

Performance Coach Award

Mentor Notes

BCAB Performance Coach Award Mentor Notes

Introduction

These Mentor Notes provide specific guidance for Performance Coach Mentors, Facilitators, Coach Developers and Assessors about the delivery of the British Canoeing Awarding Body Performance Coach Online Mentor Sessions and the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session.

Please see 'British Canoeing Awarding Body Performance Coach Delivery Centre Guidance' for details of their management and the administration requirements.

These Mentor Notes are supported by the following documents:

- Performance Coach Coaching Philosophy Task;
- Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance;
- Performance Coach Delivery Centre Guidance;
- Performance Coach Assessment Guidance.

Vision

The one-to-one, online mentor sessions provide the Coach with support to progress their holistic development and thinking. Discussion with the Mentor should support reflection, stimulate insights and action, and support the Coach to make sense of their practices and thinking.

Audience

The Performance Coach Mentor Sessions are open to coaches who are registered for the Performance Coach Award. Mentors will support coaches at various stages on their journey through the qualification pathway, from newly registered through to the final preparations for assessment.

Coaches must complete at least two mentor sessions between registration and assessment, and an additional Pre-Assessment Mentor Session prior to assessment. The costs of these are included in the Coach's registration fee.

Coaches can arrange as many mentor sessions, through the Delivery Centre, as they wish, noting that extra sessions incur an additional cost.

The Mentoring Relationship

The mentor sessions should be based on joint discussion, with the Mentor aiming to create an open, positive, empowering, motivating and confidence building environment. This requires a trusting and open relationship, where the coach feels safe to engage fully, to question, and to openly express/share their own thoughts, emotions and opinions.

Mentors will need to invest in the relationship to support:

- mutual trust, respect, appreciation and warmth towards each other;
- the Coach to feel cared for, the Mentor having their best interests at heart;
- open sharing of values and beliefs, aspirations and motivations, reflections, feelings and thoughts (emphasising commonalities helping to strengthen the relationship);
- a non-hierarchical interchange of ideas, approaches, beliefs and values, considering different approaches;
- an appropriate balance of challenge (to evoke reflection and deeper thinking) and support (to guide and fuel the Coach's reflections);
- the development of rapport with each other.

At this stage in a Coach's development it is not expected that directive behaviours will be required of the Mentor very often. The Coach is more likely to thrive when there is more equality, with joint/shared ownership of the agenda and perceived equity in the value of contributions. Or, perhaps a Coach who is more established in their thinking might want to take on more ownership of the agenda and want to fill the discussions with more of their own contributions.

To support a positive mentoring relationship, the Mentor will need to be:

- empathetic - seeing things from the Coach's perspective;
- patient - allowing the conversation to go at the Coach's pace, thinking before encouraging the conversation to move on (or slow down);
- open-minded – open to other approaches, without forcing their own views onto the Coach.

Content

The aims and outcomes of each mentor session (and therefore the content) will be selected to support the Coach to progress their coaching practices and thinking. The Coach and Mentor should both contribute to planning the session, the aims/outcomes and the content. It should be joint/shared ownership or have a bias towards coach ownership.

Possible Outcomes of a Mentor Session

The Coach may be seeking, for example:

- changes in thinking, deeper level thinking;
- raised awareness;
- adding clarity to thinking (ironing out areas of confusion);
- new knowledge;
- improved coaching practice;
- improved reflective practice;
- to further develop their coaching philosophy;
- increased motivation;
- focus to help them with their next steps;
- changes in self-esteem or confidence;
- increased ability to take ownership over own learning.

Coach Self-Analysis

The British Canoeing Awarding Body Coach Self-Analysis Tool can help the Coach identify specific areas of development, helping them to plan their own unique learning journey. Based on their responses, they will be signposted to appropriate resources to support their learning and development. [Click here to access the Coach Self-Analysis Tool](#).

It is recommended to coaches that the self-analysis tool is used prior to their first online mentor session to help steer these initial conversations.

Possible Content

Content will be selected based on the agreed aims and outcomes. Here are some examples of potential content blocks for consideration:

Clarifying the aim/s of the session; getting to know each other; sharing expectations.	Identifying areas of coaching practice that the Coach wants to improve (why and how).
Having a reflective discussion on a recent coaching episode or challenging situation (see pages 6 - 8).	Discussing and developing the Coach's coaching philosophy (see overleaf).
Exploring personal views and anxieties of the Coach in their role; supporting the Coach to understand these and feel more confident in their role, views or approach.	Making sense of feedback the Coach has received from other coaches, peers, participants or assessors. Considering what contributed to the feedback and how learning can be taken forwards.
Identifying forthcoming challenges the Coach perceives; discussing potential ways to approach the challenge; and how the Coach will know if they have been successful.	Focussing on supporting the Coach to identify their training needs and plan for their development; Supporting with the development of meaningful and purposeful goals.
Discussing newly applied knowledge and its application to practice.	Supporting the Coach with planning their next steps, how to consolidate their learning and ideas for future development.

Coaching Philosophy Task

As part of the Coach's journey on the Performance Coach pathway they will develop, and then present, their coaching philosophy. Coaches are provided support materials at the point of qualification registration and are advised to start the task at the beginning of their journey through the Performance Coach pathway and continue to develop and reflect on it throughout.

It is important that mentors are familiar with the task and able to offer support as the Coach progresses through it. Please see Performance Coach Coaching Philosophy Task for details. This includes a step-by-step process to help the Coach develop their philosophy and a number of reflective questions for them to consider, perhaps with the Mentor's support.

The Coach presents their Coaching Philosophy in the specific Pre-Assessment Mentor Session, see pages 9-11 for specific details.

Enhancing Reflection

One of the most significant purposes of the mentor sessions is to support the Coach with their reflection. Reflective practice is a skill like any other, it is therefore important to recognise how skilful the Coach is in this area and offer an appropriate level of support and guidance to keep it developing. The Mentor needs to create an environment where the Coach is encouraged to question their current approaches, and help the Coach to reach outside the frame of their own knowledge, skills and experiences. The Coach should lead the reflection, with the mentor guiding, probing and steering the conversation when necessary.

Reflective Discussion

The following table might help the Mentor support a Coach through a reflective discussion:

The Coach	The Mentor Role
Objectively describe the experience or problem being reflected upon.	<p>To be an objective observer and attentive listener. Using questioning to help the Coach recall as much information as possible.</p> <p>The Performance Coach Decision Making Model – The WHO WHAT HOW, (see Appendix 1) is a useful resource for either the Coach, or the mentor to structure this thinking/questioning and to draw out more detail.</p> <p>The WHO WHAT HOW model is used within the Community of Learning events, so coaches who have attended one of these will be familiar with it.</p>

The Coach	The Mentor Role
<p>Evaluate the experience or problem, considering the positives, things that worked well for the coach or participant, and the things that didn't work so well.</p>	<p>To be an attentive listener and to ask probing question to draw out the Coach's thoughts on the things that worked well/not so well.</p> <p>Use questioning to focus this evaluation on how the intervention affected the development of participants' performance, long-term development and wellbeing in relation to their goals/enjoyment.</p> <p>A more skilful reflector may need less prompting, the Mentor checking the evaluation, only interjecting with questions if required. This could open the door to explore what the coach missed, and how they might go about capturing the most pertinent points themselves.</p>
<p>Analyse one aspect of the experience or problem being reflected upon. Analyse WHY it worked well/not so well.</p>	<p>Using probing (WHY) questions to challenge the Coach are the key here, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why did you select that specific intervention? - what options did you discount (and why)? - what compromises did you make? <p>The WHO WHAT HOW model can be used to structure questioning or the Coach's thinking. For example, is the answer to the WHY questions something related to, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a match/mismatch between WHO and WHAT was being coached? • a match/mismatch between WHAT was being coached and WHERE it was being coached? • a match/mismatch between the Coach themselves (skills or beliefs) and the WHO, WHAT or HOW? <p>Can the more skilled reflector retain ownership of this element? Can the Mentor help the Coach be more independent in their reflection?</p>

The Coach	The Mentor Role
Come to conclusions and explore solutions.	<p>Clarify the Coach's conclusions and solutions.</p> <p>Add breadth or depth to the Coach's ideas by sharing thoughts, acting as a source of knowledge, suggesting alternative solutions or by signposting other ways to find more/different information or support.</p> <p>Sharing personal experiences from similar situations if this uncovers unknowns for the Coach.</p>
Plan what to do next; decide what action needs to be taken to take the learning into practice.	<p>Can the Coach identify the strengths and limitations of their knowledge or skills (in coming to their conclusions and exploring solutions)? These can be used by the Coach (or the Mentor) to identify the most pertinent topics for action planning.</p> <p>Has the focus of discussion been on a specific area of the WHO, WHAT, HOW model? Is it related to the need to get more knowledge, or to try a new/different approach in coaching practice? Is the Coach clear how they are going to go about this, and who they might seek to help them?</p> <p>Final check - has the Coach got pertinent takeaway/s to explore next time they are coaching?</p>

Based on the Gibbs (1998)¹ Reflective Cycle.

Reflecting on Reflection

The five stage reflective process in the preceding table can also be used to help understand the Coach's reflection skills:

- did the Coach get stuck with any particular stage?
- did they have a tendency to skip stages?
- did they struggle to consider alternative approaches?
- did they wrestle too long (or not long enough) in any particular stage?

This understanding can enable the Mentor to help the Coach become more sophisticated in their reflective practice, and more independent in developing themselves as a Coach.

¹ Gibbs, G. (1998) Learning by Doing: a Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods. London: Further Education Unit. IN Galvin, B. (2005) A Guide to Mentoring Sports Coaches. Sports Coach UK.

Specifics Regarding the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session

Coaches engage in a Pre-Assessment Mentor Session when they are ready to progress to their practical coaching assessment. The format and content of this particular session is somewhat different to the preceding mentor sessions.

The Pre-Assessment Mentor Session has two main elements:

1. The Coach will present and discuss their coaching philosophy and provide context and background into how and why they go about their coaching practice as they do.
2. To check (and confirm) the Coach's readiness for assessment and help them fine-tune their final preparations.

The Pre-Assessment Mentor session is recorded and then viewed by the Coach's practical coaching assessor; this gives the Coach the opportunity to give context and insights into their coaching practice and thinking ahead of the assessment.

Details regarding the presentation requirements, content and how this is linked to the practical coaching assessment are provided in the Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance. This is an important reference for the Mentor to utilise in planning, steering and supporting the Coach through this particular Mentor session.

The maximum time gap between the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session and practical coaching assessment is 4 months.

Recording of the Session

Arrangements must be made to record the session in a format that can be shared with the Delivery Centre.

Professional Discussion

Following the Coach's presentation, time should be scheduled for professional discussion, using this time to:

1. Help the Coach to continue to develop their coaching philosophy and how they are able to articulate their thinking. Further explore and discuss the

Coach's thoughts in relation to the requirements and content as outlined in the Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance.

2. Discuss and check that the Coach is ready for their practical coaching assessment, and help to fine tune their final preparations. The checklist in the Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance should be used as a guide.

Outcome

One of two potential outcomes is possible from the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session. The decision being based on the evidence provided in relation to the Readiness for Assessment Checklist provided in the Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance:

1. The Mentor makes a recommendation to the Delivery Centre that the Coach is ready to progress to their practical coaching assessment, confirming that the Coach has provided adequate evidence in relationship to all elements on the Readiness for Assessment Checklist.
2. If the Coach has not provided the Mentor with adequate evidence of their readiness, they will not be recommended for assessment. A personal action plan outlining the necessary steps will be agreed between the Coach and Mentor. The associated action plan will include a requirement for a further Pre-Assessment Mentor Session if this is deemed necessary, noting that the maximum time gap between the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session and practical coaching assessment is 4 months. If the action plan is expected to take longer than this, completing a further Pre-Assessment Mentor Session will be required.

Details of the recommendation and action plan must be included in a Summary Report, see overleaf.

Multiple Pre-Assessment Mentor Sessions

There are three likely situations when a Coach will engage in more than one Pre-Assessment Mentor Session:

1. if it was deemed necessary after their first Pre-Assessment Mentor Session;
2. if they were unsuccessful at a practical coaching assessment;
3. if the Coach did not complete their practical coaching assessment within the required 4 months of the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session.

These further Pre-Assessment Mentor Sessions will follow a similar format to others, but it will also be important to also consider the summary report/feedback the coach received from the preceding Mentor and/or assessor.

Summary Report

Mentors must provide the Coach with a summary report within 7-days of their Pre-Assessment Mentor Session. A copy of the report must be sent to the Delivery Centre at the same time. The Delivery Centre will verify any recommendations made and confirm outcomes with the Coach. This report will include:

1. A summary of the Mentor's conclusions regarding the Coach's readiness for assessment, making a clear recommendation for the Coach to progress to their practical coaching or the action plan required if not.
2. A summary of the Coach's strengths, development areas, and action points noted for each section of the Readiness for Assessment Checklist.

Any recommendations that have an influence on the Coach's progress through the qualification pathway must be made clear. Note that this summary report will be passed on to the Coach's practical coaching assessor.

Administration

Delivery Centre Management

Performance Coach Online Mentor Sessions and Pre-Assessment Mentor Sessions can only be organised by the Delivery Centre. The Delivery Centre is responsible for the recruitment and deployment of Mentors, course authorisation, coach recruitment, financial arrangements, marketing, record keeping, and for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the mentor sessions.

Recruitment

After a Coach has registered for the Performance Coach Award, the Delivery Centre will work together with the Coach to arrange their first, and further, mentor sessions.

Staffing

It is the Delivery Centres' responsibility to deploy an appropriate mentor for the Coach's mentor session. The staffing ratio is 1:1.

Both the Coach and mentor need to be involved in the pairing decision, to ensure compatibility.

Organising the Mentor Session

Once a mentor has been agreed, they will take on responsibility for liaising with the Coach to arrange an appropriate time for the session, agree the aims and outcomes of the session.

Pre-course Information

Prior to a mentor session, the Delivery Centre will provide the Coach with:

- the name and contact details for their mentor;
- details of the cancellation policy;
- information about the Coach/Mentor responsibilities in working together to plan the mentor session;
- details of the IT requirements;

- signposting to the British Canoeing Awarding Body Digital Self Analysis; recommending it to coaches as a tool that can help them better understand their learning and development needs, and use this to help them steer the focus of mentor sessions.

Prior to a Pre-Assessment Mentor Session, the Delivery Centre will also provide:

- the Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance;
- information regarding the enquiries and appeals process;
- information regarding the potential outcomes of the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session.

Venue

It is expected that the norm will be for the mentor session to take place via an online video conference call. Both the Coach and Mentor must be in a private, quiet space with a reliable connection.

Face-to-face sessions are an option, they are not required or expected. Whilst face-to-face sessions can provide a higher quality social environment leading to improved outcomes, the benefits are not seen to out-way the time and travel costs incurred. If face-to-face sessions are convenient for both the Coach and the Mentor, they are an option. Check Delivery Centre procedures for allowable expenses.

Session Length

Mentor sessions are a minimum of 60-minutes in duration.

Scheduling

The scheduling of mentor sessions will depend on the Coach's specific needs and wants. As a guide, it is recommended that the following matters are considered in the scheduling of a mentor session, this list is not exhaustive:

- timing in relation to attendance at a Community of Learning event - a mentor session scheduled before a Community of Learning event can help the Coach gather/focus their thoughts going into the event, or to consolidate/progress their thinking afterwards;

- timing in relation to Coach Developer Support - a mentor session scheduled before Coach Developer Support can help the Coach gather/focus their thoughts going into the event, or to consolidate/progress their thinking afterwards;
- timing in relation to other mentor sessions – it is important to consider if there is enough time in-between sessions to allow for reflection and focused development, and not too much time that the Coach has stalled or lost focus in their development;
- the spacing of mentor sessions in relation to the Coach's expected journey to assessment, it is important to aim for the right support at the right time through the pathway as a whole;
- how active the Coach is in their coaching – being active within their coaching provides the opportunity for recent reflection on and for action. If they have stalled, they may need some support or guidance to reignite their motivation.

The maximum time gap between the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session and practical coaching assessment is 4 months.

Cancelling Sessions

Mentors are required to follow the Delivery Centre's cancellation policy.

Sessions may need to be cancelled/rescheduled by the Mentor or Coach, for example, due to illness or IT issues. The Coach must be involved in the decision making process.

End of Course Administration

Immediately after the Performance Coach Award Mentor Session, the Mentor is required to complete their Delivery Centre **Course Results process**.

In addition, a copy of the Mentor's summary report (see page 11) and recording of the session must be sent to the Delivery Centre within 7-days of the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session.

Mentors need to ensure they are fully aware of the end of course process and required timescales.

Appeals

If the Coach wishes to appeal the Mentor's decision/recommendation following the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session, they follow the Delivery Centre appeals process. The Delivery Centre will have shared the appeals procedure with the Coach at the point of booking.

Data Protection

Any personal information held by a Mentor on the Coach, must be kept in accordance with the Delivery Centre GDPR, Data Processing and Data Protection policies.

Feedback from the Coach

Delivery Centres are required to gather, and act upon, feedback from coaches on the quality of the mentor session, sharing relevant information with mentors. Evidence of this should be retained for quality assurance purposes.

Feedback to Delivery Centres

Mentors are encouraged to provide written feedback to their Delivery Centre about any issues that may help with the general development of the awards. Feedback should be returned to the Delivery Centre Manager.

Appendix 1

Performance Coach Decision Making Model – The WHO WHAT HOW

This model is a useful tool to support coaches to develop their thinking about their decision making process as it links well to the Performance Coach role.

The model aims to represent the idea that the Coach is constantly engaged with the problem of improving a participant's development and performance. This requires them to be continually making, and fulfilling, decisions to enhance and optimise participants' and groups of participants' long-term development and wellbeing. Coaching practice (i.e. the way the Coach plans, delivers and reviews to facilitate learning and development) therefore involves a constant internal dialogue comparing plans, goals, tasks, and coaching strategies with the reality of their participant's

performance, improvement and state of mind. This problem solving and decision making process requires constant attention and evaluation of the influencing factors (i.e. the WHO, WHAT and HOW they are coaching, in the context of WHERE they are coaching, and their own beliefs, values, behaviours and skills - SELF). With the coach seeking maximum alignment between the learning environment created and the participant's performance, development and wellbeing (in line with their goals and aspirations).

References

The model is based on the work of Abrahams et al (2015). See reference overleaf.

Additional relevant references include:

Abraham, A., Collins, D. (2011). Effective Skill Development: How Should Athletes' Skills Be Developed? In Collins, D., Richards, H., & Button, A. (Eds.) *Performance Psychology: A Guide for the Practitioner*. Kidlington, Elsevier. Chapter 15.

Muir, B., Morgan, G., Abraham, A., Morley, D. (2011). Developmentally Appropriate Approaches to Coaching Children. In Stafford, I. (Eds) *Coaching Children in Sport*. Routledge. 17-37.

Till, K., Muir, B., Abraham, A., Piggott, D., & Tee, J. (2019). *A Framework for Decision-Making within Strength and Conditioning Coaching*. Strength & Conditioning Journal: 41(1) 14-26.

Performance Coach Decision Making Model – The WHO WHAT HOW



Adapted from Abrahams et al (2015)².

² Abraham, A., Saiz, S.L.J., Mckeown, S., Morgan, G., Muir, B., North, J., Till, K. (2015), 'Planning your coaching: a focus on youth participant development' in C. Nash (Ed.) Practical sports coaching, Abingdon: Routledge. Chapter 2.

Additional Information to Support Mentors

WHO: (analysis and goal setting)

- Motivations, goals and aspirations
- Wants and needs
- Values and beliefs
- Technical, tactical, physical, psychological profile
- Injury, health, well-being, recovery, sleep
- Age, stage, gender
- Social skills
- Social support
- Cognitive skills
- Emotional Intelligence
- Them as a learner
- Wider expectations

WHAT:

- Agility, Balance, Coordination
- Posture, Power Transfer...
- Technical Tactical, Physical, Psychological
- Activity demands



WHERE (The Context):

- The group
- The group dynamics
- Organisational values
- Other people (e.g. parents)
- Expected practice
- Traditions
- Available resources
- Environmental conditions

SELF:

- Values and beliefs
- Curiosity and hunger
- Skills
- Knowledge
- Behaviours
- Expectations
- Motivations
- Emotional Intelligence

HOW:

- Social environment, relationships
- Learning environment
- Task design, practice structure
- Coaching interventions
- Level of learner decision making