of performance directed inquiries and high performance innovation.
- Develop expert-based research strategies to identify talent in partnership with sport organizations.
- Government supports research and innovation through a broad array of programs i.e. tax incentives, grant contributions and procurement of goods/services.
- Businesses and Academic Institutions assist with financing, project operations and dissemination of findings.
- Ongoing training/knowledge development through fellowship programs and sharing activities with the national/international community of Science, Health and Humanitarian Organizations through Sport and Olympic Values.

e. Anti-doping

A participant of an ISU Center of Excellence should be aware of the Center's stance on anti-doping. Education is provided through means made available by the Center itself (pamphlets, documents, courses, etc). Competitions at a Center may have an anti-doping testing component as well as random testing throughout the year. The ISU is in compliance with the current World Anti-Doping Code and expects all Centers and ISU CoE participants to conduct themselves in the nature of Clean Sport.

Standard practices

- The Center has information posted and/or pamphlets available with information regarding anti-doping.
- Online links and documents to either ISU's Clean Sport 'Pure as Ice' program or any other Clean Sport program provided by the National Anti-Doping Organization (NADO) belonging to the country where the Center is based, to be made available for education on Anti-Doping for Center participants.

Best practices

- The Center has a partnership with an external organization, like the NADO of the country where the Center is based, that provides education on Anti-Doping practices.
- There is regular communication via email or otherwise to participants with any updates to new regulations.
- Yearly education seminars or webinars educating participants about Anti-Doping/Clean Sport are available.
- Participants are required to complete one anti-doping course or education seminar per season; either the ISU's Pure as Ice program and/or similar Clean Sport program of the NADO of that country where the Center is based.
- There is Anti-Doping testing conducted at the facility during sanctioned competitions and/or randomly for all participants in the Center. The Center shall liaise with the NADO or the ISU for the organization and planning of such tests accordingly.

6. Leadership, management, and operations

a. Governance

i. Values

The Centers may have different missions and objectives, depending on the nature of the entity/organization. They may vary in size, focus areas, funding sources, organizational structure, national sports systems, social culture, applicable laws and regulations, etc. Therefore, the governance system and processes of the Centers can be diversified. Each Center may have its own values and beliefs. It is recommended that the pursuit of excellence in all related areas, the willingness to share its expertise with the wider skating community as well as to support the development of skating sports worldwide are well embraced in the overall value system of the Center and well demonstrated in its daily operation.

ii . Code of Ethics

In terms of ethical standards, the Centers are eligible to follow the national rules and/or guidelines of the national sports authority.

When it is related to ISU CoE activities, as a general requirement, the Centers are expected to:

- Understand the [ISU Code of Ethics](#) and encourage all related people in the Centers to complete the ISU Code of Ethics eLearning challenge.
- Respect and apply the ISU Code of Ethics during the period of executing ISU CoE activities.
- Promote the ISU Code of Ethics and principles (integrity, safeguarding, fairness, etc) whenever necessary and possible.
- Follow the control mechanism set aside by the ISU in this respect when the codes apply.

iii. Sustainability

According to the ISU Sustainability plan, the general definition of sustainability in sport is described as below:

A sport is sustainable when it meets the needs of today's sport community while contributing to the improvement of future sport opportunities for all and the improvement of the integrity of the natural and social environment on which it depends.

There are 3 areas associated:

- Environment
- Social
- Good Governance

The Centers are responsible for applicable national rules and regulations on sustainability as well as the implementation of appropriate governance systems that are defined by the Centers and other relevant bodies.

When it concerns ISU CoE activities, the Centers are expected to:

- Be willing to participate in ISU sustainability initiatives (e.g. reduction of paper/plastic usage) when called upon;
- Take actions in building awareness towards environmental protection and social responsibility of individuals when necessary and possible;
- Follow ISU internal control mechanisms regarding ISU funding and/or ISU funded CoE activities.

b. Management of a Center

Management

The management of a Center may vary depending on the region of its location and the size of the organization or the relationship with the facility. A large organization may have a Board of Directors and an Executive Leadership Team, where a smaller organization could be run operationally with fewer staff. There may be an organization that leads the operations of the Center, but it could also be a Member Federation that leads the Center within a facility. In all iterations of the ISU CoE constructs throughout the world, the critical notion is that a Center is managed in a clear, organized, and professional standard. Management therefore would develop and implement a strategic plan that drives the goals of the organization which are aligned to the delivery of a world class ISU Center of Excellence.

Management is expected to provide consistent direction through a thoughtfully allocated organizational structure, providing regular and clear communication to staff. All staff should create and have in place goals that they are striving to achieve that align with the overall

strategy of the organization. Leadership should have regular formal meetings to assess the progress of these goals. The vision and purpose of the Center, as well as the ISU CoE concept and its objectives are widely known throughout the organization and in line with the definition of a Center as identified at the outset of this document. Management will ensure that the organization supports all necessary and reasonable actions to fulfill the role of a Center.

Operations

Members of staff of the organization are educated appropriately for the positions they employ. There is a combination of business acumen and high performance sport knowledge and experience throughout the team.

As expressed in Chapters 3 - 5, management and operations of a Center can provide a level of service that spans from developing to best-in-class depending on the individual entity. The ISU expects that a Center meets the standard practices while continuously reaching for a higher level of service. Centers should actively work to provide options that go above and beyond the standard practice and provide best practice options when possible.

The operational structure of the Center can present differently throughout the branch entities. The essential positions needed to carry out the ISU CoE concepts and objectives would include the positions listed below keeping in mind that roles may be combined and carried out by the same person.

- Center Manager– lead of the branch Center, responsible for liaising with the ISU as the entity representative (fluent in English)
- Administration Manager – responsible for logistics, human resources, facilities booking and administration of the Center
- Program Manager/Coach – responsible for the delivery of the Center’s programs, coaching and managing the Center’s coaches, paramedical and scientific staff
- Coach/Officials Education Manager – responsible for the creation and delivery of coach and officials education

Additional staff if feasible:

- Medical Lead – responsible for leading the medical and paramedical areas

- Scientific Lead – responsible for leading the scientific, performance analysis, research and innovation areas
- Center Coordinator – responsible for assisting the Center Manager and Administration Manager
- Program Coordinator – responsible for assisting the Program Manager and coaches with administration duties

Human Resources

The culture of a Center organization is important for the wellbeing of the staff and also the participants. The management personnel have established a highly engaging, effective and cohesive culture that enables a high level of employee engagement, commitment and satisfaction. The management personnel are motivated and extend this inspiration to other levels of staff and through to the participants. Employees are engaged and display a high level of satisfaction and commitment to their role. An overall dedication to excellence is visible through the management, operations and delivery of services.

In a Center environment, all parties are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner adhering to ethics and a code of conduct. Work is conducted in a violence and harassment free environment and there are processes in place to report any wrongdoing. Operational health and safety standards are valued and employed in the workplace by leadership and staff and adhered to by all participants.

c. Marketing and promotion

As the foundation for their marketing strategy, Centers should have a clear understanding of their environment and the needs of their clients. The marketing strategy should be aligned with the organisational goals as well as its mission, vision, and strategy. It should produce branding that is well-understood and consistent throughout the marketing formats.

Centers are expected to communicate clearly and effectively on its service offerings. In particular, they should have an up-to-date website with information available in English about its program and activities. They should be present and active on social media, engaging with their audience, and leveraging activities of the athletes to increase public engagement and raise awareness.

In line with the ISU overall and ISU CoE communication strategy, the Center's activities will be promoted via ISU media outlets and the ISU eLearning Platform when appropriate. There

could be a dedicated web page on the ISU official website for Centers with a published calendar, upcoming events and stories behind.

d. Financial stability

Centers should be enduring organisations and it is therefore essential that their financial situation be healthy and stable.

Given the variety of organizational forms allowed, and especially the possibility that a Center be dependent on another entity, the usual measures of profitability and solvency may not always be applicable. It should nevertheless be demonstrable that the Centers will have the necessary resources at their disposal for long-run operation, therefore sound financial planning must be in place and regularly updated. In particular, sources of revenue must be clearly identified; they may consist of tuitions, government subsidies, support from sports institutions or corporate sponsorships. It is notably desirable that critical sources of revenue be guaranteed by long-term commitments with staggered renewal dates.

Moreover, beyond financial soundness, it is important that Centers can count on strong and diversified support within their community.

Annex 1: Abbreviations

CoE = Center of Excellence

ISU = International Skating Union

KPI = Key Performance Indicator

MoU = Memorandum of Understanding

NADO = National Anti-Doping Organization

Annex 2: Assessment grid

3a. Facilities

Fair

All of the following:

- For figure skating:
 - Enclosed ice rink (min. 56m length by 26m width)
 - Sound system
- For speed skating:
 - Enclosed standard 400m speed skating oval
- For short track:
 - Enclosed ice rink (min. 60m length by 30m width)
- For speed skating and short track:
 - Lap timing system
 - Padding system in compliance with ISU regulations
 - Video analysis and feedback system on or close to the ice to provide direct feedback while the skaters are training
 - Equipment maintenance room, including rockering and bending materials
 - Starting equipment, blocks, cones
- Promote high-performance; athletes are provided with adequate access to the facilities but may share access with public groups practicing the same sport at a lower level or for leisure.
- Basic sport-specific and general training space and equipment is available for at least one ISU discipline with minimal other amenities.

- At least one indoor open space (e.g., gymnasium or multipurpose hall).
- A strength and conditioning center offering standard equipment (e.g., free weights, squat cages, treadmills, bikes).
- Equipment for sport-specific discipline training is procured as required.
- Basic changing rooms with wet room amenities (e.g. showers).
- Facility maintenance and upgrades are performed on an ad hoc basis.
- High-speed network connectivity through Wi-Fi or mobile networks.
- Basic medical facilities (e.g., first-aid room, massage room).

Good

The requirements of “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- For figure skating:
 - Olympic-size ice rink (60m length by 30m width)
 - Dance studio
 - Sport-specific equipment: harness, spinner, balance platform, etc.
- For speed skating:
 - Access to the ice from the infield to the warm-up lane (warm-up lane to be used for slow skating, training on the race lanes)
- For short track:
 - Movable padding system
- Cater to high-performance; athletes have priority access to the facilities. Public usage is available but restricted to specific environments and times.
- Basic sport-specific and general training space and equipment is available for a minimum of two ISU disciplines with minimal other amenities.
- Sport facilities equipped with connectivity and audiovisual technology for remote training.

- Provide a fully-integrated training environment with space and equipment adequate for high-performance training on and off the ice, warm-up/cool-down, and recovery.
- Some sport facilities meet international competition standards; the venue is capable of hosting select national and international events (e.g., for speed skating and short track: ability to host limited world cup competition).
- Multiple indoor open training areas.
- A performance-focused strength and conditioning center offering industry-leading, sport-specific equipment used to maximize athlete performance, e.g. weightlifting platforms and high-speed treadmills.
- Quality changing rooms with wet room amenities (e.g. showers)
- Lounge area for athletes and coaches.
- Facility maintenance and upgrades are performed regularly and in a manner that minimizes downtime and inconvenience. A plan for equipment refurbishing and/or replacement is in place.
- A range of ancillary facilities are located on-site (e.g., meeting/conference rooms, study rooms, classrooms, offices).

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and all of the following:

- For speed skating:
 - Combination with access or close availability of a standard short track ice rink for variety in training and practicing multiple disciplines.
- For short track:
 - Heated bench inside the skating area in the middle on ice to keep the skaters warm while resting.
 - Combination with access to or close availability of a 400m oval for variety in training and practicing multiple disciplines.
- For speed skating and short track:
 - Treadmill (inlining) and mirror to practice technique

- Multiple ice rinks for concurrent activities.
- Cater strictly to development and high-performance; athletes have absolute priority access and the training environment is optimized for their needs. Public usage is only available when the facilities are not needed for training and in a manner that doesn't affect the quality of the environment (e.g., without requiring changes to ice characteristics).
- Facilities are built and equipped purposely to meet national and international federation standards for both training and competition.
- Quality changing rooms, exclusive to participants (i.e., not shared with the general public), with wet room amenities (e.g. showers); resident participants are supplied with individual locker storage.
- Sport facilities provide active and passive recovery equipment to optimize athlete training, performance, and comfort (e.g. sauna, hot/cold tubs, steam rooms).
- A long-term plan is in place for facility upgrades to remain in line with ISU standards for training and competition.

3b. Food services

Fair

All of the following:

- At least one canteen or restaurant within a 15 minutes' walk from the training location. Lunch and dinner are served. Freshly-made, warm dishes made with quality ingredients are available.
- Dedicated eating space at the training location where participants can bring their own dishes. Equipped with a microwave oven to reheat the dishes and accessible drinking water.
- Connection with sports nutrition specialists who can work with individual athletes on meal plans or health issues.

Good

The requirements for "Fair" are satisfied and all of the following:

- In-house canteen or restaurant with meals designed for athletes by sport nutrition specialists and coordinated with professional chefs.
- Meal options compatible with common dietary restrictions (e.g., gluten-free, lactose-free, and vegetarian/vegan).
- Vending machines or kiosks within the training venues, close to where the athletes need them after their workout, offer recovery drinks and snacks, such as protein shakes or energy bars.
- Courses and workshops by sports nutrition specialists as part of the curriculum (e.g., education sessions on nutrition for performance and introduction to the Relative Energy Deficiency Syndrome); availability for private sessions to discuss individual cases and provide advice or referral to medical specialists.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Meal options compatible with less common dietary restrictions (e.g., halal, kosher, etc.).
- Meals are subsidized so they are offered at a discount or for free to participants.
- Sport nutrition specialist intervening regularly and following the athletes continuously.
- Separate room where the skaters/coaches can have their meals apart from other users of the facility.

3c. Accommodation services

Fair

All of the following:

- Provide information on accommodation locations within reasonable traveling distance for short and long term stays.
- Accommodation options are all safe, clean and secure (including evacuation procedures).

- Accommodation options provide amenities including wifi, spacious rooms and proximity to shops and outdoor spaces.
- Options are appropriate for the needs of young/developing athletes and older/more mature athletes.
- Public transport information is made available, suitable to user needs.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Maintain strategic relations with an offsite accommodation provider that is a benefit to the participants.
- The third party accommodation provider offers preferred rates for athletes and coaches.
- Accommodation is located off site within reasonable proximity.
- Public transport options, travel and/or local information available, suitable to user needs.
- Residency provides basic accessibility options that cater to users with disabilities i.e. parking spaces and ramps.
- Alternatively, University residency/dormitory style accommodation is available for short term and long term stay.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Team meeting rooms are available on site.
- Organization covers a percentage of resident athlete fees and/or provides discounts through the strategic relationships with accommodation providers.
- In-room kitchenette, fridge and microwave.
- Onsite accommodation, either attached to or within comfortable walking distance to the Center, is provided for short or long term stays (eg. residency).

- Provide support to the participants through discounts, funding or full coverage of accommodation.
- Organization offers transportation options to the Center daily.
- Residency provides accessibility options that cater to users with disabilities e.g., parking spaces, bathroom grab bars, avoid deep pile carpets that make it difficult for a wheelchair to manoeuvre, as well as provide information in a range of formats.
- Security available 24/7; appropriate for minors (U-18 years); a high degree of general safety and security, including information on evacuation procedures in the event of an emergency, advertised in every bedroom.
- All rooms provide sufficient bed sizing and space to allow athletes freedom of movement based on sport discipline, around all furniture and fittings including sofa beds.
- Accommodation fees are covered by the Organization for resident athletes and coaches.
- Hi-Band Internet optical fibre provider supporting HD video streaming for remote learning.
- Excellent in-room communication technology with the best available connectivity and sufficient support to resolve any problems.
- Other amenities may include air conditioning, kitchen or area to store and cook meals.

4a. Coaching

Fair

All of the following:

- Quality face to face coaching is available as well as a training program provided
- Coaches are employed by the organization or have a working relationship with the Center.
- Coaches possess a basic sport performance background.

- Coaches meet a minimum level of coaching certification or a minimum amount of years of coaching experience depending on the country of the Center.
- Coaching options are appropriate for the needs of young/developing athletes and older/more mature athletes.
- Certified strength and conditioning coaches provide team training.
- There is specified skills coaching i.e. choreography and artistic coaching.
- A mental performance coach is available and provides training according to the level of the athlete(s).
- A manageable athlete to coach ratio is maintained.
- Coaches are educated in safe sport practices.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- International quality coaching is available.
- A Center lead that manages and monitors coaching staff.
- An average 8:1 (figure skating) or 12:1 (short track and speed skating) athlete to coach ratio is maintained.
- Coaches meet an intermediate level of coaching certification or an intermediate amount of years of coaching experience depending on the country of the Center.
- Coaches not only have knowledge and skill, but also a commitment to high professional standards and a strong code of ethics.
- Staff is comprised of experienced, Masters and PhD strength and conditioning experts and mental performance coaches providing individualized and team training, programs influenced by the latest technological research, developments, equipment and lab analysis.
- A safe sport mandate is installed and followed by the coaches.
- Coaches have access to further coaching education and certification training with opportunities for mentorship that promote skills, tactics, systems and cross pollination.

- Specialized coaches are available that cater to one aspect of the sport performance ie. choreography, start training.
- Periodic and ongoing education offered on site.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Coaching staff possess a diverse background in high performance sport and an understanding of the appropriate age and stages of athlete development.
- World class experienced coaches with a history of podium performances available for each training group.
- Staff is composed of experienced, Masters and PhD strength and conditioning experts providing individualized and team training, recovery programs influenced by the latest technological research, developments, equipment and lab analysis.
- Appropriate administrative support is available to the coaches.
- An average 4:1 (Figure Skating) or 8:1 (Speed Skating and Short Track) or less athlete to coach ratio is maintained
- Coaches meet the highest level of coaching certification or the highest amount of years of coaching experience depending on the country of the Center.
- The organization has sport specific and educated support staff managing the Center’s coaching program.
- Organization provides and funds professional development for coaching staff.
- Customized training programs are developed for individual athletes within the training group.

4b. Performance analysis

Fair

All of the following:

- Performance analysis is performed at an off-site location; recorded data is transferred to the central repository and results are analyzed by the coach.

- The Center coaches have the ability to use the data to adjust training programs.
- Performance analysis allows for the basic management of athletic training data.
- Performance analysis is used to identify and measure a limited range of performance indicators.
- Host a central repository/database of collected relevant data; the repository's access is limited to onsite use and provides tools that allow coaches to mine data.
- Repository/database has standard security and privileges in place to protect personal athlete information databases.
- Some daily training environment technology is available when needed.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Performance analysis is performed on site and allows for the basic management of athletic training data and effective analyses of competitive data.
- Coaches have support from professionals to assess the data of each athlete and adjust the training program accordingly.
- Performance analysis is used to identify and measure a limited range of performance indicators that provide a better understanding of how success can be achieved.
- Repository has data from a wide variety of formats, recording/storage devices and other performance measurement devices i.e. lactic acid analysers and heart rate monitors.
- Performance analysis is used constructively in the training program and daily training environment to benefit high performance athletics.
- Repository has protocols in place to protect personal information, allowing access to those who possess proper authorization.
- Cooperation with university researchers or physiologists to assess results is available.
- On-ice analysis is performed (lactic acid testing during training, screening of performance by judges/specialists).
- Performance analysis technology is available in the daily training environment.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Performance analysis is performed on site and allows for the complete management of athletic training data and is configurable to different athlete fitness levels, from entry level to high performance.
- Professionals assess the data and give recommendations on how to adjust the individual athlete’s training program to maximize their performance.
- Performance analysis is used to identify and measure an individual athlete’s wide range of performance indicators that provide a better understanding of how success can be achieved at all levels of performance.
- Provide privileged access to athlete information databases within the central repository to effectively perform competitive analyses and athlete assessments.
- Repository provides basic and historical information on a wide variety of national/ international sport disciplines, as well as competition results and high performance studies that can be easily accessed for reference.
- Repository has standard security, privacy and access privileges in place to protect personal athlete information databases.
- Professionals are consistently analyzing individual athlete’s data so that improvements and insights are gained in sports medicine, exercise physiology and athletic performance.
- Performance analysis technology is used daily for individual athletes in the training environment including video analysis, lap timing system, etc.
- Dedicated physiologists and university researchers analyse physiological data and complete a document of results for each athlete.

4c. Medical supports for performance

Fair

All of the following:

- Provide part-time health services of licenced physicians encouraging overall health.

- Medical care is reactionary; evaluation, management and treatment is practiced post symptoms.
- Provides basic rehabilitation equipment needed for sports injury recovery i.e. treatment tables and some necessary equipment.
- Provides assessments and treatment methods based on current evidence-based research; the facility offers traditional treatment techniques.
- A sport psychologist professional is available for consultation focused on personal athlete development and high level performance.
- Has appropriate devices for emergency care according to current safety standards, and well trained staff in CPR manoeuvres and evacuation protocols.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Provide basic on-site health services of licenced physicians and paramedical professionals needed to promote overall athlete health.
- Medical care includes a proactive approach to injury prevention, evaluation, management and treatment of athletic injuries.
- Provide basic rehabilitation equipment needed for sports injury recovery and maintenance.
- Staff operate in an integrated and multi-disciplinarian manner.
- Staffed with part-time sport psychologist Ph.D.'s focused on personal athlete development, and high level performance.
- Sport medicine staff is composed of part-time qualified professionals with backgrounds in high performance sport including Registered physiotherapists and sport medicine physicians.
- Long term Center participants are medically assessed yearly for prevention.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Focus is performance medicine.

- Training staff is composed of dedicated, full time experts.
- Medical care includes a proactive, performance focused, multi-disciplinary approach to injury prevention, evaluation, management, treatment and rehabilitation of athletic injuries/illnesses.
- Provide top level rehabilitation equipment needed for sports injury recovery.
- Cater to Paralympic medical needs in providing equipment adjustments and para-specific medical services.
- Provide the most up to date assessment/treatment methods based on current evidence- based research studies.
- Offer traditional treatment techniques paired with several specialized areas of physiotherapy.
- Sport Medicine staff is fully qualified and experienced professionals with expertise in a multitude of sports disciplines.
- Has an external network of specialists necessary to provide comprehensive care for the athletes.
- Provide access to sport psychologists focused on optimising mental and emotional skills, techniques, processes that lead to positive personal development and high level performance.
- Integrated medical staff meet regularly and assess each athlete individually to support their success.
- Medical, psychological and physiological assessments are completed on a consistent basis (quarterly/yearly) for all individual athletes.

4d. Sport science

Fair

All of the following:

- Provide a basic performance environment where athlete performance and physical state can be monitored with basic equipment.

- Provide a performance training environment where athletic performance and physical state can be tested and improved.
- Programming adheres to research and evidence based practices related to appropriate age and stage of development principles.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- High performance environment offers biomechanical video and motion analysis as well as computer evaluation of performance outputs.
- High performance environment provides standard physiology testing through periodized annual planning.
- The Center’s sport science area is led by Masters and PhD Exercise Physiologists, Anthropometrists, Biomechanists and Lab Technicians capable of monitoring all aspects of an athlete’s physical state.
- Sport science staff is composed of dedicated, full time experts.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Provide a high performance training environment where every aspect of the athletes’ physical state and athletic performance is planned, tested, monitored, improved, from their technical efficiency to their physiology, to the effect of environmental changes.
- High performance environment offers biomechanical video and motion analysis as well as computer evaluation of performance outputs.
- High performance environment provides physiology testing through periodized annual planning and cycle-based plans that include competition, practice and training schedules, tapering strategies, volume intensity fluctuations.
- Both laboratory and sport specific field tests are available for monitoring purposes.
- Ongoing Training and knowledge development through Mentorship, Fellowship Programs and sharing activities with the national/international community of Science, Health and Humanitarian Organizations through Sport and Olympic Values.

5a. Participant support

Fair

All of the following:

- Basic assistance with travel arrangements (e.g., itinerary from nearest international airport using public or own means of transportation, referral to taxi services and hotels).
- Basic assistance with immigration processes (i.e., documents describing generally the process are readily available and referral to the appropriate authorities).

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Advanced assistance with travel arrangements (e.g., Center organises transportation to and from the nearest international airport).
- Advanced assistance with immigration processes (e.g., Center acts as a coordinator between the participants and the immigration authorities and actively supports the participants in their efforts).
- Support the resident athletes in managing their relationship with the relevant sports institutions (e.g., Center coordinates the parties and ensures good communication).
- Provide selected athletes with resources and expertise to assist them with personal issues (e.g., addiction, relationships, abuse, mental health).
- Provide basic career and transition planning services (e.g., mentoring, workshops); connection with a transition specialist.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least three of the following:

- Offer complete travel services (e.g., booking of flights and accommodation) for resident and guest participants.
- Manage immigration processes on behalf of the participants (e.g., directly applies for residence permits with the relevant immigration authorities)

- Provide complete career and transition planning services; full-time transition specialists are available to the athletes.
- Participant support programs are integrated with the performance services and integrated into the annual and quadrennial training plans.
- Provide professional development programming for the acquisition of skills and knowledge for personal and career development, encompassing a variety of facilitated learning opportunities (e.g., workshops, conferences, webinars).

5b. Education

Fair

All of the following:

- Partnered with a middle and secondary school institution contributing to the standard education credit requirements required for diploma completions.
- Programming is flexible in accommodating the training, travel, and competition demands for high-performance track athletes.
- Has established relationships with distance education providers that facilitate access to high-quality remote learning opportunities.

Good

All the requirements of “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Has established relationships with reputable post-secondary and graduate institutions providing access to counselling to advise students on their career and education options.
- Offer mentoring programs assisting students in exploring career and education options.
- Full-time, part-time, and online learning options are available.

Excellent

All the requirements of “Good” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Provide on-site, required academic programming for middle and secondary school, contributing to the standard education credit requirements required for diploma completions and the qualifications necessary to pursue post-secondary education.
- Has established relationships with reputable post-secondary and graduate institutions offering deliverables directly benefiting resident high-performance athletes (e.g., early registration, tuition vouchers, career/academic counselling).
- Institutions provide access to established professionals who provide valuable advice in regards to personal/professional development.

5c. Youth and pathway development

Fair

All of the following:

- Coaches consider the age characteristics of their athletes when planning programming; training is designed to fit the basic needs of the youth.
- Youth training combines general athletic development with minimal sport-specific movement.
- Ensure the development of fundamental movement skills.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Basic framework/pathway in place for youth development programming that includes research-based age- and stage-appropriate training.
- Youth training combines foundational components of athleticism with sport-specific movement promoting the long-term development of youth.
- Ensure the development of fundamental movement skills and physical literacy.
- Offer sport-specific training programs for specialized sport disciplines.
- Programming provides progressive transitions between developmental, high-performance, elite, and competition stages.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Advanced framework/pathway in place for youth development programming that includes research-based age- and stage-appropriate training.
- Coaches recognize the age characteristics of their athletes when planning programming; all training is designed to fit the physical, mental, and developmental needs of the youth.
- Provide a solid foundation for youth ensuring the development of fundamental movement skills, physical literacy, knowledge and attitudes needed to engage in a wide variety of activities with poise and confidence.
- Cater to the sport-specific needs of youth through specialized training programs.
- Programming provides seamless transitions between developmental, high-performance, elite, and competition stages.

5d. Research and innovation

Fair

All of the following:

- Both laboratory and sport specific field tests are available for monitoring purposes.
- Perform research and innovation off-site in an auxiliary location.
- Work with top athletes and modern equipment to collect data and analyses in regards to high performance athlete development.
- Investigate the identification of risk factors, prevention of performance related injuries; leading to the development of prevention strategies.
- Short-term plans are in place for integrating improvements and new technologies in regards to athlete performance.
- Focus is specifically on advancement of elite performance.
- Contribute to improving human performance and learning through high performance focused innovation.

- Conclusions of research and innovation are measured frequently demonstrating project impact/contribution.
- Research and innovation is supported by an academic institution.

Good

The requirements for “Fair” are satisfied and all of the following:

- Continuous improvement program is in place integrating new technology for athlete performance, innovation, financial and internal business dimensions of the organization.
- Work with elite athletes and state-of-the-art equipment to collect data, where the analysis and insights are contributing to high performance sport.
- Investigate the identification of risk factors, prevention of performance related injuries; leading to the development of prevention strategies.
- Has an essential role in improving human performance and learning through interdisciplinary research and high performance focused innovation.
- Conclusions of research and innovation are regularly measured to provide significance of project impact; impact in sport and the elite performance communities.
- The majority of research and innovation projects provide a significant contribution to elite performance and athlete success.
- Shows leadership in developing athlete transfer programs and agreements between sports.
- Government, businesses and academic Institutions provide financial assistance as well as secondary support for selected projects.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Both laboratory and sport specific field tests are available for monitoring purposes.
- Work with elite athletes and state-of-the-art equipment to collect data, analysis and insights that challenge current thinking in the field of elite performance modalities.

- Provide an on-site research and learning environment which enables the effective study of performance directed inquiries and high performance innovation.
- Develop expert-based research strategies to identify talent in partnership with sport organizations.
- Government supports research and innovation through a broad array of programs i.e. tax incentives, grant contributions and procurement of goods/services.
- Businesses and Academic Institutions assist with financing, project operations and dissemination of findings.
- Ongoing training/knowledge development through fellowship programs and sharing activities with the national/international community of Science, Health and Humanitarian Organizations through Sport and Olympic Values.

5e. Anti-doping

Fair

All of the following:

- Centers have information posted and/or pamphlets with information regarding anti-doping.
- Online links and documents to either ISU's Clean Sport 'Pure as Ice' program or any other Clean Sport program provided by the National Anti-Doping Organization (NADO) belonging to the country where the Center is based, to be made available for education on Anti-Doping for Center participants.

Good

The requirements for "Fair" are satisfied and all of the following:

- Has a partnership with an external organization, like the NADO of that country where the Center is based, that provides education on Anti-Doping practices.
- There is regular communication via email or otherwise to participants with any updates to new regulations.

Excellent

The requirements for “Good” are satisfied and at least two of the following:

- Yearly education seminars or webinars educating participants about Anti-Doping/Clean Sport are available.
- Participants are required to complete one Anti-Doping course or education seminar per season either the ISU's Pure as Ice program and/or similar Clean Sport program of the NADO of that country where the Center is based.
- There is Anti-Doping testing conducted at the facility during sanctioned competitions and/or randomly for all participants in the Center. The Center shall liaise with the NADO or the ISU for the organization and planning of such tests accordingly.