



# COACH ASSISTANT AWARD

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## Planning Skills Module

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# Planning Skills Module

## Welcome to the Planning Skills Module

As a Coach Assistant, having an understanding of planning will help you become more effective in supporting the coach during sessions. Planning ensures that drills and exercises are structured, purposeful, and run smoothly, helping players improve in an organised and progressive way.

This module will teach you how to assist with planning by understanding session structures, recognising how drills progress, and preparing for the next steps in a session. While you are not expected to plan full sessions, having knowledge of how sessions are structured will make you a better assistant and allow you to contribute more effectively. By developing planning skills, you will be able to anticipate what the coach needs, assist with session organisation, and support players in a structured way.

## What you will learn

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

- \* Understand the basic structure of a coaching session.
- \* Recognise the difference between proactive planning (structured sessions) and reactive planning (adjusting based on player needs).
- \* Assist in preparing equipment and drills in advance.
- \* Identify how drills progress within a session.
- \* Support the coach by ensuring smooth transitions between activities.



## Before the session

Before assisting in a session, make sure you:

- \* Read this Planning Skills module in your Student Training Card.
- \* Observe how the coach structures the session from start to finish.
- \* Ask the coach about the session plan and any specific areas where they need assistance.
- \* Ensure equipment (balls, cones, baskets) is set up and ready before the session begins.

# Key Skills

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## Understanding Session Structure

**Most sessions follow a structure like this:**

- **Warm-Up:** Light movement exercises to prepare players physically and mentally.
  - **Technical Drills:** Focused practice on a specific skill (e.g., volleys, serves, footwork).
  - **Tactical Drills:** Applying skills in game-like situations.
  - **Match Play or Games:** Players practice skills in real match or other points scoring conditions.
  - **Cool Down:** Light stretching or debrief at the end of the session (often not adopted in junior sessions).
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## Proactive vs. Reactive Planning

- **Proactive Planning:** The coach prepares a full session plan in advance with set drills and progressions.
  - **Reactive Planning:** The coach adjusts the session based on how players are performing (e.g., making a drill easier or harder depending on player needs).
  - **Your Role:** Help the coach stick to the plan while being flexible when adjustments are needed.
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## Preparing Equipment & Setting Up Drills

- **Ensure balls, cones, baskets, and other materials are in place before drills start.**
  - **Check that the court is safe and ready for play.**
  - **Be prepared to move or adjust equipment quickly between drills.**
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## Understanding Drill Progressions

- **Drills usually start simple and become more advanced as players improve.**
  - **Be aware of how drills are structured so you can assist in making adjustments.**
  - **Support the coach by keeping players on task and ensuring drills flow smoothly.**
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## Helping with Session Flow & Transitions

- **Be aware of time management**
  - **keep an eye on when drills need to change.**
  - **Help players move efficiently between drills.**
  - **Assist in keeping the group organised so sessions run without disruption.**
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## Practical Task: Your Role in Delivery

During the next session, you will:

- 1) Assist in setting up a drill / exercise before it starts (it may be a totally different time to the session).
- 2) Help ensure players transition smoothly between drills.
- 3) Observe how the coach adjusts drills based on player performance.
- 4) Recognise whether the session follows proactive, reactive planning or a combination of both.
- 5) Ensure all equipment is ready and in the correct place before each new activity.

## After the Session: Reflect and Improve

At the end of the session, take time to:

- 1) Discuss with the coach how the session plan worked.
- 2) Reflect on whether you were able to anticipate session needs effectively.
- 3) Identify one area of planning you can improve for the next session.
- 4) Get feedback from the coach and make sure they log your progress in the Student Training Card.

## How You Pass This Module

- You ensure smooth transitions between different parts of the session.
- You recognise whether the session follows proactive or reactive planning.
- You help manage equipment and session structure effectively.
- The coach signs off your Planning Skills module in your Student Training Card.

## Final Thoughts

Understanding planning makes you a more effective Coach Assistant. While you may not be designing sessions yourself, having awareness of how sessions are structured allows you to support the coach more effectively, anticipate needs, and ensure everything runs smoothly.

By developing planning skills, you will contribute to well-organised, professional coaching sessions, helping both the coach and players to have a more positive experience.

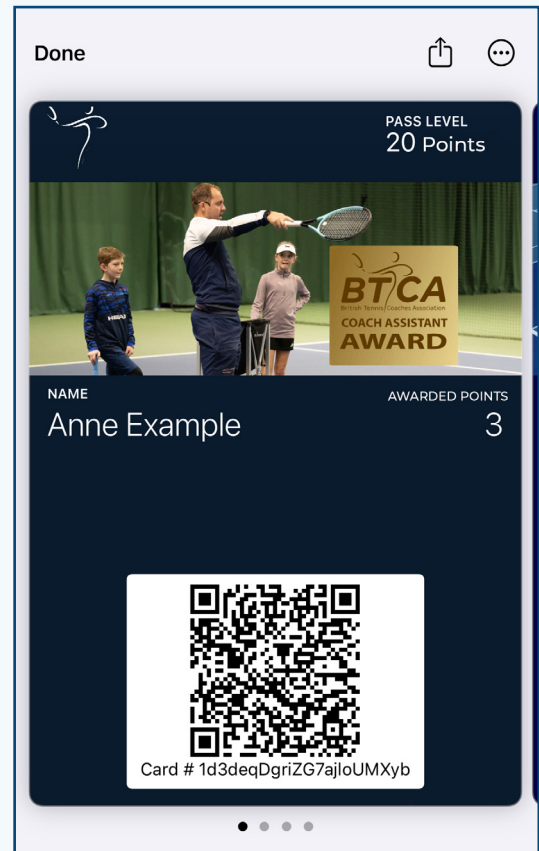
You're one step closer to becoming an excellent Coach Assistant!

# STUDENT TRAINING CARD

Your Student Training Card is a key component of the course, please ensure it is downloaded to the Wallet app of your phone (your coach can assist you if you're unsure how to do this).

Be sure to have your phone and your digital card available to be scanned at the end of each session. If you forget your phone, or your digital card is unavailable in the Wallet app of your phone, the coach can still sign off your volunteer hour attendance and any completed modules via their BTCA Dashboard, but it is an additional administration process for them, so having your digital Student Training Card available at the end of each session is important.

You will receive at least one point for each volunteer hour you undertake and a point for each module passed. When you have reached 20 points, you will have passed the course and your coach/mentor will pass on your certificate to you.



## A Summary Reminder

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Have your phone and digital Student Training Card available to be scanned at the end of each session (there'll be at least one point you gain from the volunteer hour). Don't be disheartened if the module isn't signed off at the end of the session as some modules are assessed over a number of weeks.

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Be sure to ask your coach for any feedback related to the session and ask what the module focus is for the following week.





  
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British Tennis Coaches Association  
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