



THE KAIRON ACADEMY METHOD

**Individual development.
Connected to the game.**

How we turn a player's development need into purposeful practice, clear feedback and a next step.

01

UNDERSTAND

02

DESIGN & COACH

03

REVIEW & ADAPT

Spanish football roots.

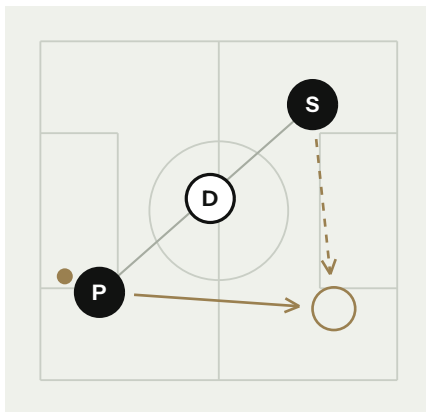
A field guide for players, coaches and programme partners.

A CLEAR PURPOSE

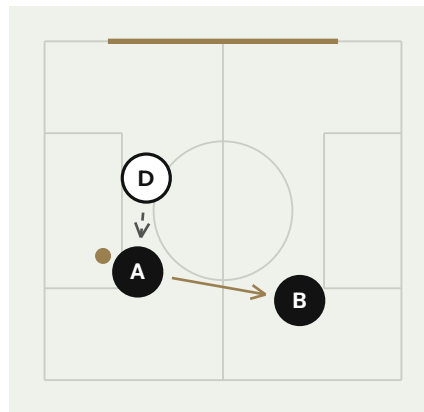
Individual attention. Football that stays connected.

KAIRON Academy is an independent player-development project with Spanish football roots, being developed for French-speaking Switzerland. The method starts with a player's needs and keeps practice connected to their game.

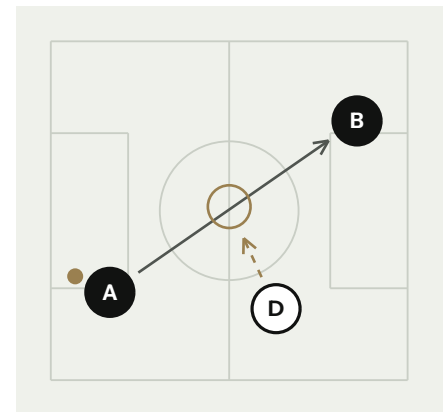
OFFER SUPPORT



USE A 2v1



SCREEN A PASSING LANE



P/A: ball carrier / S/B: support / D: defender. Filled: attackers; outline: defender.

Dark solid: passing lane / Dark dashed: pressure / Gold solid: possible pass / Gold dashed: movement

Gold dot: ball / Gold ring: possible position / Gold end line: attack direction. Schematics, not to scale.

One player.

A priority drawn from their own football, not a label applied to a whole group.

Real football.

Team-mates, opponents and more than one useful way to solve the situation.

A next step.

A clear observation and a focus the player and family can understand.

THE PLAYER KEEPS THEIR CLUB AND SCHOOL TEAM

Focused development alongside their existing football.

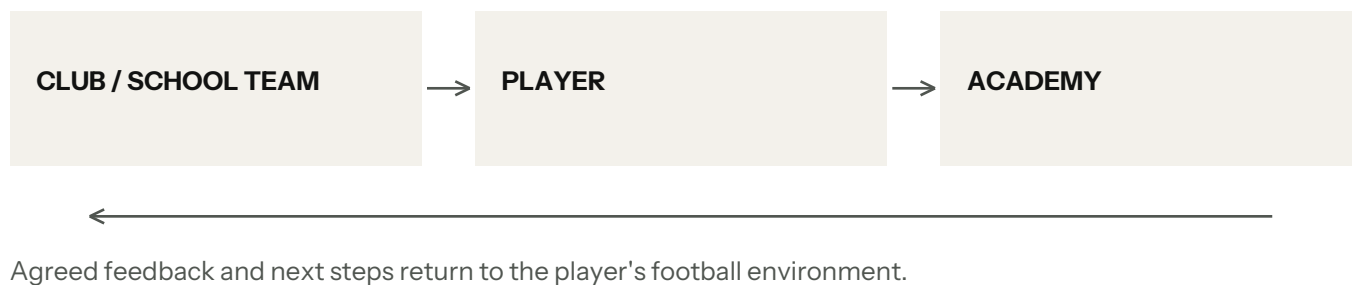
The guide describes our method and intended delivery standard. Dates, staffing, venue access and programme terms are agreed separately.



ALONGSIDE THE PLAYER'S CLUB

Add focused time. Respect the existing programme.

A player's club and school team provide relationships, team responsibilities and competition. Academy aims to add focused practice that fits that environment, rather than replace it.

**Start with context**

Consider the player's role, training and match schedule, their own priorities and relevant wellbeing information.

Coordinate where agreed

With the family's agreement, a coach can contribute a priority and receive a concise development summary. Their participation is optional, not a condition for every player.

Agree the fit

Where a school already offers football development, objectives, content, eligibility and timetable need review before an activity is accepted.

Hiring a pitch does not establish a school partnership, permission to recruit its pupils or approval to use its name. See 'Working with a host' and 'Collaboration options' for the different arrangements.



SPANISH FOOTBALL ROOTS

A way of reading football. Shaped around the player.

The approach draws on the founder's experience as a player and coach in Spain. That experience informs how we read situations and design practice. The player's club context remains the reference for their role.

RELATIONSHIPS

An action has meaning through team-mates, opponents and the options they create.

ORIENTATION

Body position and information gathered before receiving affect the next action.

SPACE AND TIME

Distance, angle and timing shape what can be reached, protected or made available.

ADVANTAGE

Support, movement and the ball can create or preserve a useful advantage.

INTENTION

Ask what the player is trying to achieve, not only how the movement looks.

ADAPTATION

Change a relevant condition so the player must read and solve the situation again.

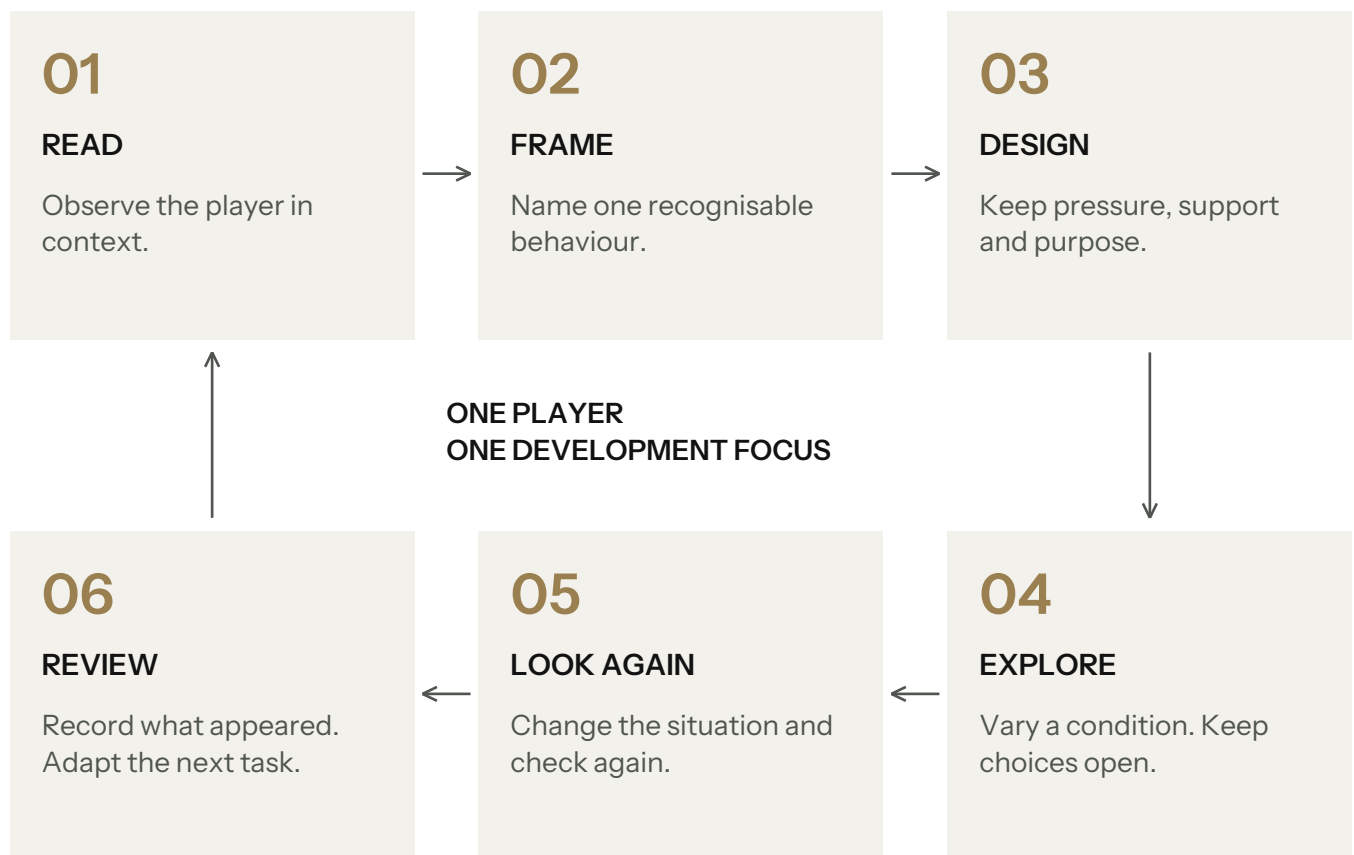
Spanish roots shape the approach, not a tactical system imposed on the player's team. Prior coaching experience is distinct from evidence of KAIRON programme outcomes.



THE METHOD

One development focus. A consistent coaching process.

The process stays recognisable while the football changes. A coach observes the player, designs relevant opportunities and checks what reappears when the situation changes.



THE PROCESS REPEATS. THE TASK DOES NOT HAVE TO.

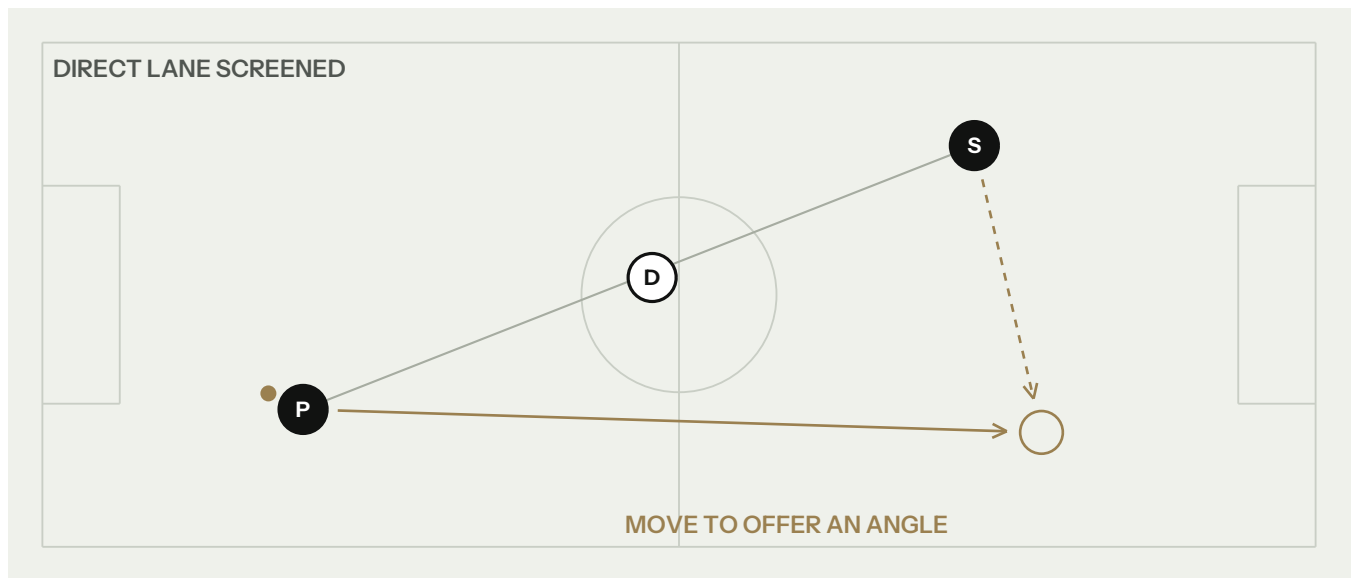
The next observation determines what we keep, change or revisit.

A successful exercise is not enough to establish progress in matches. A changed practice task is one check; observations from the player's wider game are separate evidence.

AN OBSERVABLE PRIORITY

Make the focus clear. Keep the answer open.

Rather than label a player as slow, unaware or lacking confidence, we identify a specific situation and a behaviour worth exploring. The question must allow more than one useful football solution.



P: player with the ball / S: support player / D: defender screening the direct lane

Grey line: screened lane / Gold dashed: possible support run / Gold solid: possible pass

Gold dot: ball / Open gold circle: possible position / Schematics, not to scale

Read the lane

Can the player with the ball reach me, or is a defender screening the pass?

Offer an option

Adjust angle and timing. The illustrated run is one option, not a fixed route.

Look again

Move the ball or the defender. Does the supporting player find a useful angle again?

Before judging the player, check that the task offers the relevant choice. If the passing lane never becomes available, redesign the situation rather than demand the same run.



THE STARTING POINT

Listen first. Then observe in play.

The first observation combines the player's own view, their football context and representative situations. It establishes a starting point for coaching, not a grade or selection verdict.

THE PLAYER TELLS US**Their football**

Role, responsibilities and existing weekly demands.

Their priority

A situation they want to handle better.

Agreed input

Relevant family or club information, where appropriate.

THE COACH OBSERVES**Before**

Visible checks, position and available options.

During

Choice, timing and execution under opposition.

After a change

What appears when pressure or coach support changes.

ONE SHARED STARTING POINT

“Receive under pressure while keeping another option.”

An illustrative priority, agreed and refined after observation. Not a grade.

The output is one understandable priority and its context. If opportunities are insufficient, the record says so. Lack of evidence is not evidence of inability.

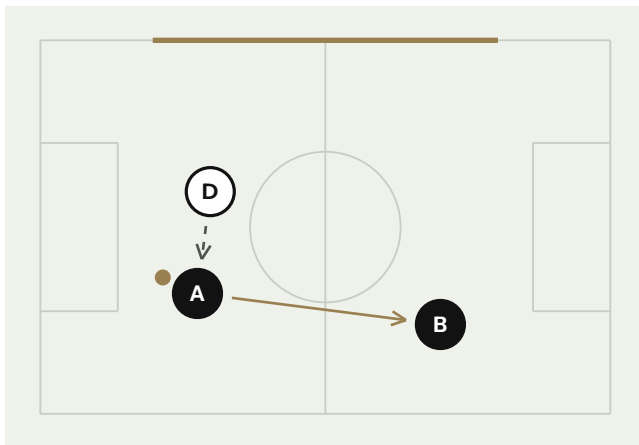


INSIDE A SESSION

Real choices. Guidance that fits the moment.

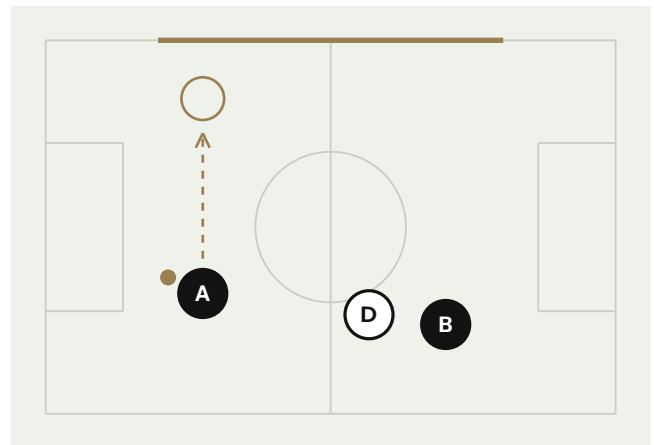
Representative practice keeps the important information of football available: opponents, direction, pressure, support and purpose. It does not mean every task must reproduce a full match. [1, 2]

01 DEFENDER ENGAGES A



D approaches the ball. A can consider connecting with B, then supporting the next action.

02 DEFENDER SCREENS B



D screens the supporting pass. Space may open for A to carry the ball forward.

A: ball carrier / B: supporting attacker / D: defender / Gold end line: direction of attack

Dark dashed: pressure / Gold solid: possible pass / Gold dashed: possible carry

Gold dot: ball / Open gold circle: possible position / Schematics, not to scale

03 OBSERVE AGAIN

Keep the focus. Adjust the help. Let the player choose a useful action.

Coaches may observe, ask, explain, demonstrate or simplify. Less support is not always better: choose what helps the player, then create another opportunity to act. [2, 6]



SESSION ARCHITECTURE

A clear rhythm. Not a rigid script.

Six moments organise a session. Their length depends on readiness, age, task demands and the group. The sequence below is not a time allocation or a fixed 90-minute timetable.

1 ARRIVE

Check readiness and existing load.

Player + coach

2 READ

Watch the priority appear in play.

Observe

3 FRAME

Make the responsibility clear.

Explain or demonstrate

4 EXPLORE

Create repeated choices under opposition.

Play + adapt

5 LOOK AGAIN

Change a condition and observe the response.

Another opportunity

6 RETURN

Name what appeared and the next step.

Player + coach

A flexible sequence, not a fixed allocation of minutes.

Make the responsibility clear. Adapt the challenge as the player progresses. Technique, explanation and game-based practice can be combined where they serve the focus. [2, 6]



COACH DECISIONS

Before repeating the task, diagnose what is missing.

Start with the football problem, not a preferred coaching style. Change one relevant condition when practical and record why. This is a proposed decision protocol, not a validated diagnostic test.

NO RELEVANT CHOICE

The receiver never has a reachable support option.

Change the task: move support or adjust pressure. More repetitions would test the wrong problem.

CHECK UNDERSTANDING

The goal or restart is unclear in the player's explanation or action.

Explain or demonstrate briefly, then check understanding in the next action.

CHOICE FITS, EXECUTION FAILS

An available pass is selected but played beyond the target.

Keep the decision open. Add a brief technical cue or simpler repetition, then restore opposition.

RESPONSE NEEDS A PROMPT

The action appears only after a coach cue.

Record the cue and its timing. Offer another opportunity without that cue if appropriate.

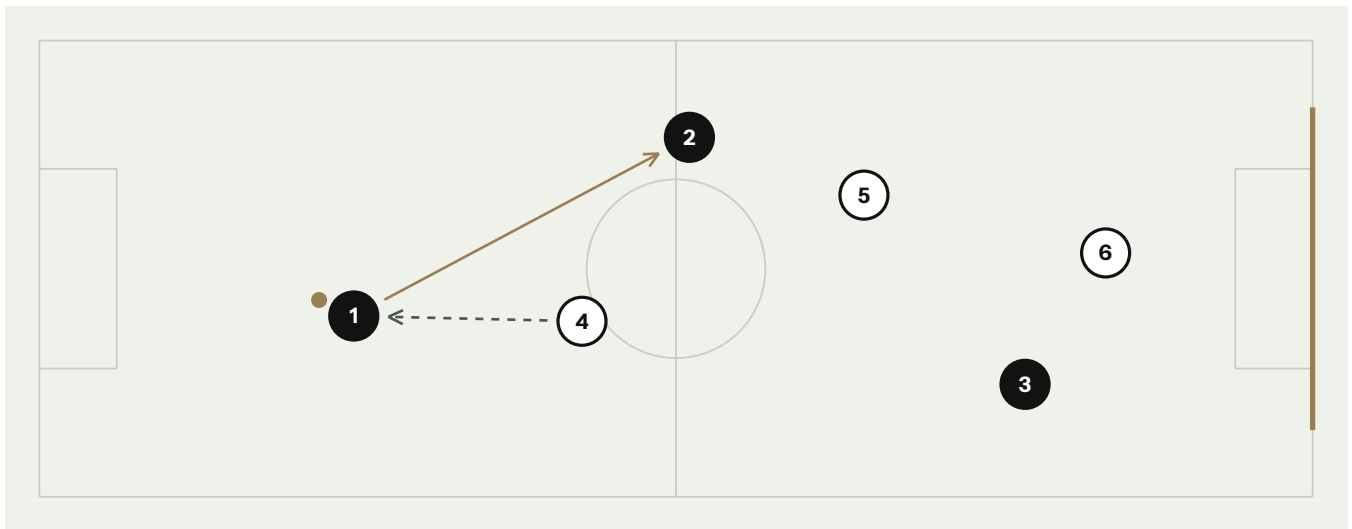
If the player solves the problem independently, vary one relevant condition and observe again. A successful attempt alone is not stable learning.

Safety and wellbeing override this sequence. Pause where needed. A coaching hypothesis is revisable; a player does not become the explanation for every task failure.

SMALL GROUPS

Individual focus. Shared football.

A useful group gives each player repeated opportunities around their own priority. Grouping considers age, physical development, safety and task compatibility, not only position or a common label.



1-3: team in possession / 4-6: defending team / Gold end line: direction of attack

Gold solid: possible pass / Dark dashed: pressure / One moment within a 3v3 task

Gold dot: ball / Schematics, not to scale

1 BALL CARRIER

Read the presser and keep an alternative.

2 + 3 SUPPORT

Offer different angles, widths and depths.

4 PRESSER

Close space without losing the next action.

5 + 6 COVER

Protect passing lanes and space behind the presser.

Six active players, different priorities. Rotate roles and adapt the task as possession changes.

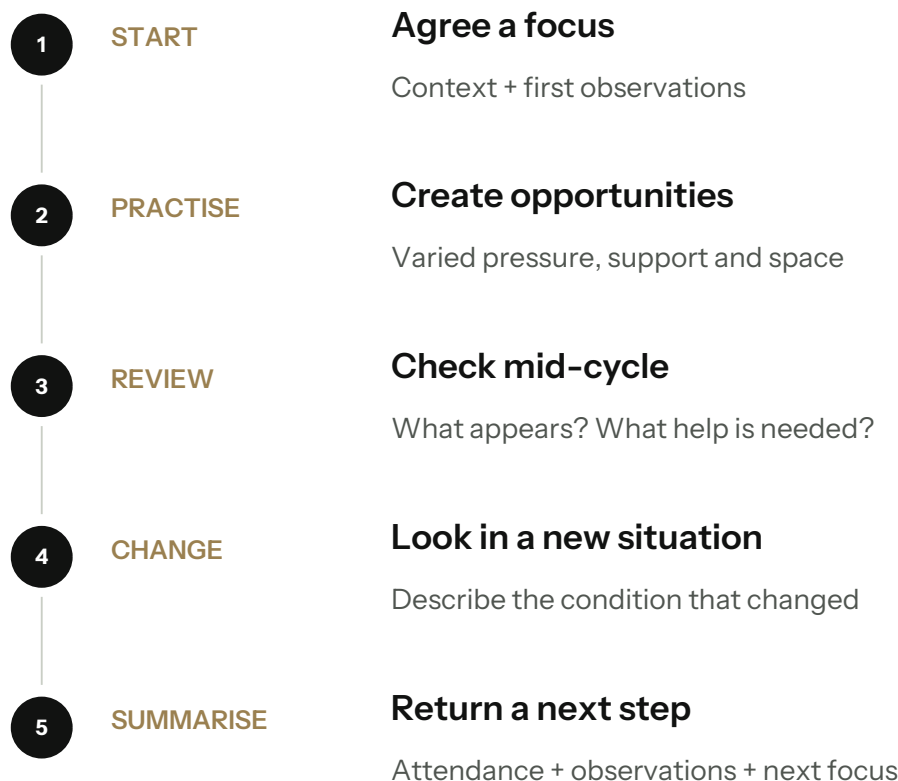
Compatible priorities share the same game. If one rule helps a player but removes another player's problem, change the roles or task. Do not keep everyone together merely to preserve the exercise.



THE DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

Follow a priority. Review it across situations.

A cycle connects the starting observation, practice and review. Duration and session count belong to the agreed programme. A fixed calendar does not mean every player progresses at the same rate.

**LATER REVIEW, IF INCLUDED**

Observe after an interval to check retention. The final session alone cannot establish it.

What remains constant: meaningful football, individual attention, appropriate load and honest records.
What adapts: rules, task size, help, grouping and observation tools.



OBSERVATION COVERAGE

Individual attention. An honest observation plan.

Illustrative capacity check: eight players, eight sessions and two detailed player observations per session create 16 slots. These are focused windows within shared play, not eight simultaneous assessments.

8 PLAYERS x 2 FOCUSED WINDOWS = 16 SLOTS

A first and a later view of each player, not a complete baseline on day one.

SESSION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
OBSERVED PLAYERS	A + B	C + D	E + F	G + H	A + B	C + D	E + F	G + H
Earlier window				Later window				

A-H identify eight players. A + B means: observe players A and B in separate windows during that session. They are not teams.

Watch everyone. Detail two.

Supervision and brief coaching continue for the whole group. Detailed coding must not take attention away from safety.

Absence uses capacity.

Reschedule within remaining slots where possible. If a comparable later view is missing, report it rather than invent progress.

Keep the actual dates.

A first view in session 4 is not a session-1 baseline. Attendance, prior exposure and changed conditions remain visible.

This example adds no sessions or staffing. Confirm the approved programme, age group, coach capacity and recordkeeping before delivery. A later retention check is separate and only included where agreed.



FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS

A record of development. Not a ranking.

The Player Passport links an agreed focus to dated observations and a next action. Evidence coverage, help and response to change are recorded separately, not compressed into a talent score. [3]

PLAYER PASSPORT		FICTIONAL EXAMPLE
FOCUS	Receive under pressure and keep a next option.	
RECORD	Session 3 / 4-minute window / event detail on the next page.	
NEXT TASK	Change only the pressure angle. Record any new cue and another visible opportunity.	

FOUR DIMENSIONS, NOT FOUR LEVELS

Evidence coverage

State dates, visible opportunities and gaps.
Insufficient evidence stays explicit.

Observed behaviour

Describe the visible action and available options.
Keep choice separate from execution.

Coach support

Record what help came before the action.
Prompted behaviour is not independent behaviour.

Response to change

State what changed and what reappeared.
Retention and match transfer need separate observations.

No global score. No label of intelligence, motivation or potential.

These dimensions can coexist: a player may adapt with help. An obscured action is unassessable, not a failure. The Passport is a coaching record, not a validated assessment scale.



A TRACEABLE OBSERVATION

Record the event. Keep the inference separate.

The coach watches a declared player and focus within a defined window. A short record must preserve the opportunities that did not go well, not just the memorable success.

DEFINE THE WINDOW BEFORE WATCHING

Example: session 3, minutes 12-16. One event starts as the pass towards the receiver is released and ends with their next action or loss. Count it once; record the visible pre-reception action too.

ILLUSTRATIVE LOG / NOT PARTICIPANT DATA

01

Head turn after a cue; available lay-off selected; pass overhit.

Decision fits the visible option. Execution fails. Support was present.

02

No cue; receiver protects and returns the ball to an available passer.

A functional alternative. Do not require a turn simply because it was the first aim.

03

Receiver and contact moment are obscured.

Unassessable. Keep it in the log, but not among assessable events.

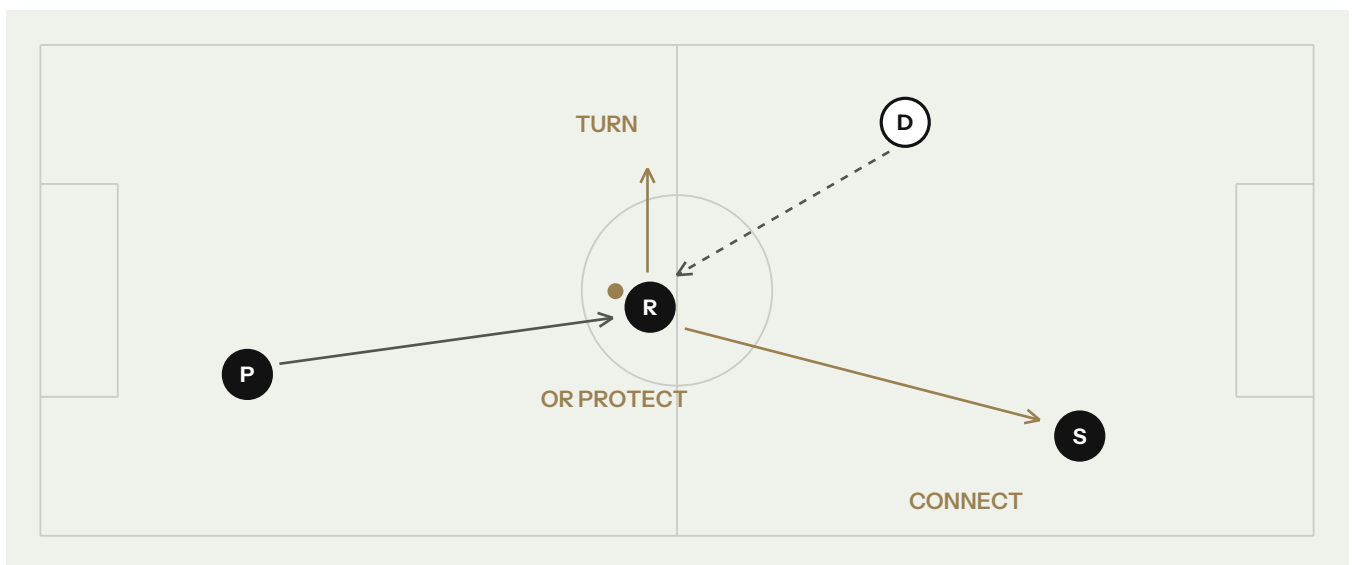
3 events logged / 2 assessable / 1 obscured. Only one assessable event had no cue. Too little comparable evidence to describe stable independent behaviour.

Event codes support coaching, not rankings. Never calculate an improvement percentage from these illustrative events. Different task conditions, help or visibility prevent a like-for-like claim.

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE / STARTING POINT

Receive under pressure. Keep the next action available.

Fictional U15 example: a midfielder receives with pressure from behind. We observe visible checks, available options and the next action without claiming to know what the player perceived or understood.



P: passer / R: receiver / S: support / D: defender
Dark solid arrow: pass / Dark dashed arrow: pressure
Gold dot: ball / Gold arrow: possible action / Schematics, not to scale

What the coach makes visible

Pressure angle. Available support. Visible checks. Chosen action. Coach input.

THE PLAYER'S QUESTION

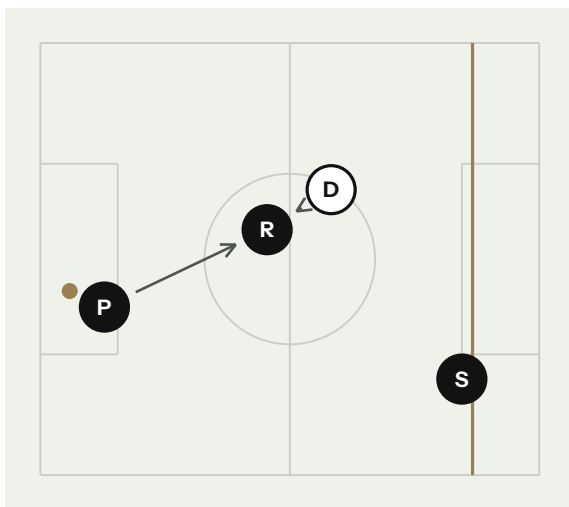
"Can I check the pressure before receiving and keep my options?"

The diagram introduces the problem. The following page defines one runnable task. Neither is a participant history, measured outcome or universal prescription. [1, 7]

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE / TASK CARD

Four players. A task you can actually run.

Proposed starting setup for the fictional case: 14 x 12 m, four active players and one ball. Dimensions are an adjustable example, not an age norm. One coach supervises; no extra observer or goalkeeper is assumed.



14 x 12 m / target zone: final 2 m

P: passer / R: receiver / S: support
D: defender. Arrows: first pass + pressure.

START

P, R and S attack. P starts with the ball; R offers a line. D starts behind R and may defend immediately. First pass towards R; then all four move freely.

SCORE + RESET

Attack: a controlled reception in the target zone. D: win and carry over the opposite end line; attackers may regain. Ball out or a point ends play. Restart with P. One live ball only.

THREE POSSIBLE RESPONSES, NOT A REQUIRED SEQUENCE

Turn

If pressure and space allow progress, open towards the target.

Connect

If support is reachable, use a lay-off or another available pass.

Protect

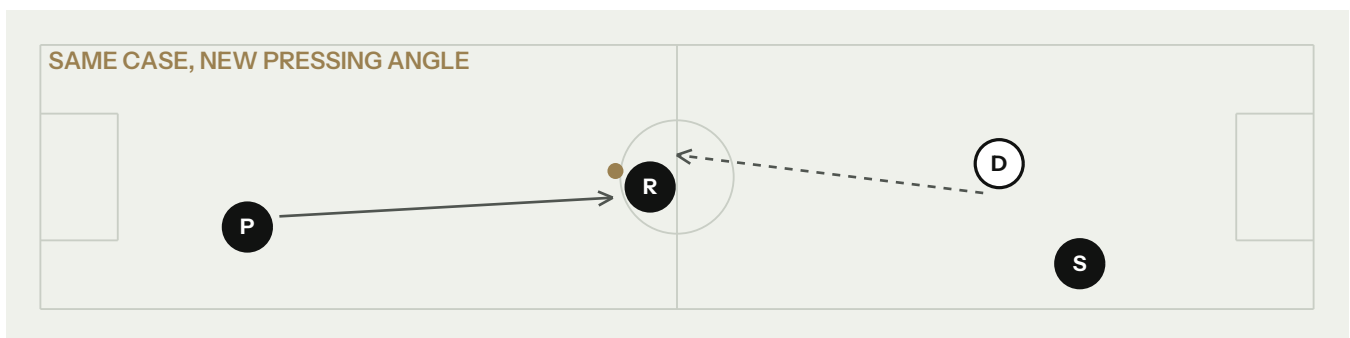
If the forward option closes, secure the ball and use support.

Rotate P > R > S > D > P after each possession. Reduce pressure if choices disappear; adjust space when needed. Later free-choice play checks the response without the scripted first pass.

ILLUSTRATIVE CASE / REVIEW

Change the pressure. See what the player can solve.

The coach changes the pressing angle or delays support and observes another set of relevant opportunities. The purpose is to understand how the player responds, rather than repeat a task simply because it went well.



P: passer / R: receiver / S: support / D: defender. Attacking positions match the starting-point schematic.
Dark solid: pass / Dark dashed: pressure / Gold dot: ball. Schematic, not to scale.



THE BEHAVIOUR REAPPEARS

Record

State what changed and the help provided.

Check again

Seek another observation before describing consistency.

Choose

Keep, extend or refine the next focus.

IT DOES NOT REAPPEAR

Check the task

Did it expose the same priority with enough opportunities?

Review support

Consider difficulty, instructions and readiness.

Adapt

Explain, simplify, redesign or regroup.

Both routes produce a coaching decision, not a judgement of potential.

Fictional record: the player turned their head towards the defender before receiving after the pressure angle changed; a verbal cue preceded that action. This supports another observation, not proof of independent learning.

WORKING WITH A HOST

A venue agreement. A clear division of responsibilities.

Renting facilities and running a joint programme are different arrangements. A school can consider a rental without adopting the method or becoming responsible for delivering Academy sessions.

THE HOST**Facilities and access**

Agreed pitch and hours

Site rules and access

Premises responsibilities

KAIRON**Academy delivery**

Coaches and session design

Participant communication

Delivery responsibilities

AGREED TOGETHER BEFORE DELIVERY

Programme fit • timetable • safeguarding interfaces • emergency arrangements • insurance and required permissions

VENUE HIRE IS NOT A SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

No implied pupil access, school endorsement or right to use its name.

The agreement confirms each party's responsibilities. Additional facilities or activities are never assumed.

A possible contribution to school football is considered only where useful and agreed. No additional activity, staff commitment or joint promotion is assumed from the rental.

COLLABORATION OPTIONS

One shared need. An agreed way to work.

Where a club, school or academy wants more than venue hire, start with a specific need. These are possible formats to discuss, not services automatically included in a rental or commitments to free delivery.

A player-development need



Focused cycle

Agreed priorities → KAIRON delivery → concise review

A session-design question



Coaching exchange

Real coaching question → practical work → agreed next step

A programme worth testing



Joint pilot

Defined scope → named responsibilities → continue, adapt or stop

Every format needs an agreed scope, resources, communication and review. No automatic free delivery or ongoing commitment.

The relationship must be useful to the player and compatible with the partner. No recruitment away from its programme, no implied endorsement and no public results without an appropriate basis.



DELIVERY STANDARDS

Clear responsibilities. Care throughout the work.

A coherent method depends on how it is delivered. The following standards guide preparation and review; specific arrangements must be confirmed for each programme before it begins.

PREPARED COACHES

Clear task purpose, appropriate supervision and agreed responsibilities. Review observations and session decisions, not only exercise completion.

APPROPRIATE LOAD

Consider training, matches, growth, readiness and wellbeing. Refer medical questions to qualified professionals. [4]

SAFE PARTICIPATION

Define safeguarding contacts, emergency response, handover arrangements and applicable staff requirements with the relevant parties.

PRIVATE RECORDS

Collect only necessary information. Define purpose, access, storage and retention. Agree any sharing; no public rankings.

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

Keep players and families informed. Coach contact is purposeful and agreed; Academy does not use collaboration to draw players away.

REVIEWABLE DELIVERY

Record attendance, task context, relevant observations and the next decision. Adapt if the task is not useful or participation is not appropriate.

Care is not an add-on to the method. A football objective never overrides a player's safety, wellbeing or existing commitments.



RESEARCH AND ITS LIMITS

Research informs the design. Observations guide the next step.

Published research offers useful principles, not proof of KAIRON's effectiveness. Our diagrams and examples explain the design. They are not measured outcomes or validation of a proprietary assessment.

Game-based practice [1, 2, 5]

Representative tasks can support selected learning outcomes. Effects vary with population, task, coaching and measures; no universal improvement is promised.

Coaching support [2, 6]

Exploration, instruction and feedback can each be useful. The method does not assume that minimal instruction is always superior.

Contextual observation [3]

TAIS provides a research example of contextual tactical assessment in players aged 8 to 12. It does not validate our Passport or automatically extend to older players.

Task and player context [4, 7]

Small studies of 1v1 behaviour do not establish universal distances. Associations between growth, load and injury do not establish an injury-prevention effect for Academy.

Our distinction is the delivery discipline: a defined problem, purposeful task, explicit intervention and traceable review. We do not claim unique exercises, proven superiority or guaranteed transfer. Field implementation still needs to be tested.



SELECTED READING

The research behind the design choices.

Numbered references correspond to the notes in this guide. Descriptions below identify the subject and scope; they are not claims of KAIRON results.

1 Ometto et al. (2018)

Task constraints and tactical behaviours in small-sided football games. Systematic review.

10.1177/1747954118769183

2 Bergmann et al. (2021)

Practice design, coaching behaviour and perceptual-motor / cognitive skill acquisition in soccer. Systematic review.

10.3389/fpsyg.2021.772201

3 Barquero-Ruiz, Kirk & Arias-Estero (2022)

Design and validation of the Tactical Assessment Instrument in football (TAIS). Validation scope: ages 8 to 12.

10.1080/02701367.2021.1889457

4 Wik et al. (2024)

Growth, maturity and age as injury risk factors in high-level youth football. Associations, not a KAIRON intervention.

10.1055/a-2180-4594

5 Machado et al. (2026)

Developmental activities, interventions and decision-making skills in soccer players. Scoping review.

10.1111/sms.70250

6 Morais et al. (2026)

Instructional constraints used by coaches and tactical behaviour in soccer. Systematic review.

10.5114/jhk/202057

7 Duarte et al. (2010)

Ecological dynamics of 1v1 sub-phases. Six U13 players; a narrow task-level study.

10.2174/1875399X010030100016



Explore a relevant fit.

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