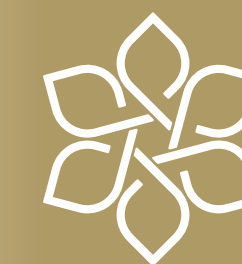


FLOURISHING IN COACHING





INTRODUCTION

This framework marks a new era for coaching in aquatics – **one where coaches, athletes and participants are flourishing.**

Co-created with the coaching community, clubs and coaching stakeholders, ***Flourishing in Coaching*** has been developed by and for the community. It reflects where we are and the voices we've heard – responding to the evolving needs of our sports. It's a shared vision for coaching that values participation and performance equally, and places people – and their experiences – at the heart of everything we do.

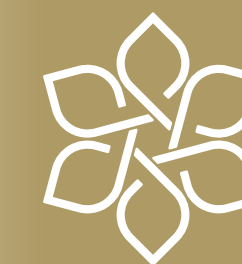
We believe coaching is more than a task – it's a practice, a craft and a powerful catalyst for personal change. It's how we create great experiences in water and how we shape a culture rooted in care, curiosity and belonging. Our character guides us in building flourishing environments where everyone is seen, supported and treated with respect.

Flourishing redefines coaching as an ethical practice, grounded in compassion, integrity and fairness. It moves us away from a rules-based culture and towards one of autonomy and agency – where coaches are trusted and supported to navigate the complexity of coaching and uphold the highest standards.

Aligned with our ***One Swim England*** strategy, ***Flourishing in Coaching*** is our way to make the vision of great coach and athlete experiences possible.

We, as Swim England, will lead and support, with real change coming from within the community. Together, we can unlock the full potential of aquatics to enrich lives, support personal development and create lasting impact.





PREFACE

Flourishing in Coaching is our collective ambition.

Flourishing is cultivating character, wisdom and purpose – helping others to grow while developing ourselves through intentional ethical practice.

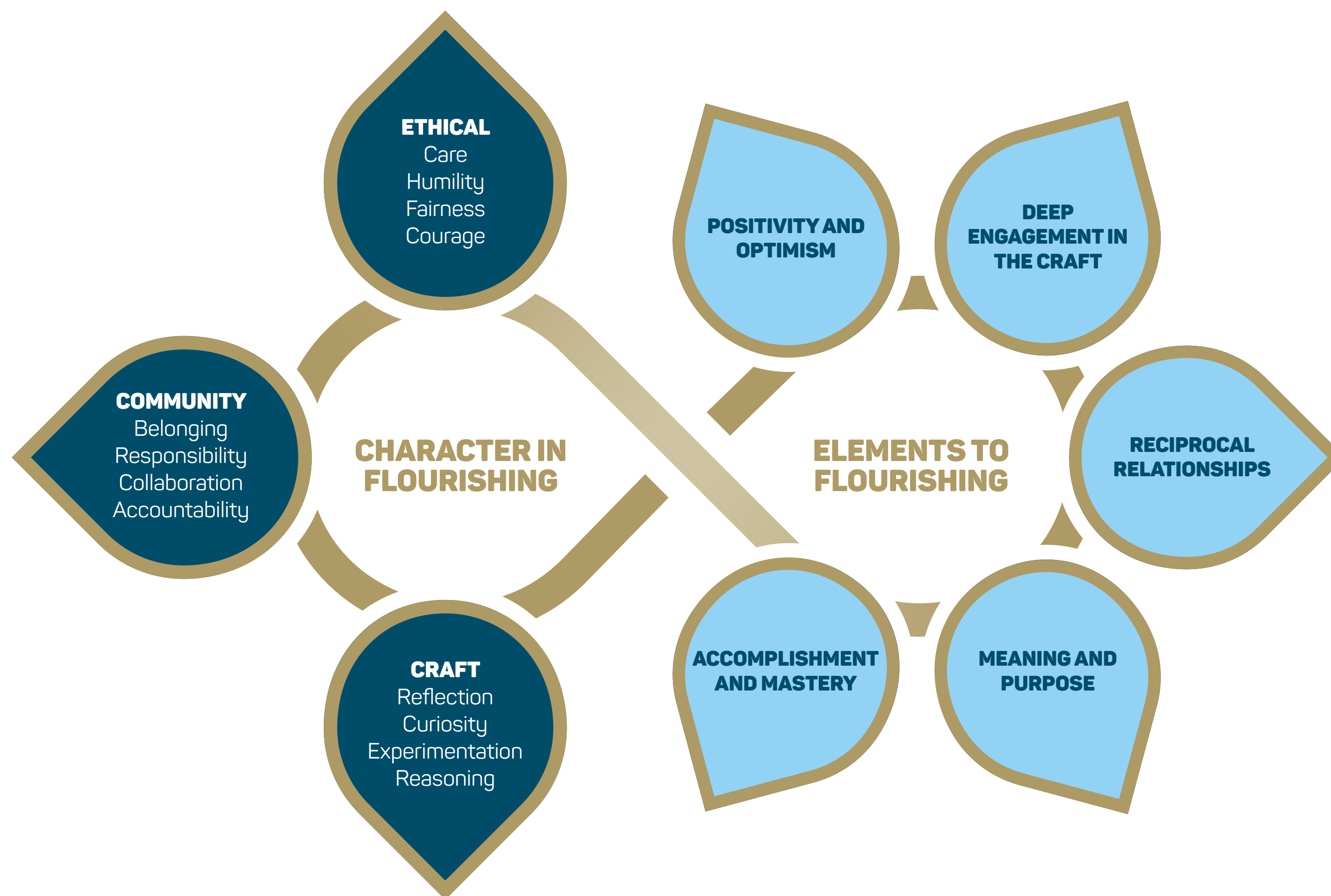
It is a state of being, where coaches are becoming their best while feeling energised, connected, satisfied and fulfilled.

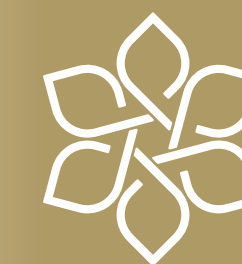
When a coach is flourishing, they perform better, lead better and live better.

Flourishing is achieved by coaching with character and engaging in the practice of coaching for its own rewards.

Flourishing is characterised by positive emotions, engagement, relationships, purpose and accomplishment.

Coaching athletes to flourish means not just developing better athletes but better, healthier and more capable people.





KEY THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

The following themes and objectives are laid out sequentially for ease of presentation. In reality, they are overlapping, integrated and interdependent. Culture is the central theme that is marbled through everything we do. Like threads of fabric, they are woven together to create something bigger than themselves.





THEME:

CULTURE

Cultivate a caring culture where people are treated as a whole, valuable and worthy.

- Athletes and participants are people first.
- Coaches are more than the outcomes they achieve.
- We treat everyone as **equals** with different needs.

OBJECTIVE 1

Shift the focus of coaching to achieve a range of positive outcomes **through effective and ethical coaching.**

- Coaching is about people.
- Good coaching is about positive experiences and outcomes.
- The craft of coaching is developing and responding to people's needs.

OBJECTIVE 2

Foster humility as a core character in coaching.

- Coaching is learning.
- Coaches don't own the athlete – it is the individual that swims, trains, plays, dives and competes.
- Coaching requires the courage to care deeply, and the humility to know it's not about you.

OBJECTIVE 3

Distribute power and prioritise autonomy.

- Coaching is a collaborative partnership.
- Every voice matters.
- Autonomy drives engagement.
- Choice builds commitment.



- We accept everyone.
- Belonging involves contributing and participating with the community.
- The community can lead its own accountability.

OBJECTIVE

Encourage a **learning culture** through shared **collaboration**.

- Coaching, learning and aquatics unite us.
- By collaborating we will achieve more.
- The expertise is already in the community.

THEME:

THE COACHING COMMUNITY

Connect the community to foster a sense of **belonging**.



OBJECTIVE 1

Explore the barriers to underrepresented groups in coaching, recognising the difference in each sport.

- The visible and hidden barriers.
- Understand people's lived experiences.
- Explore how the sporting system affects inclusion.

OBJECTIVE 2

Create targeted interventions to make a lasting, sustainable difference in diversity.

- Prioritise actions that shift systems.
- Develop practical solutions that address gaps in representation.
- Initiatives are tailored to the needs of the community.

THEME:

DIVERSITY

Support coaching to be **more diverse and representative of the people we serve.**





- Embed coaching as a complex practice.
- Highlight the ethical, social and political dimensions.
- Coaching knowledge and decision-making is contextual and situational.

OBJECTIVE 1

Develop **expertise in different domains** of coaching.

- All athletes and participants deserve great coaching.
- Elevate all types of coaching into the aquatics ecosystem.
- Align the purpose of the sport, clubs and coaching.

OBJECTIVE 2

Support aquatics to understand **what good coaching is**.

- Good coaching involves thinking, reasoning and reflecting as well as doing.
- Coaches are always becoming rather than arriving.
- Good coaching is informed by evidence *for* practice and *from* practice.

THEME:

WHAT IS COACHING?

Redefining what coaching is.



THEME:

VALUE QUALITY & RECOGNITION

OBJECTIVE 1

Raise the quality of coaching in aquatics by raising the standards of education.

- Coaching is a vocation and a profession.
- Done right, quality and standards can drive value.
- Reframe education from minimum standards to developing expertise.

OBJECTIVE 2

Raise the quality of coaching through a nationwide scheme.

- Based on principles of good coaching practice.
- Demonstrate how coaches are at the standard.
- Build trust and elevate the value of coaching.

OBJECTIVE 3

All coaches are supported, protected and have secure employment and/or deployment arrangements.

- Employers and deployers recognise their duty to care.
- Contracts and contracting becomes the norm.
- Coaches are treated fairly and justly.

Coaches and coaching are **valued, respected and recognised** for the role they play in aquatics.



- Meaningful learning makes a difference.
- Contextual learning is relevant to the real life of the coach.
- Contemporary learning is inquiring and engaging with practical problems in a real-world context.

OBJECTIVE 1

Reimagine and redesign coach education from the ground up.

- Education that aims to develop good learners.
- Coaching based on the who, what and how of coaching.
- Learning to generate knowledge and feedback.

OBJECTIVE 2

Design and co-construct coach development with coaches.

- Development is done *with* people.
- Supporting coaches to appraise their own ideas.
- Developing contextual knowledge in and from practice.

OBJECTIVE 3

Coaches are supported in their role.

- Supported to learn from experience.
- Supported to unpack and process the hard stuff.
- Supported to connect and belong.




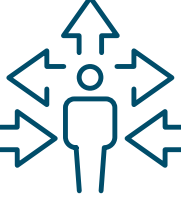


THEME:

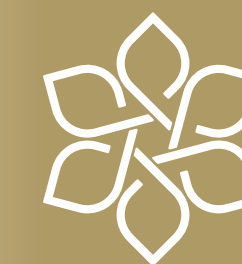
LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Meaningful, contextual and based on **contemporary principles**.



ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE FLOURISHING IN COACHING

THEME	ACTION	BEGINNING NOW (0-6 months)	COMING NEXT (6-12 months)	STARTING LATER (12-18 months)
 CULTURE	Provide clear, consistent and ongoing messaging.	→		
	Embed the principles of caring, people-centred coaching across the system.	→		
	Share ownership with coaching partners and stakeholders to drive forward effective and ethical coaching.		→	
	Support the coaching system to develop holistic measures of success.		→	
 THE COACHING COMMUNITY	Facilitate Communities of Practice (CoP).	→		
	Facilitate face-to-face opportunities for coaches to share experiences and build the community.		→	
	Create opportunities for coaches to visit other club environments to observe and learn.			→
 DIVERSITY	Work with UK Coaching on their Co-Sport Initiative.	→		
	Work with partners and stakeholders to explore how we can reduce systemic barriers to underrepresented groups.		→	
	Seek to work proactively with underrepresented groups to empower change.			→
 WHAT IS COACHING?	Create resources exploring <i>what coaching is</i> and <i>what good coaching is</i> .	→		
	Develop standards for coaching in aquatics.		→	
	Embed <i>what is coaching</i> ideas as foundation principles in coach development..		→	
	Embed <i>what is coaching</i> ideas as foundation principles in coach education.		→	
 VALUE, QUALITY & RECOGNITION	Recognise and highlight good coaching and coaches through Swim England communications.	→		
	Collaboratively work with the Swim England Development Team and Regions to support coaches and coaching.	→		
	Collaboratively work with the Swim England Safe Aquatics and Welfare Team to support coaches and coaching.	→		
	Collaboratively work with the Swim England Talent Team and Sport Science Team to support coaches and coaching.	→		
	Evolve the Swim England National Awards to recognise effective and ethical coaching at all levels.		→	
	Explore a coach licencing scheme to raise and maintain coaching standards across the system.			→
 LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT	Design a new Coach Education System for aquatics.	→		
	Develop and facilitate a range of coach learning and development opportunities focused on ethical coaching.	→		
	Facilitate a range of 'short course' learning and development programmes that are accessible and achievable.		→	
	Collaborate with the sport technical leads to facilitate sport specific technical education opportunities.		→	
	Build capacity in our mentor programme to support more coaches.			→



CO-CREATED WITH THE COMMUNITY

The method to develop *Flourishing in Coaching* was informed by the 'co-creation of the future of coaching'. The main guiding principle for the process was collaboration and so we wanted to co-create this framework with the community.

This meant going beyond mere consultation and being courageous enough to admit we didn't know the answers.

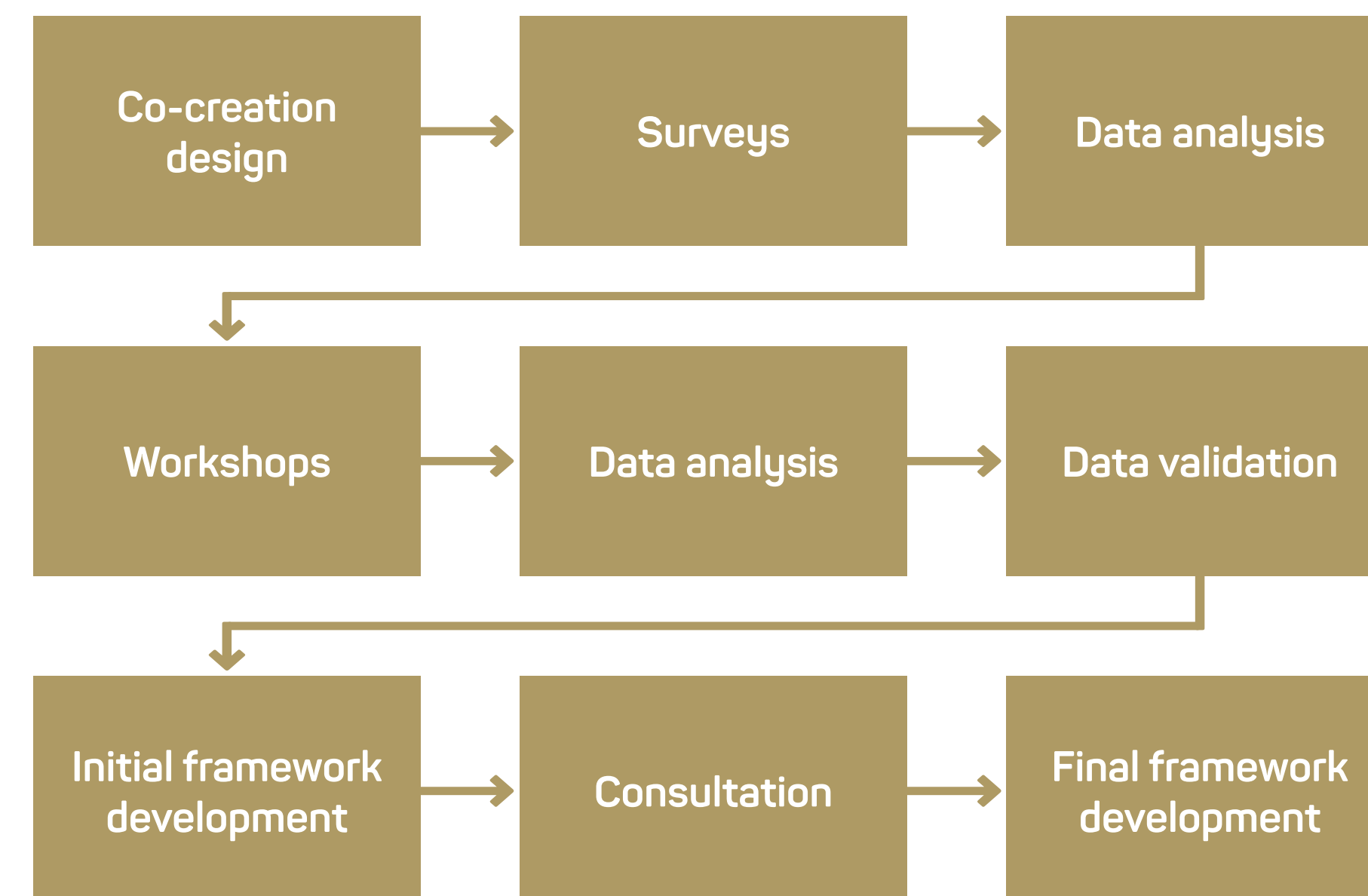
It wasn't the easiest way to develop a framework, but we feel it was the right way, embodying the Swim England values.

We engaged in the process, aware that culture, tradition and socialisation of coaching run deep in aquatics and, so to have a chance to create something different, we designed a workshop to explore and reconnect coaches with some fundamental principles of coaching, such as:

- **What is the purpose of coaching?**
- **What is success in coaching?**
- **What do we value and why?**
- **Why do you coach, what gives you joy and what keeps you motivated?**

It was also important to gain a breadth of views, and we knew that to achieve that, surveying coaches, participants, athletes and clubs would be an essential part of the method. We needed to add a degree of sophistication to understand coaching and the various stakeholders more, so we triangulated the questions to understand the differing views and perspectives on similar areas.

THE CO-CREATION PROCESS



**CO-CREATION
ENGAGEMENT
BY NUMBERS**

COACH
SURVEY **382**
RESPONSES

PARTICIPANT
AND ATHLETE
SURVEY **123**
RESPONSES

CLUB
SURVEY **29**
RESPONSES

15 IN-PERSON
WORKSHOPS
IN 8 LOCATIONS
ACROSS ENGLAND **147**
PARTICIPANTS

COACH
VALIDATION
SESSIONS **25**
PARTICIPANTS

TOTAL
- MORE
THAN **700**
PEOPLE



Pavilion 3, SportPark, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough University, Leicestershire LE11 3QF
Tel: 01509 618700 | swimming.org/swimengland



SwimEngland



@Swim_England



swimengland