



THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Coaching & Mentoring Pool

Led by West Midlands Employers

Code of Conduct For Coaches and Mentors

Coaching and Mentoring Code of Conduct

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct establishes a set of guidelines for ethics and good practice for members of the Public Sector Coaching and Mentoring Pool and internal coaches and mentors who are matched via the online matching system, to ensure they conduct their practice in a professional and ethical manner. **To ensure that our high standards are maintained, all members with matching site profiles are required to follow this Code of Conduct, which has been adapted to meet our needs from the [Global Code of Ethics](#).**

2. Terminology

2.1. For the purposes of this document the term:

- “**client**” denotes any individual using the services of a coach or mentor.
- “**member**” denotes any individual who has a coach or mentor profile on the online matching system www.coachmentormatchingwme.org (both internal and external coaches and mentors)
- “**sponsor**” to indicate the line manager or representative of the organisation who is supporting the “client” and has a vested interest in the outcomes of the coaching/mentoring relationship. The sponsor is the link back to the sponsoring organisation and is responsible for representing the organisation's expectations of the client and the purpose of the coaching work.
- “**supervision**” and “**supervisor**” describe the process by which the work of the coach/mentor is overseen and advice/guidance sought.

2.2. We describe **coaching and mentoring** as activities within the area of professional and personal development with focus on individuals and teams and using the client's own resources to help them to see and test alternative ways for improvement of competence, decision making and enhancement of quality of life. Thus, a professional coach/mentor can be described as an expert in establishing a relationship with people in a series of conversations with the purpose of serving the clients to improve their performance or enhance their personal development or both, choosing their own goals and ways of doing it.

2.3. **Coaching** offered through the online matching system utilises coaches who have a set of skills that enable them to observe and analyse attitude, skills and behaviour with the purpose of supporting individuals to look at their beliefs and assumptions, what might be holding them back and how they can build on their strengths. Coaches draw on a range of methods and techniques to help individuals explore practical ways to develop their performance beyond its current position.

Coaching is generally not performed on the basis that the coach needs to have direct experience of their client's occupational role. A Coach will provide support and challenge through powerful questioning and introducing models and tools to help enable thinking.

2.4. **Mentoring** offered through the pool utilises individuals with specific skills, experience or professional expertise in an area a client wants to develop in. Mentoring can be described as a developmental process which may involve a transfer of skill or knowledge from a more experienced to a less experienced person. A mentor will demonstrate, explain and model things based on their experience and expertise.

Like coaching, mentoring is not telling someone what to do, but sharing experience and knowledge to help individuals consider other options and avenues. The distinctive difference between coaching and mentoring is that a mentor has specific expertise that they are there to share with a client. A mentor does not have to be more senior than the client, but they do need to hold expertise in an area that they can share and help an individual explore in depth.

3. The Code

Context

- 3.1. When coaching or mentoring clients in any capacity members will conduct themselves in accordance with this code.
- 3.2. Members are required to record the frequency of all coaching and mentoring work and to complete feedback and evaluation forms as required via the online matching system, encouraging their clients to do so also. This is to monitor the progress of the Pool and aid the future development of Coaching and Mentoring within the public sector.
- 3.3. Members **are not allowed to coach or mentor, to generate individual income** within local authorities in the West Midlands or subscribing organisations of the Public Sector Coaching and Mentoring Pool, unless expressly approved by WME.

Working with Clients

Contracting

Members (Coaches and Mentors) agree that:

- 3.4. Before they start working with a client, they will explain and make explicit their commitment to abide by this Code of Conduct and Good Practice.
- 3.5. Before starting to work with a client, they will explain and strive to ensure that, clients and sponsor(s) understand the nature of coaching/mentoring, the nature and limits of confidentiality, and any other terms of the relationship agreement or contract. Such as:
 - 3.5.1. Being clear about the involvement of the sponsor and how coaching/mentoring information will be exchanged among coach/mentor, client, and sponsor.
 - 3.5.2. Ensuring that the expectations of the client and the sponsor are understood and that they themselves understand how those expectations are to be met. Members will also try to take into account the needs and expectations of other relevant parties.
- 3.6. Will be open about the methods they use, and on request will be ready to supply the client and sponsor with information about the processes involved.
- 3.7. Will ensure that the duration of the contract is appropriate to achieve the client's and sponsor's goals and will actively work to promote the client's independence and self-reliance.
- 3.8. Will ensure that the setting in which any coaching or mentoring takes place offers optimal conditions for learning and reflection and therefore a higher likelihood of achievement of the goals set in the contract.
- 3.9. Should always put their client's interests first but at the same time safeguard that these interests do not harm the interests of the sponsor or any other third parties

Integrity

4. Members will accurately and honestly represent and ensure that no false or misleading claims are made about their relevant experience, training, certifications and accreditations to clients, sponsors and colleagues.
 - 4.1. Members will attribute ownership of work, ideas and materials of others to the originator and not claim it as their own.
 - 4.2. Members will act within applicable law and not in any way encourage, assist or collude with conduct which is dishonest, unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory.

Confidentiality

- 4.3. When working with clients, will maintain the strictest level of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information unless release of information is required by law.
- 4.4. Members will have a clear agreement with clients and sponsors about the conditions under which confidentiality will not be maintained (e.g. illegal activity, danger to self or others) and gain agreement to that limit of confidentiality where possible unless the release of information is required by law.
- 4.5. Members will keep, store and dispose of appropriate and accurate records of their work with clients, including electronic files and communications, in a manner that ensures confidentiality, security and privacy, and complies with all relevant laws and agreements that exist regarding data protection and privacy.

- 4.6. Members will inform clients that they are receiving supervision and identify that the client may be referred to anonymously in this context. The client should be assured that the supervision relationship is itself a confidential relationship focused on developing the coach and their safe, effective practice.

Conflict of interest and Inappropriate interactions

- 4.7. Members will consider the impact on any client of any relationships they have with other clients and organisations and discuss any potential conflict of interest with those who might be affected
- 4.8. Members will consider the impact and/or the potential for conflicts of interest of either a commercial, emotional or sexual nature to arise through the coach/mentoring relationship and deal with them quickly and effectively to ensure there is no detriment to the client or sponsor.
- 4.9. To avoid any conflict of interest, will distinguish a coaching and mentoring relationship with a client from other forms of relationships.
- 4.10. Members will disclose any conflict openly with the client and agree to withdraw from the relationship if a conflict arises which cannot be managed effectively.

Terminating professional relationships and ongoing responsibilities

- 4.11. Members will respect a client's right to terminate an engagement at any point
- 4.12. Members will encourage the client or sponsor to terminate the coaching or mentoring engagement if it is believed that the client would be better served by another practising member or a different form of professional help.
- 4.13. Members understand that their responsibilities continue beyond the termination of the coaching and mentoring relationship.
These include:
- Maintenance of agreed confidentiality of all information relating to clients and sponsors
 - Safe and secure maintenance of all related records and data that complies with all relevant laws and agreements regarding data protection and privacy
 - Avoidance of any exploitation of the former relationship, which could otherwise call into question the professionalism or integrity of the member or the member community
 - Provision of any follow-up that has been agreed to.

5. Professional Conduct

Maintaining the reputation of coaching and mentoring

- 5.1. Members will behave in a way that at all times reflects positively upon and enhances the reputation of accessing coaching and mentoring via the online matching system (whether internal or external relationships).
- 5.2. Members will demonstrate respect for the variety of practising members and for the different approaches to coaching, mentoring and supervision.

Recognising equality and diversity and inclusion

- 5.3. Members will seek to enhance their own awareness of possible areas of discrimination and monitor their communication to avoid being discriminatory.
- 5.4. Members will be cognisant of the potential for unconscious bias and seek to ensure that they take a respectful and inclusive approach, which embraces and explores individual difference.
- 5.5. Members will challenge in a supportive way anyone perceived to be using discriminatory behaviour.
- 5.6. Members will engage in developmental activities to increase self - awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Breaches of conduct

- 5.7. Members accept that any breach of the code that is upheld in a complaints procedure may result in sanctions including removal from the online matching system. Such breaches will be shared with West Midlands Employers and your employing organisation in the interest of client safety, upholding quality standards and maintaining the reputation of the service.

- 5.8. A member will challenge another member if they have reasonable cause to believe that the member is acting in an unethical manner and, failing resolution, will report that person to their Organisational Representative or WME.

Legal and statutory obligations and duties

- 5.9. Members are obliged to stay up to date and comply with all relevant statutory requirements and work within any organisational policies and procedures in the context in which they are working.
- 5.10. Members volunteering their time to deliver coaching and mentoring on behalf of their organisation should be covered by their organisations professional indemnity insurance as part of their employment, any independent members volunteering on behalf of the Public Sector Coaching and Mentoring Pool are covered by West Midlands Employers professional indemnity insurance, provided they have signed relevant documentation. (It is important to note that if a coach or mentor engages in paid work, and contravenes point 3.3, they will not be covered by the above mentioned Professional Indemnity Insurance).

6. Excellent Practice

Ability to perform

- 6.1. Members will have the qualifications, skills and experience appropriate to meet the needs of the client and will operate within the limits of their competence. Where appropriate, they shall cooperate with other professionals by making appropriate referrals in order to serve clients effectively. Where necessary refer the client either to a more experienced coach/mentor, or support the client in seeking the help of another professional, such as a counsellor, psychotherapist, GP or business/financial advisor. West Midlands Employers or the client's organisation may be able to provide details about relevant alternative support services.
- 6.2. Members will be fit and healthy enough to practice. If they are not or are unsure if they are able to practice safely for health reasons, they will seek professional guidance or support. Where necessary or appropriate, the practising member should manage the termination of their work with the client and refer the client to the client's Organisational Lead for Coaching and Mentoring (or West Midlands Employers) to seek alternative arrangements. The members online profile will be hidden from searches until such a time as they are fit to resume. Approval from WME or the Organisational Lead will need to be gained to confirm they are suitable to resume coaching/mentoring before their profile is unhidden by a system administrator.

On-going supervision

- 6.3. Members will engage in supervision with a suitably trained supervisor or peer supervision group with a level of frequency that is appropriate to their coaching, mentoring or supervision practice, in accordance to their responsibilities:
- 6.3.1. For External Coaches/Mentors as stipulated by the Public Sector Coaching and Mentoring Pool
 - 6.3.2. For Internal Coaches/Mentors as stipulated by their organisation
- 6.4. Members need to ensure that any other existing relationship with the supervisor does not interfere with the quality of the supervision provided.
- 6.5. Members will discuss any ethical dilemmas and potential, or actual, breaches of this Code with their supervisor or peer supervision group for support and guidance.

Continuing professional development

- 6.6. Members will develop their level of coaching and/or mentoring competence by participating in relevant and appropriate training and/or continuing professional development (CPD).
- 6.7. Members are expected to make a contribution to supporting the development of a healthy working culture and encouraging the use of coaching and mentoring within their organisation and other public sector organisations they engage with.
- 6.8. Members will systematically evaluate the quality of their work through feedback from clients, through supervision and other relevant parties