



SCCR ROUTESETTERS EDUCATION MODEL

created within the project

“European system for training of sport climbing coaches and route setters”

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SCCR Routesetters Education Model Vision:

To encourage the development and professionalism of routesetting to maximise the progression of sport climbing, while safeguarding the environment the athletes and setters are working within.

SCCR Routesetters Education Model Mission:

Design and implement an education system for routesetters at all levels, which functions within the framework of the IFSC Routesetter qualification pathway.

Key Objectives:

- Design and define a training system
- Create training programmes for key actors within this system
- Pilot the training programme
- Realise dissemination activities expanding the platform and engaging other associations into the system
- Develop a learning management system for the whole training system and international platform

SCCR Routesetters Education Model Background:

IFSC

According to IFSC Strategic Plan 2020, their aim is to:

2.3.2. Develop training camps for climbers, paraclimbers, routesetters, para-routesetters, and coaches in cooperation with the Continental Councils and NFs;

2.3.3. Create materials and training opportunities specific for coaches and officials, from national, to continental, to international level;

The IFSC is the world governing body for all aspects of Sport Climbing, especially international competition climbing, leisure and recreational climbing, and climbing as a sport for all. However, the IFSC is a sport organisation and as such, their goals are around competitive sport and performance.

The IFSC 2020-2028 Strategic Plan includes goals specific to the delivery of high standard programmes to educate routesetters at all levels. Key targets include developing training camps for routesetters and para-routesetters in cooperation with the Continental Councils and NFs; creating materials and training opportunities specific for officials, from national, to continental, to international level; and to create the IFSC Academy in the



most sustainable way. Therefore, the education model will be focussed on routesetter education for competitive climbing.

During 2023 the IFSC has developed their educational models around officials, athletes' health, routesetters and coaches, in collaboration with and in parallel with the SCCR project, in order to have a sustainable pathway forward at the completion of the SCCR project. Specific to the routesetters pathway, was an entire overhaul of the lists of IFSC Routesetters and implementation of a new multi-level and objectively fair system of selection and accreditation aimed at supporting the education path and career progression of IFSC Routesetters.

Applications for inclusion in the new level system was opened at the end of 2023, where NF's were invited to submit applications to have two routesetters considered newly named level 1 -3.

- Level 1 (previously called Continental Routesetter / Diversity Programme / Exchange Programme)
- Level 2 (previously called Continental Chief Routesetter)
- Level 3 (previously called IFSC Junior Routesetter / IFSC Routesetter)
- Level 4 (previously called IFSC Chief Routesetter)

Education and experience levels of all existing and new routesetters are being assessed to guide the development of the education system.

IFSC Routesetters Commission

The IFSC has a Routesetters Commission selected from nominated routesetters from the IFSC routesetters list. One of the roles of the commission is to ensure the continued development of a progressive, fair and safe field of play and competitive environment for the athletes. Education of routesetters is not in their mandate per se, but supporting (and perhaps requiring) diversity and growth through increasing the pool of qualified routesetters at the international level is crucial to providing an appropriate competitive environment.



Collaborative model

Therefore, a collaboration between the IFSC, IFSC Routesetters Commission and SCCR on the development of an EU and eventually International routesetter education pathway that is accessible, appropriate and sustainable is logical.

The proposal involves five stages:

- The development of the education model by SCCR (2021)
- Approval by IFSC
- Development of content by SCCR and approval by IFSC (2022)
- Pilot of one of the courses in 2023
- Adoption by IFSC as part of the routesetter pathway.

Education model structure considerations

The education model must be structured in a way that it serves both the IFSC strategic plan and values, but also provides a valuable and complementary education opportunity for national federations.

National Federations generally have an education system ranging between two extremes. These are usually tightly linked to certification for setting at national level events.

More advanced NF's have clear sequential level systems ranging from e-learning resources, and basic - advanced clinics for commercial or competition setting. These multi-level systems are based off apprenticeships at events, and to attain the highest levels the routesetter must be proficient at the head-routesetter role at the national level. The USA Climbing Setting Levels Programme is the current example of best practice. Many under-developed NF's have limited or no education system, where routesetters for national competitions are selected by experience or subjective abilities. In many cases, the locally available setters are simply not skilled enough and international setters are hired. Since the level of the athlete and the skill of the routesetters is so tightly linked, raising the quality of the routes through educated routesetters is critical for the development of the athletes.

Upon discussion with the Routesetters Commission, it is clear that there is a need for an education pathway for federations that have no system, as well as a continued education pathway for those with very well developed systems. Moreover, as routesetting is a highly skilled and creative process, that is developed through experience, there is a great need for a way to harness the knowledge from the experienced and retiring routesetters.

Safety is a large component in competition routesetting. Considerations in terms of the route/problem and risk for injury, risk analysis and management working at heights on ropes, ladder or mechanical lifts, during the



event, rigging and fixation systems, as well as occupational health. Currently, the industry has no clear certification or accreditation system.

During the SCCR project, an American initiative by Climbing Wall Association, produced a routesetting curriculum that was a collaboration between international routesetters. The guide was reviewed by a panel of international level routesetters. At the same time, a separate group of international routesetters were working on a commercialised career pathway.

Trying to create a credible education pathway within the small community of highly experienced routesetters who were already in workgroups tackling this issue was challenging. Therefore, the proposed model focusses on a base level for national federations and an IFSC 'excellence' programme for 'teaching the teachers' and harnessing the experience from retiring setters. The formulation of these courses was contingent upon the completion of the selection pathway by the IFSC, necessitating a sequential approach. The framework was crafted in conjunction with the IFSC to align with the envisaged accreditation and selection process. However, syllabus development (specifically the Excellence level) and implementation was deferred pending the finalization of the new accreditation system. It is envisaged that once routesetters have been accepted and classified in the new level accreditation system, additional educations will be developed and offered to progress setters between the levels. This process, along with the deeper development of the Excellence-level programme will occur once the selection process highlights what is needed.

Proposed model

The proposed model consists of two courses:

NF programme – 'Base level' – An open-entry course/clinic aimed at educating routesetters on responsible and effective competition routesetting. Suitable for aspiring competition routesetters from federations without a developed system.

IFSC programme – 'Excellence level' – An open-entry course aimed at providing continued education of routesetters working at the highest national level, continental or international level with the aim of being on the IFSC accredited list of level 4 routesetters. This programme develops teachers for the NF base programme.



The course structure is summarised in the figure below.





Roles:

Project Manager: Šimon Budský, management of the project in terms of the E+ Erasmus rules, proposal, requests of the partners and is responsible for project budget, time, fulfilling the outputs/indicators.

Content Guarantor: Emma Hawke, management and direction of the work groups in terms of the quality of the outputs, consistency and interconnection between the courses, communication with IFSC and IFSC Coaches Commission.

Steering Committee: Members from IFSC, project partner federations, project manager. Role is to oversee the progress of the project, give direction to the project, oversee budget, solve problems between partners or IFSC.

WG Business Model: Project manager, content guarantor, IFSC. Role is to create a model of how the education programmes and MS will work sustainably after the end of the project.

Partner's Administration: Administer all requirements stated by the project, grant contract, Erasmus+ sport rules.

Key Stakeholder platform: Ensure that the education and training of coaches and routesetters are in line with IFSC structure and coaches' and routesetters' career path, support the quality of the system and the outputs. Since the grant was approved, IFSC has appointed members of SCCR in key positions on the IFSC Coaches Commission (Emma Hawke – Vice Chair) and the IFSC Routesetters Commission (Adam Pustelnik – Vice Chair, Jan Zbranek – Member).

Working groups: Discuss and creatively develop and realise the structure and content of the educational programmes. Each work group will have a leader and 4-5 experts. There is a workgroup for each course, i.e. routesetting and each coaching-related course, as well as for the Learning Management System.

Candidate: Anyone in the process of doing one of the courses.

National Federations: National sporting organisation responsible for the administration and regulation of Sport Climbing at the national level.

Certification process:

SCCR aims to increase the educational level of routesetters. However, it is important to note that candidates should not assume that their certification is guaranteed upon attending a course. While some courses may distribute a certificate of attendance, in the course selected for the SCCR pilot programme, IFSC will only designate a candidate certified after an assessment process. This is not a certificate of competency as a routesetter, rather a certificate of participation in the course. The certification structure is designed to work as an 'added value' for routesetters and to supplement National Federation routesetter certification systems, and at the same time, provide for those National Federations without developed education programmes.



Courses:

NF programme – Base level

This course is intended to train routesetters in the craft and technical design skill of competition routesetting, mainly at national level. It is not aimed at commercial routesetters. The syllabus encompasses modules covering competition setting basics – kinematics in relation to routesetting and trends; role of the setter and setter management, career path development; route management – logistics and product management; safety and risk mitigation. This course will be delivered in a flexible format, allowing for either a comprehensive 3-4 day session culminating in route setting for an event, or a shorter clinic tailored to accommodate the specific requirements and constraints of the national federation.

Initially, these courses will encompass comprehensive safety and risk mitigation modules. However, with the eventual establishment and implementation of an industry-standard certification process, the inclusion of these modules will become redundant, as aspiring candidates will already be mandated to possess certification for routesetting.

Must have certificates in First Aid & CPR, minimum of 6 months commercial routesetting experience, ability to set routes on a rope and boulders via a ladder, ability to forerun 7a+ /V4. In the future, the safety-related aspect will be integrated with any formal accreditation process, should such a framework be established.

This course will be aligned to the entry point of the current IFSC mentoring/exchange initiative where emerging routesetters are invited to assist at international events alongside more experienced routesetters to engage in dynamic knowledge and experience exchange.

Because of the ongoing development phase of the IFSC routesetter selection system during the SCCR project, this base level program was chosen to be conducted as a clinic rather than the excellence level program. The clinic was conducted for the Greek national federation, addressing a significant demand for the exchange of fundamental competition routesetting knowledge.

IFSC programme – Excellence level

This programme is intended to provide continued education of routesetters aiming for IFSC accreditation as level 3-4 routesetters. The theoretical modules will be delivered early in the programme and followed by a period of practical experience over the competition season(s) with regular check-ins, mentoring and reflective sessions. The duration of the practical experience period will be in line with the new level system accreditation process. The theoretical modules will be scheduled to enable co-reading of relevant sessions with the Coaching Level 4 course. This program develops educators for the NF base program by providing an additional course in didactic skills tailored for routesetters. This offering is extended to routesetters aspiring to facilitate the base program at the National Federation level. The syllabus will include modules relevant to the head routesetter job description such as personal and media communication skills, team management and leadership; advanced competition routesetting – route management and work flows specific to IFSC World Champs, World Cups and Olympic



games, role in evolution of competitive climbing, routesetting ethics and athlete safeguarding; sustainability of routesetters health and wellbeing (overuse injury prevention, training and recovery principles); maintaining the setters 'self'(creativity and individuality, kinematics component). The setting didactics module will include approaches to teaching routesetting, role as a routesetter educator, communication skills in education, lesson and course planning, inclusion and equity. Detailed syllabus for this programme will be developed once the selection and accreditation system has been finalised.

Must have certificates in First Aid & CPR, must be nominated and verified by NF to participate, verified head routesetter for a specified number of national events (number to be aligned with the IFSC selection criteria), level routesetter at a specified number of continental international events (number to be aligned with the IFSC selection criteria), fore-running ability to be aligned with the IFSC selection criteria.