



EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

2025 - 2030



INTRODUCTION:

MARC CANHAM CHIEF FOOTBALL OFFICER

In February 2024, we launched the Football Pathways Plan (FPP) with the drive to maximise the potential of Irish football across all levels and facets of the game.

At its core, the Plan covers three key areas: Pathways, Participation and Performance, which are underpinned by a huge strategic focus on education and coach development.

One of the 11 key actions from the launch of the FPP was the FAI's new Education & Development Strategy and we are excited to unveil it. The five-year vision (2025-2030) will see three primary missions to this strategy:

- **To incorporate football in all levels of education in Ireland;**
- **To develop an innovative approach to coach development through an individualised expertise approach;**
- **To develop an education and development pathway for referees.**

Football education is vital to the structure of the game in Ireland and a critical component to the FPP. From volunteers at our grassroots clubs, to playing, coaching and officiating in our professional game, education is the cornerstone of the development of the sport.

Our ethos is that everything delivered in the Education & Development Strategy incorporates the best practice in education, development and learning. A modernised approach will be created to ignite curiosity and create an environment of learning which will be activated from and within football.

We're excited for everyone to see a new chapter in Irish football and we welcome you along this important step of the football pathway.



INTRODUCTION:

NIALL O'REGAN HEAD OF EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

I'm excited to be a part of the new 2025-2030 Education & Development Strategy. I have been with the Football Association of Ireland since 2012 and in that time I have seen first-hand how much football means to people at every level of the game.

Football's beauty is its accessibility and is unrivalled for the passion that is out there for the game. We must harness that energy for the good of the game in this country and I'm proud that the Education & Development Strategy goes to great lengths to maximise football's true potential.

THE VISION IS SIMPLE;

Where there is football there is education, and where there is education there is football.

It's a strategy that aligns the FAI with the Department of Education to better enable teacher training in football. It further implements Transition Year education through Gaisce – the President's Award.

The strategy looks at Junior and Senior Cycle Football Curriculums aligning learning outcomes with a football specific approach, furthering a key mission of ours to integrate football into all levels of education.

Perhaps one of the most vital components is a new ethos of **Play the Game**. It will focus on early engagement and individual development, and allows us to re-think the development experience of anyone on the football pathways journey.

The wider collaboration of football education will also include continuing to working with the League of Ireland to embrace educational programmes in partnership with football development.

Our coach development programme takes the best practice of football development around the world and takes in the feedback and insights given to us through the consultation process of the Football Pathway Plan.

The five-year vision will be modern and holistic while remaining individualised and age appropriate. We look forward to delivering it for the better of Irish football.



CONTENTS

This document is to provide a high-level overview of the Education & Development Strategy.

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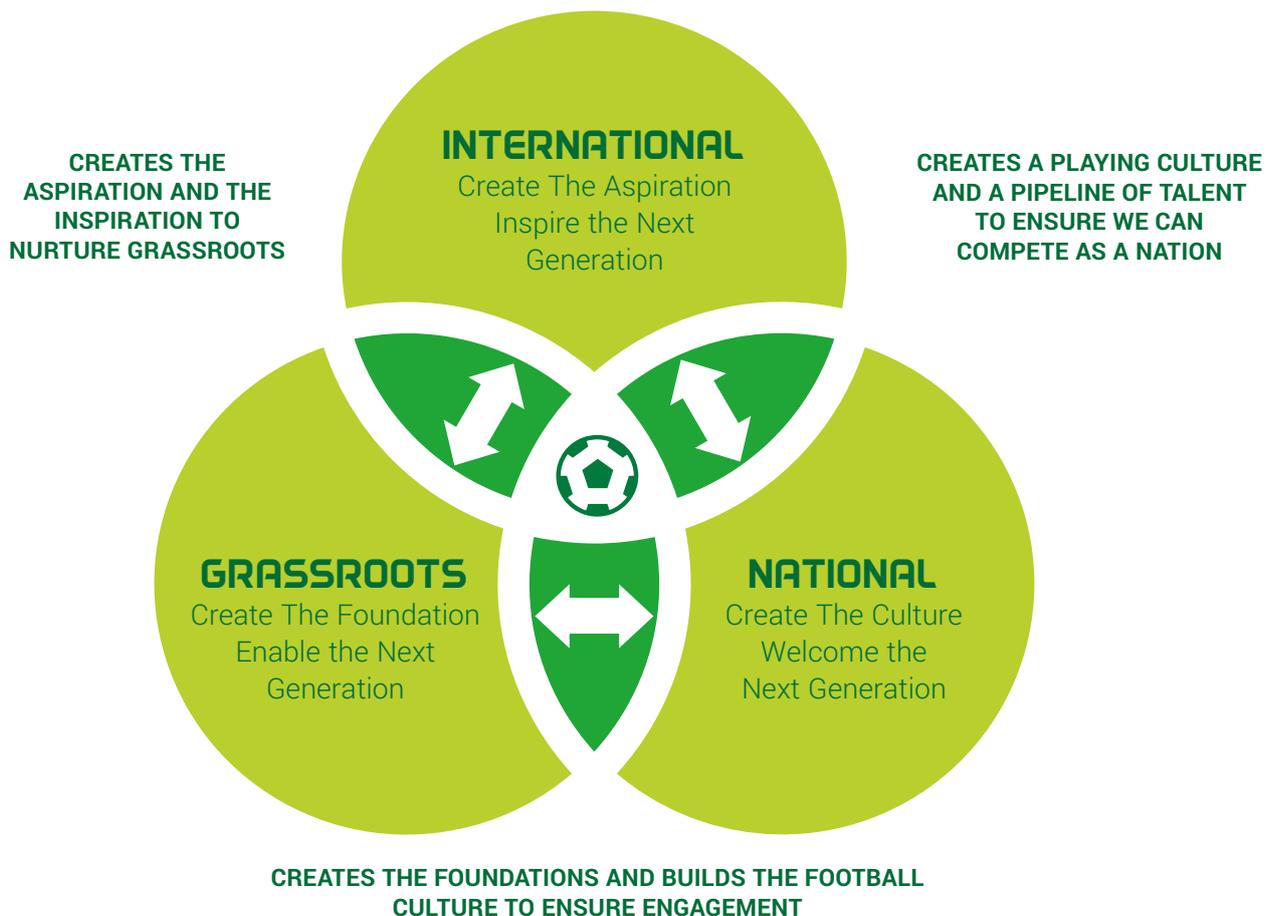
01 OVERVIEW



EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2025 - 2030

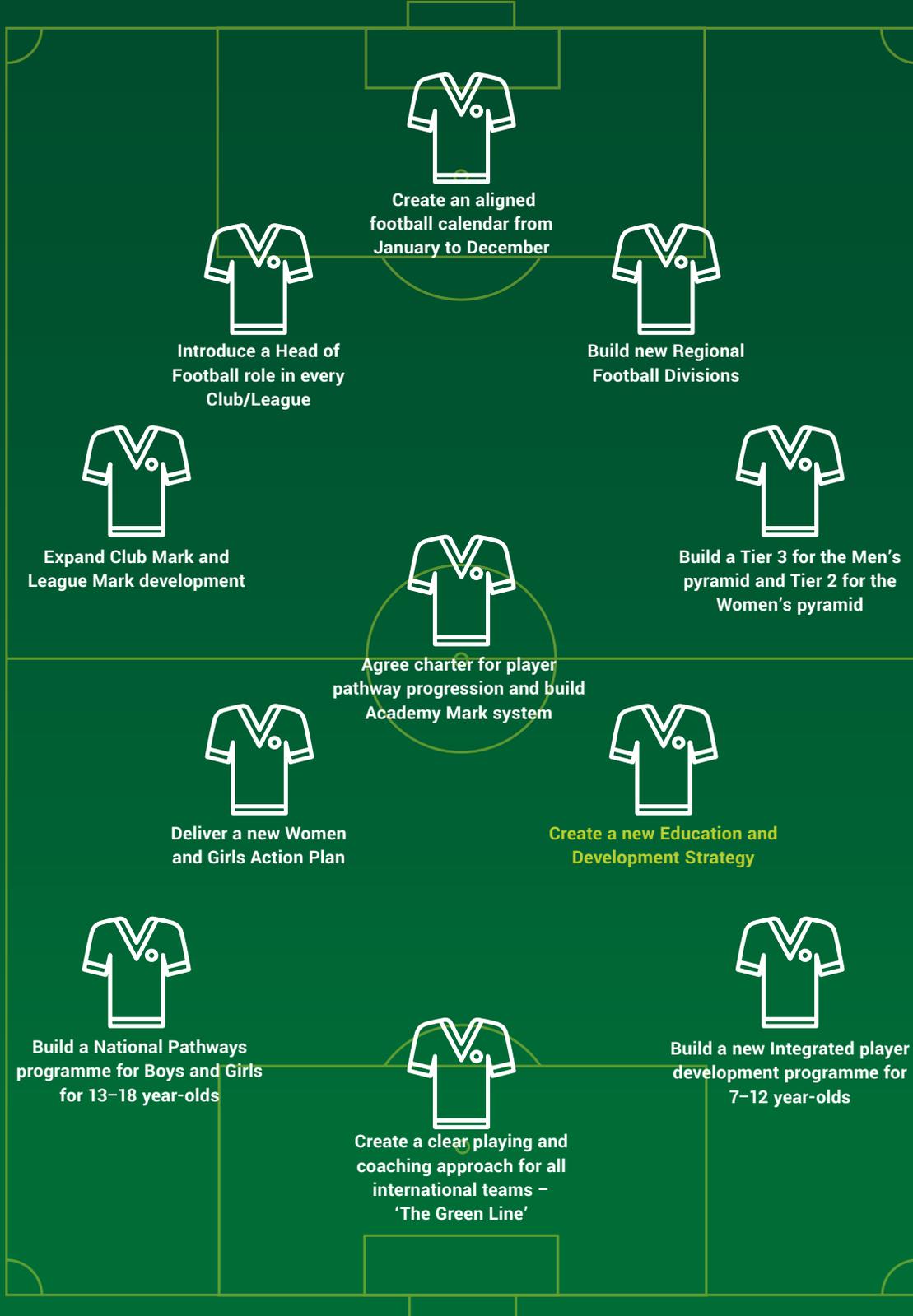
REBUILD FOOTBALL AS AN ECO-SYSTEM

FOOTBALL AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO
THE MOST INTEGRATED FOOTBALL ECO-SYSTEM IN THE WORLD



02. CONSULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

11 Priority Action Areas for 2024-2026



OVERVIEW

THE STRATEGY: OUTCOMES & ACTIONS FOR EACH PILLAR

Everything delivered in the 'Football Pathways Plan' will be done to **increase** the number of, and **quality of, participation experiences**, to develop **clearer, stronger and more rewarding pathways** and to produce players, **teams and coaches**, at club and country level, for boys and girls, men and women, that are **more successful**.

VISION

A **life-long love of football** through an active and rewarding involvement in the game that **maximises our potential** on and off the pitch.

MISSION(S)



PARTICIPATION

To create positive participation experiences for all



PATHWAYS

To develop more and better (Irish players and) routes into & through the game



PERFORMANCE

To develop winning Senior Teams, at club & international level

ACTIONS

Develop a range of programmes and experiences that enable positive participation for all in Irish football

ACTIONS

Develop a clear set of pathways to enable people to play and/or participate in football in all areas & at all levels

ACTIONS

Develop higher performing teams (playing & technical) at all levels and for all aspects of the professional game

HOW

EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**EVERY PERSON HAS A ROLE
EVERY CLUB HAS A ROLE
EVERY MOMENT HAS A ROLE**

VISION

Where there is Football
there is Education
& where there is Education
there is Football

EDUCATION
DEVELOPMENT

COACH
DEVELOPMENT

REFEREE
DEVELOPMENT



02

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

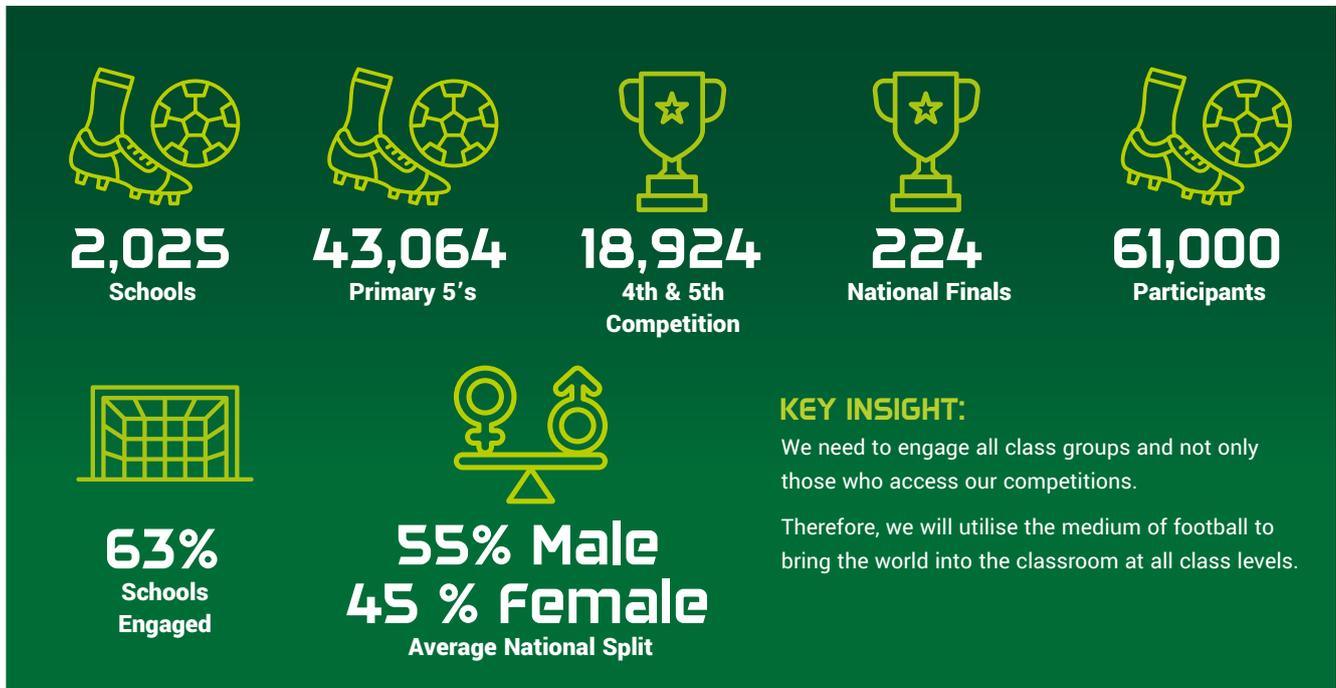


EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2025 - 2030

02. EDUCATION

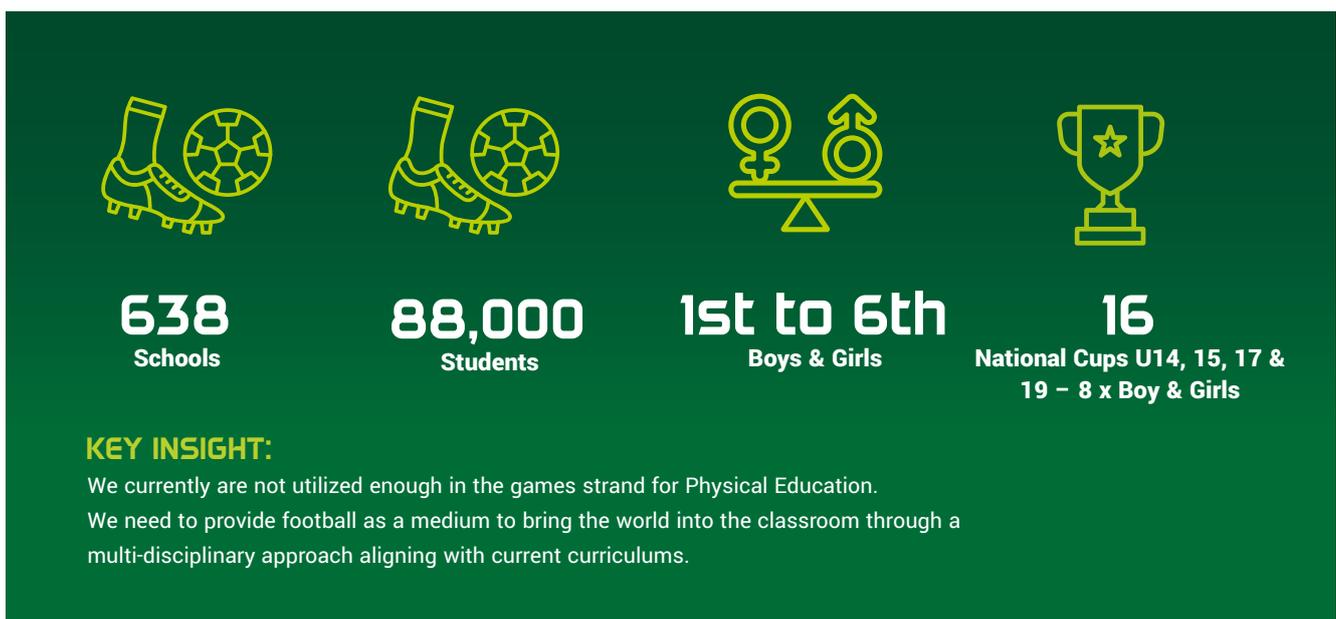
WHERE ARE WE NOW - PRIMARY?

Football in Primary Schools is popular within our competitions, but we must engage more outside competitions.



WHERE ARE WE NOW - POST PRIMARY?

Lots of competitions in post primary but not enough engagement through physical education.



02. EDUCATION

WHERE ARE WE NOW – 3RD LEVEL

3rd level student football currently has multiple affiliates.



IUFU
Irish University Football Union



CUFAI
Colleges University Football Association of Ireland



WSCAI
Women Soccer Colleges Association of Ireland

COMMITTEE



CUFL
Colleges Universities Football League

KEY INSIGHT:

We need to create an environment where 3rd level student football is inclusive, accessible and is provided through a modern & holistic games programme.



WE HAVE IDENTIFIED 5 KEY OPPORTUNITIES ACROSS EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT **TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION**

1

Implement football in schools as a multi-disciplinary approach aligning to the curriculums.

2

Build on the engagement in our competitions by growing the use of football in schools outside our competitions.

3

Provide teacher training which is recognized by the Department of Education for CPD & EPV training days.

4

Implement a research and innovation approach across 3rd level student football.

5

Evaluate the current 3rd Level games programmes to ensure inclusivity, diversity & accessibility for all students.

02. EDUCATION

THE STRATEGY: OUTCOMES & ACTIONS

VISION

A **life-long love of football** through an active and rewarding involvement in the game that **maximises our potential** on and off the pitch.

MISSIONS

- To incorporate football in all levels of education in Ireland.
- To develop an innovative approach to coach development through an individualized expertise approach.
- To develop an education and development pathway for referees.

FOCUS AREAS



FOOTBALL & FORMAL EDUCATION



FOOTBALL & EDUCATION PROGRAMME I.E. ETB'S, TY'S & FOOTBALL SCHOOLS



3RD LEVEL STUDENT FOOTBALL

HOW

1. Introduce Education into LOI Licensing from 2027.
2. Implement a Football Specific Transition Year programme aligned with Gaisce at Bronze, Silver & Gold.
3. Implement a Football Programme for the Junior & Senior Cycle.

1. Introduce Education into League of Ireland Licensing from 2026 and mandatory from 2027.
2. Grow the ETB programme through collaborations with the LOI clubs, providing education opportunities for all players from academy to first team.
3. Grow the TY Programme by collaborating with LOI Clubs as part of their education licensing requirements.

1. Evaluate the 3rd level student experience, games programme and governance to ensure to provide a modern, holistic & accessible opportunities through football.
2. Create a Research and Innovation collaboration with the FAI and 3rd level through football.
3. Develop collaborations between 3rd level institutions and LOI clubs to provide football & education.



02. EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

FOOTBALL & FORMAL EDUCATION

1. IMPLEMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING SUMMER COURSES WHICH ARE RECOGNISED FOR EPV DAYS

GOAL 1

Provide Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) training for teachers across the country by 2026.

GOAL 2

By 2030 have every school represented in attendance with one of their teachers completing the EPV training.

2. IMPLEMENT A FOOTBALL SPECIFIC TY PROGRAMME ALIGNED WITH GAISCE AT BRONZE, SILVER & GOLD

GOAL 1

Create an alignment with Gaisce through a TY through Football Award from 2025.

GOAL 2

Utilise the Gaisce Award across the Youth Development National Squads.

3. IMPLEMENT A FOOTBALL PROGRAMME FOR THE JUNIOR & SENIOR CYCLE

GOAL 1

Create a cross curricular junior and senior cycle football curriculum.

GOAL 2

Establish teacher leaders in the use of football as a method of achieving learning outcomes across multi-disciplines.

02. EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

FOOTBALL & EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCE EDUCATION INTO LOI LICENSING FROM 2025 AND MANDATORY FROM 2026

GOAL 1

Produce achievable targets for each LOI club during first and second years of LOI Licensing. Education requirement.

GOAL 2

Develop viable options for LOI players to continue educational journey while training as a professional footballer in Ireland.

2. GROW THE ETB PROGRAMME THROUGH COLLABORATIONS WITH THE LOI CLUBS

GOAL 1

Identify suitable LOI clubs to adopt the running of our programmes, and to develop their relationships with their local ETBs.

GOAL 2

Set out the quality control parameters for each LOI club to understand and implement the educational requirements for ETBs.

3. GROW THE TY PROGRAMME THROUGH COLLABORATIONS WITH LOI CLUBS

GOAL 1

Create full-time TY Programme in each LOI Club.

GOAL 2

Create Football Scholar Programme Apprenticeship/Traineeship option for LOI Clubs beginning in TY.





02. EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

3RD LEVEL STUDENT FOOTBALL

1. EVALUATE THE 3RD LEVEL GAMES PROGRAMME TO CREATE A MODERN, HOLISTIC, DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE & ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMME FOR ALL

GOAL 1

Review of 3rd Level Football current games programme.

GOAL 2

Identify the optimum games which is inclusive, accessible and available for all 3rd level students.

2. CREATE A RESEARCH AND INNOVATION APPROACH TO 3RD LEVEL THROUGH FOOTBALL

GOAL 1

Complete an internal analysis of research & innovation opportunities within football and through the FAI.

GOAL 2

Create a portfolio of research opportunities and develop a relationship with 3rd level institutions nationally to complete this research & innovation.

3. DEVELOP COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN 3RD LEVEL INSTITUTIONS & LOI CLUBS TO PROVIDE FOOTBALL & EDUCATION

GOAL 1

Build synergies between LOI clubs and 3rd level institutions to facilitate collaborations allowing for the successful implementation of education licensing requirements for LOI clubs.

GOAL 2

Develop a culture of micro learning amongst 1st team players to prepare for the future.



03

COACH DEVELOPMENT



EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2025 - 2030

03. COACH DEVELOPMENT

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Parents, volunteers and Grassroots coaches need more support. Too much focus on certification and qualifications.



9,000

Grassroots Coaches
in 2024



60

Grassroots
Coach Developers



10

Grassroots Courses
Per FAI Development
Officer



12

Average of 12
Coaches Per Course



50,000

Coaches
Safeguarded on our
system

KEY INSIGHT:

We need to provide parents, volunteers and coaches with direction, how we play and how we coach.

We need to have more focus on informal continuous development, in their club, in their context & environment.

Lots of qualified coaches,
but currently not enough jobs in our industry.

6

Full-Time National
Coach Developers

136

UEFA Pro Licence
Holders

94

Active Pro Licence
Holders

10

Pro Licence Holders
Required in LOI

3

Women with a UEFA
Pro Licence

15

UEFA Licence
Courses delivered in
2024

360

Coaches on UEFA
Licence Courses in
2024

20

UEFA A Licence
coaches Required
in LOI Women's &
Men's First Division

39%

Women on UEFA
Licence courses in
2024

8%

Overall Women to
Male Coaches at
UEFA Licence Level

KEY INSIGHT:

All of these coaches have been trained through the FAI Coach Development department but we now need to provide further development programmes for those we have already educated.



WE HAVE IDENTIFIED 5 KEY OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE THE VISION...

1

Provide more support to parents, volunteers and coaches at all levels of the game in their contexts.

2

Provide an individualised approach to coach development, placing the learner at the centre.

3

Utilise E-Learning as an accessible method for compliance, development & ease of access to learning.

4

Develop the coaches we have already educated, through individual development plans formally & informally.

5

Implement an expertise approach to coach development.

03. COACH DEVELOPMENT

THE STRATEGY: OUTCOMES & ACTIONS

VISION

A **life-long love of football** through an active and rewarding involvement in the game that **maximises our potential** on and off the pitch.

MISSIONS

- To incorporate football in all levels of education in Ireland.
- To develop an innovative approach to coach development through an individualized expertise approach.
- To develop an education and development pathway for referees.

FOCUS AREAS



**AGE & STAGE
APPROPRIATE
DEVELOPMENT**



**INDIVIDUALISED
APPROACH TO COACH
DEVELOPMENT**



**FORMAL, INFORMAL
& NONFORMAL
DEVELOPMENT**

HOW

1. Implement an ethos of play, early engagement and individual development.
2. Re-think and re-design the development experiences for everyone in the formal coach development pathway.
3. Introduce a new coach development website & app to serve as a one-stop tool, resource & support for every parent, volunteer & coach in Ireland.

1. Transition from coach education to coach development.
2. Implement an individualised approach to coach development, placing the learner at the centre of the learning experience.
3. Introduce a modern coach development eco-system across the pathway.

1. Introduce a new approach to formal coach development which focuses on developing expertise through an individualised approach across all levels.
2. Develop a mentorship approach to coach development at every level of the game.
3. Implement informal coach development across the game, at Grassroots through the head of football, at LOI through communities of practice.



03. COACH DEVELOPMENT

AGE & STAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

1. IMPLEMENT AN ETHOS OF PLAY, EARLY ENGAGEMENT AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1

Develop the ethos of play through new formal courses for parents and volunteers.

GOAL 2

Implement mandatory, optional and recommended continuous professional / personal development (CPD) through Club Mark tutor.

2. RE-THINK AND RE-DESIGN THE DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES FOR EVERYONE IN THE FORMAL COACH DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

GOAL 1

Transition from a competency-based approach to an expertise individualised approach to formal development.

GOAL 2

Develop an ethos and culture of life-long learning, ensuring the learners understand the importance of continuous development

3. INTRODUCE A NEW COACH DEV. WEBSITE & APP TO SERVE AS A ONE-STOP TOOL, RESOURCE & SUPPORT FOR EVERY PARENT, VOLUNTEER & COACH IN IRELAND

GOAL 1

Design, Develop and Deliver a new FAI Coach Development Website and App which is the go-to resource for coaches in Ireland.

GOAL 2

Provide Club Mark Tutors with support through e-learning modules, CPD and club-based coach development.

03. COACH DEVELOPMENT

INDIVIDUALISED APPROACH TO COACH DEVELOPMENT

1. TRANSITION FROM COACH EDUCATION TO COACH DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1

Launch new coach development pathway.

GOAL 2

Implement a new ethos of individual development with a greater focus on informal coach development.

2. IMPLEMENT AN INDIVIDUALISED APPROACH TO COACH DEVELOPMENT, PLACING THE LEARNER AT THE CENTRE OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

GOAL 1

Re-imagine the learning experiences for all throughout their formal coach development.

GOAL 2

Develop an ethos and culture of mentorship, supporting and nurturing the individual's development during and after formal coach development.

3. INTRODUCE A MODERN COACH DEVELOPMENT ECO-SYSTEM ACROSS THE PATHWAY

GOAL 1

Design, develop and deliver a new Grassroots coach development programme aligning with Me & My campaign.

GOAL 2

Provide a culture of communities of practice, alumni coaches at UEFA Licence level and targeted cohorts of CPD development programmes.





COACH DEVELOPMENT

03. COACH DEVELOPMENT

FORMAL, INFORMAL & NON-FORMAL COACH DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCE A NEW APPROACH TO FORMAL COACH DEVELOPMENT WHICH FOCUSES ON DEVELOPING EXPERTISE THROUGH AN INDIVIDUALISED APPROACH ACROSS ALL LEVELS

GOAL 1

Place the coach at the centre of their learning experience, providing them with an individualised development plan, within the overall course plan.

GOAL 2

Develop the coach in a formal environment, directly in relation to their context and environment.

2. DEVELOP A MENTORSHIP APPROACH TO COACH DEVELOPMENT AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE GAME

GOAL 1

Develop a culture of lifelong learning, providing student coaches with formal mentorship experiences and informal mentorship environments during their coach development.

GOAL 2

As part of their continuous professional development, ensure that every coach at every level is working with a mentor, ensuring they are nurtured, developed and supported throughout their coaching journey individual's development during and after formal coach development.

3. IMPLEMENT INFORMAL COACH DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE GAME, AT GRASSROOTS THROUGH THE HEAD OF FOOTBALL, AT LOI THROUGH COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

GOAL 1

Develop an ethos and culture of support for parent, volunteer and grassroots coaches through the Head of Football role, allowing for direct mentorship support within the club environment.

GOAL 2

Create a culture of sharing through communities of practice within Club Mark Clubs and the LOI Clubs allowing for networking, sharing and development and targeted cohorts of CPD development programmes.



04

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT



EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2025 - 2030

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04. REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

2024

1834
Active Registered Referees

101 (5.5%)
Active Female Referees

SEASON END FIGURES - FEMALE REFEREES

2022 - 73, 2023 - 79, 2024 - 112.

TOTAL REFEREES

2022 - 1611, 2023 - 1751, 2024 - 2028.

Referee Education is overseen by the National Referees Committee who have governance of all refereeing matters in line with the UEFA Referee Convention.

REFEREE RETENTION

We are training lots of referees, but the challenge we face is football's overall growth & referee growth is not aligned. Retention Rates are:

36% - 2019

71% - 2024

NEW REFEREES TRAINED

2022 - 593, 2023 - 689, 2024 - 899.

KEY INSIGHT

The growth of the game is not aligned with the growth of referee recruitment, this must change for the future of the game.



WE HAVE IDENTIFIED 5 KEY OPPORTUNITIES TO ACHIEVE OUR VISION...

1

Increase the number of women referees through a targeted approach to their development.

2

Provide enhanced support, development and learning opportunities across the development pathway.

3

Create a referee department ensuring we maximize our potential and expertise in referee development.

4

Increase support for new and existing referees through individual development plans and learning opportunities.

5

Implement a referee facilitator role for U7-U12's.

04. REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

THE STRATEGY: OUTCOMES & ACTIONS

VISION

A **life-long love of football** through an active and rewarding involvement in the game that **maximises our potential** on and off the field.

MISSIONS

- To incorporate football in all levels of education in Ireland.
- To develop an innovative approach to coach development through an individualized expertise approach.
- To develop an education and development pathway for referees.

FOCUS AREAS



CREATE A REFEREE FACILITATOR ROLE FOR U7 – U12



INCREASE & RETAIN THE NUMBER OF REFEREES IN THE GAME



FURTHER DEVELOP THE REFEREE EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

HOW

1. Introduce a new approach to game management at the entry levels of child development within the pathway.
2. Provide a more holistic engagement between player, parent & game facilitator to ensure players build a positive relationship with the referee from U7-12.
3. Introduce Formal referees from U-13 onwards.

1. Design and deliver a referee development plan 2026-2030.
2. Introduce and grow a referee department to be able to nurture, develop and increase the number of referees in the game.
3. Create a targeted approach to Women's Referee Development, increasing the number of women refereeing in the game.

1. Further develop the LOI academy referee development programme
2. Introduce a targeted approach to high-potential referee's providing a clear pathway & progression plan.
3. Create a clear, concise and transparent education & development pathway for refereeing.



04. REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

CREATE A REFEREE FACILITATOR ROLE FOR U7 – U12

1. INTRODUCE A NEW APPROACH TO GAME MANAGEMENT AT THE ENTRY LEVELS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE PATHWAY

GOAL 1

Create a campaign for all players, parents and coaches starting their football journey, ensuring to implement the ethos of respect throughout their first experiences.

GOAL 2

Create a culture of best practice, where clubs and leagues are recognised for their positive engagement and positive experiences at the entry levels of football.

2. PROVIDE A MORE HOLISTIC ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN PLAYER, PARENT & GAME FACILITATOR TO ENSURE PLAYERS BUILD A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REFEREE

GOAL 1

Design and develop a 'Respect' training module focusing on establishing and reinforcing positive behaviours between player/parent/referees.

GOAL 2

Further develop the 'Respect' training making it mandatory for all clubs to deliver.

3. INTRODUCE FORMAL REFEREES FROM U-13 ONWARDS

GOAL 1

Design, develop and implement a new referee facilitator role to be utilized across football from U7 – U12.

GOAL 2

Provide a means for match facilitators to become referees.

04. REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

INCREASE & RETAIN THE NUMBER OF REFEREES IN THE GAME

1. DESIGN AND DELIVER A REFEREE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2026 – 2030

GOAL 1

Develop a Referee Development Plan which sets out the strategy to recruit, retain, develop and educate our referees from 2026 – 2030.

GOAL 2

Create a culture of best practice, where clubs and leagues are recognised for their
Develop a Referee Development Plan which sets out the strategy to recruit, retain, develop and educate our referees from 2026 – 2030.

2. INTRODUCE AND GROW A REFEREE DEPARTMENT TO BE ABLE TO NURTURE, DEVELOP AND INCREASE THE NUMBER OF REFEREES IN THE GAME

GOAL 1

Introduce a dedicated referee department focused on educating, developing and managing referees.

GOAL 2

Grow the department to meet the increasing needs of refereeing in Ireland.

3. CREATE A TARGETED APPROACH TO WOMEN'S REFEREE DEVELOPMENT, INCREASING THE NUMBER OF WOMEN REFEREEING IN THE GAME

GOAL 1

Develop a women's referee development plan to help with recruitment and retention of female officials.

GOAL 2

Provide increased support to female officials in the game.





04. REFEREE DEVELOPMENT

FURTHER DEVELOP THE REFEREE EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1. FURTHER DEVELOP THE LOI ACADEMY REFEREE

GOAL 1

Mentor, nurture, develop and support high potential referees while providing them with feedback, guidance and support in preparing them to reach the highest levels of the game.

GOAL 2

Further develop the use of Academy Referees as a dedicated panel for LOI Academy Football.

2. INTRODUCE A TARGETED APPROACH TO HIGH-POTENTIAL REFEREES PROVIDING A CLEAR PATHWAY & PROGRESSION PLAN

GOAL 1

Continue to develop and progress referees through the Centre of Refereeing Excellence to operate at the highest levels of the game.

GOAL 2

Increase the number of opportunities for CORE referees to progress through the pathway.

3. CREATE A CLEAR, CONCISE AND TRANSPARENT EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY FOR REFEREEING

GOAL 1

Develop a pathway which clearly identifies the steps towards the role of the referee as a football career.

GOAL 2

Through clear and transparent pathways, encourage more people to become a referee and to provide individual development plans for referees currently in the pathway.

OVERVIEW

NINE FOCUS AREAS

EDUCATION

FOOTBALL & FORMAL EDUCATION

1. Implement Primary School Teacher Training Summer Courses which are recognised for Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days.
2. Implement a Football Specific TY programme aligned with Gaisce at Bronze, Silver & Gold.
3. Implement a Football Programme for the Junior & Senior Cycle.

FOOTBALL & EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1. Introduce Education into LOI Licensing from 2027.
2. Grow the ETB programme through collaborations with the LOI clubs, providing education opportunities for all players from academy to 1st team.
3. Grow the TY Programme by collaborating with LOI Clubs as part of their education licensing requirements.

FOOTBALL & EDUCATION PROGRAMME

1. Evaluate the 3rd level student experience, games programme and governance to ensure to provide a modern, holistic & accessible opportunities through football.
2. Create a Research and Innovation collaboration with the FAI and 3rd level through football.
3. Develop collaborations between 3rd level institutions and LOI clubs to provide football & education.

COACH

AGE & STAGE APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

1. Implement an ethos of play, early engagement and individual development.
2. Re-think and re-design the development experiences for everyone in the formal coach development pathway.
3. Introduce a new coach development website & app to serve as a one-stop tool, resource & support for every parent, volunteer & coach in Ireland.

INDIVIDUALISED APPROACH TO COACH DEVELOPMENT

1. Transition from coach education to coach development.
2. Implement an individualised approach to coach development, placing the learner at the centre of the learning experience.
3. Introduce a modern coach development eco-system across the pathway.

FORMAL, INFORMAL & NON-FORMAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Introduce a new approach to formal coach development which focuses on developing expertise through an individualised approach across all levels.
2. Develop a mentorship approach to coach development at every level of the game.
3. Implement informal coach development across the game, at Grassroots through the Head of Football, at LOI through Communities of Practice.

REFEREES

CREATE A REFEREE FACILITATOR ROLE FOR U7 – U12

1. Introduce a new approach to game management at the entry levels of child development within the pathway.
2. Provide a more holistic engagement between player, parent & game facilitator to ensure players build a positive relationship with the referee from U7-12.
3. Introduce Formal referees from u-13 onwards.

INCREASE & RETAIN THE NUMBER OF REFEREES IN THE GAME

1. Design and deliver a Referee Development Plan 2026 -2030 .
2. Introduce and grow a referee department to be able to nurture, develop and increase the number of referees in the game.
3. Create a targeted approach to Women's Referee Development, increasing the number of women refereeing in the game.

FURTHER DEVELOP THE REFEREE EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

1. Further develop the LOI academy referee development programme.
2. Introduce a targeted approach to high-potential referees providing a clear pathway & progression plan.
3. Create a clear, concise and transparent education & development pathway for refereeing.





05 THE FUTURE

AND HOW WE'RE GOING TO GET THERE



EDUCATION &
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
2025 - 2030

05. THE FUTURE

STRATEGY: EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

VISION

A **life-long love of football** through an active and rewarding involvement in the game that **maximises our potential** on and off the pitch.

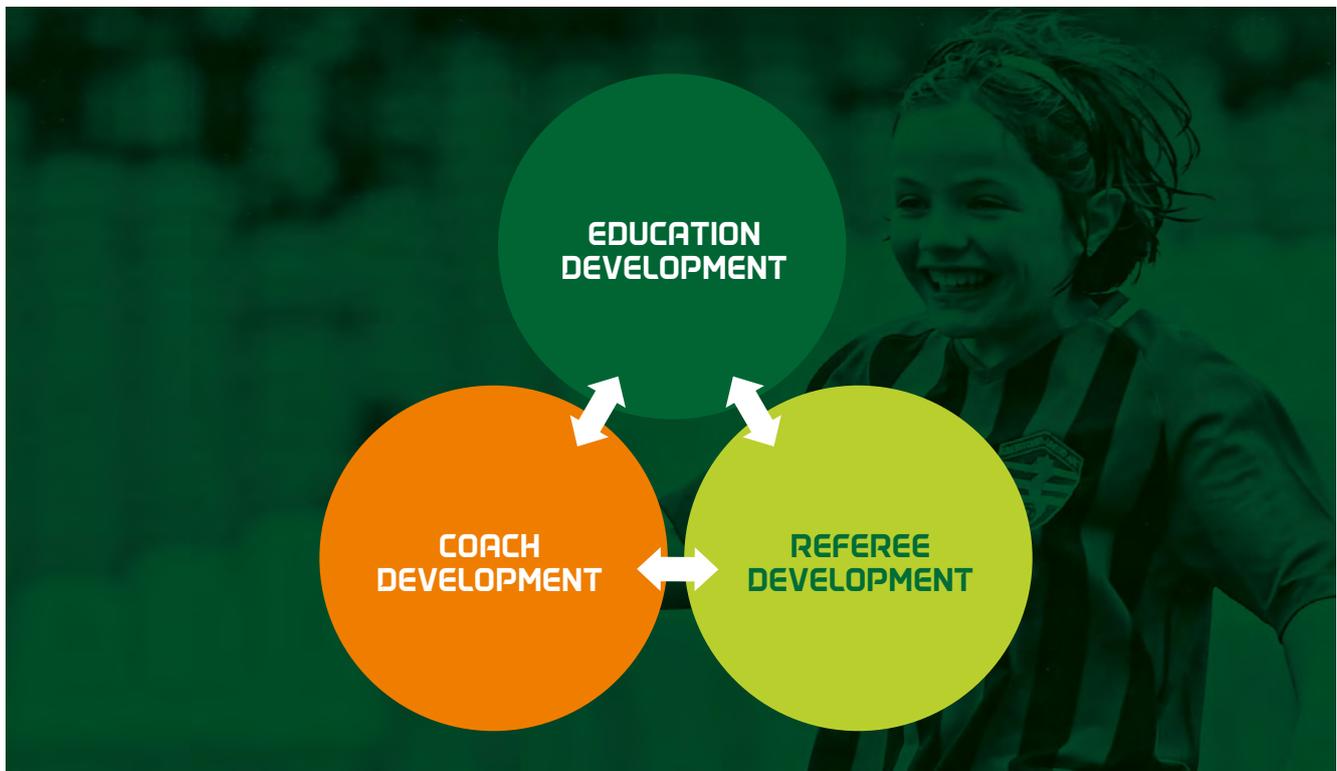
MISSIONS

- To incorporate football in all levels of education in Ireland.
- To develop an innovative approach to coach development through an individualized expertise approach.
- To develop an education and development pathway for referees.

WE HAVE IDENTIFIED 5 KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Everything delivered in the 'Education & Development Strategy' will be done to create a modernized approach to education and development igniting a curiosity for learning through, in and from the game of football.

OUTCOMES OF EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2025 - 2030



05. THE FUTURE

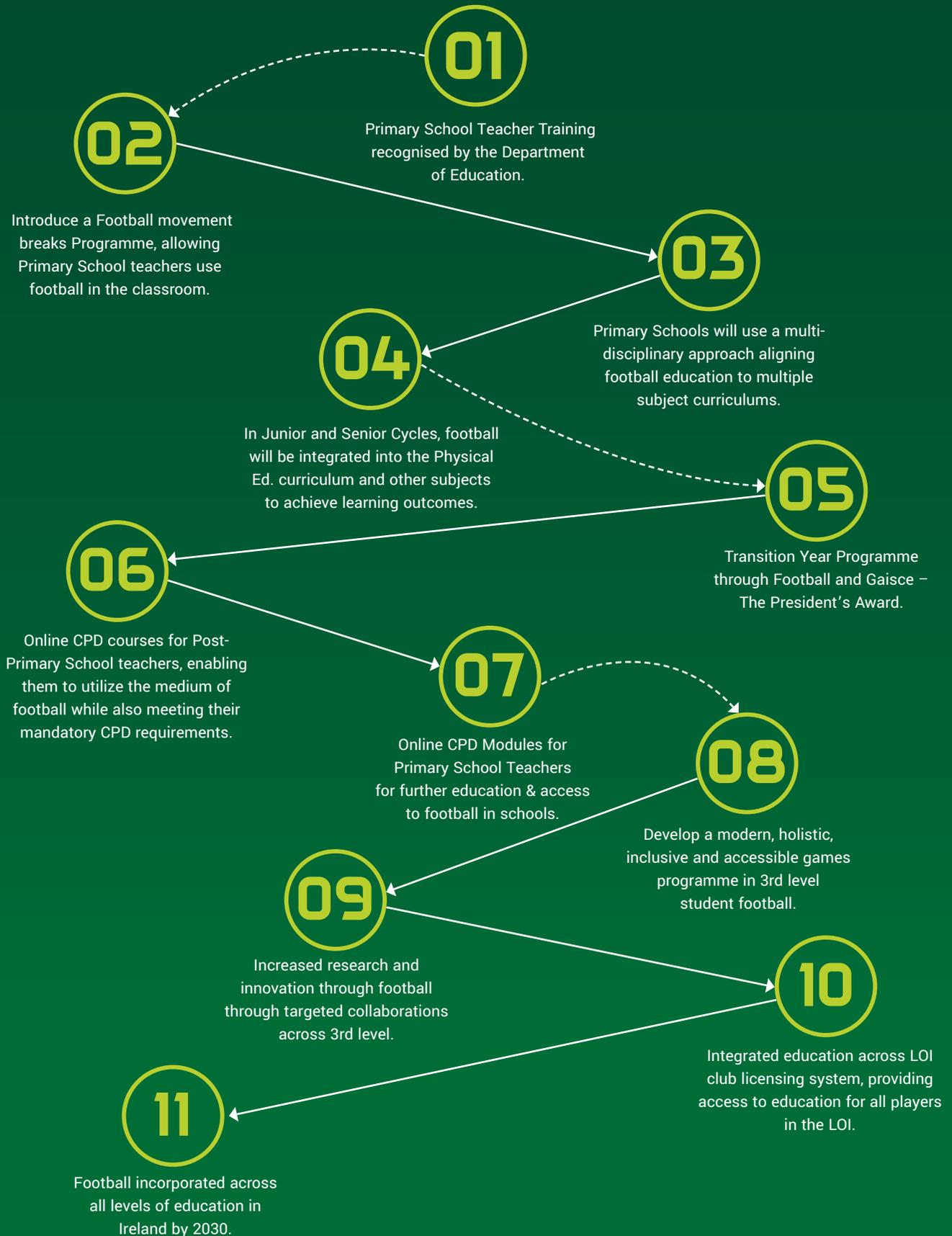
CREATING A BETTER GAME FOR THE FUTURE OF IRISH FOOTBALL...



**“Where there is Football there is Education
& where there is Education there is Football”**

05. THE FUTURE

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES



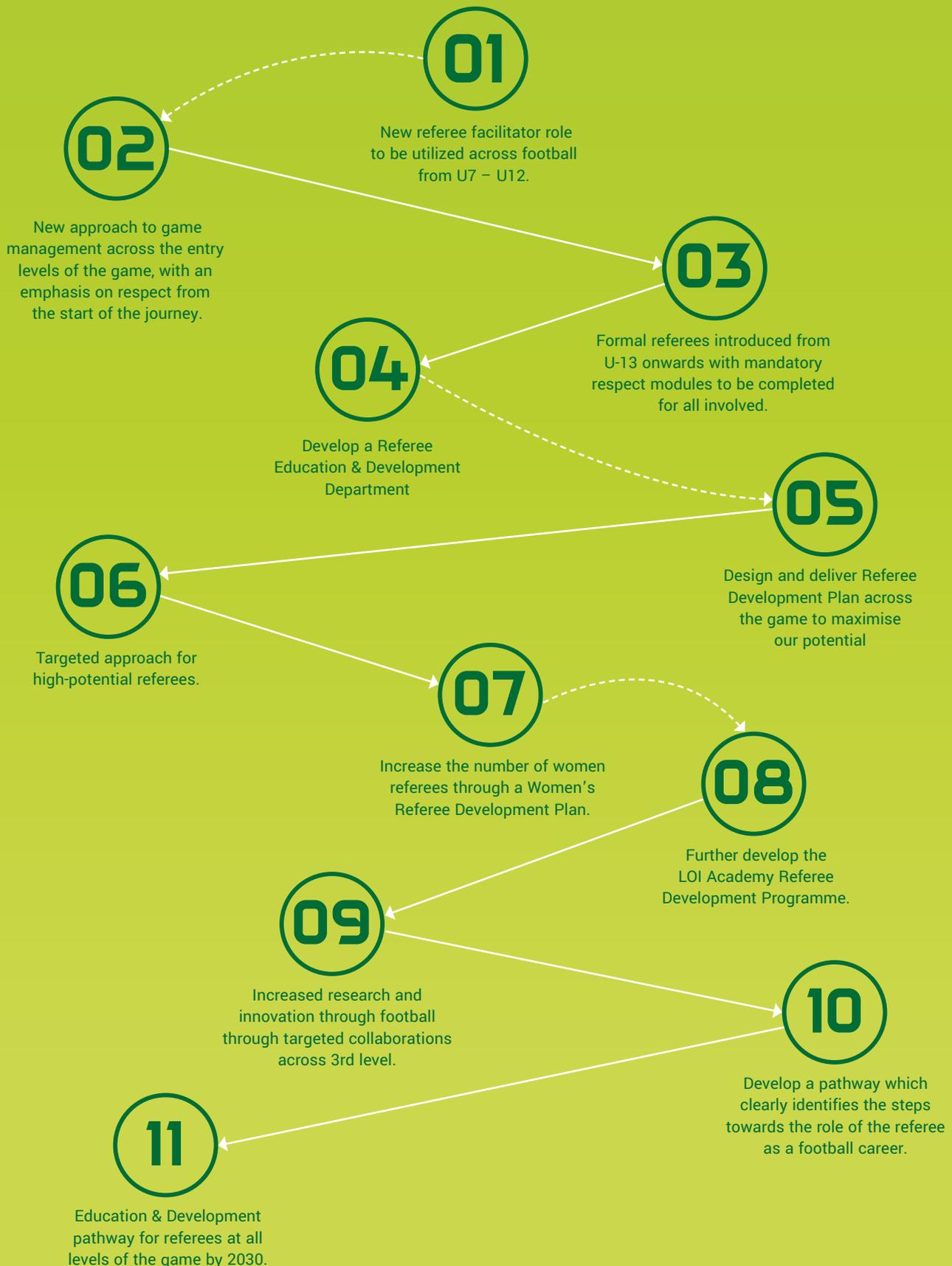
05. THE FUTURE

COACH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES



05. THE FUTURE

REFEREE DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES





VISION...

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there is Education**

**& where there is Education
there is Football**



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