



# **Performance Coach Award Assessment Guidance**



## Introduction

This document provides specific guidance for Performance Coach Coaches, Facilitators, Mentors, Coach Developers and Assessors on assessment and the standards required for the British Canoeing Awarding Body Performance Coach Awards.

It is the guidance within this document that is used to inform assessment decisions and can be used by Coaches, Facilitators, Mentors and Coach Developers in preparation (or supporting Coaches in their preparation) for assessment.

This Assessment Guidance should be read in conjunction with the British Canoeing Awarding Body:

- Performance Coach Course Guide;
- Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Guidance;
- Performance Coach Coaching Philosophy Task;
- Performance Coach Delivery Centre Guidance;
- Performance Coach Evidence of Completion;
- Performance Coach Assessor Notes.

The 'Course Guide' provides details of the award and its general requirements, whilst the accompanying 'Assessor Notes' and 'Delivery Centre Guidance' expand on the organisational matters relating to assessment.

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## Assessment

Coaches are required to complete a mainly practical assessment.

It is the **blend** of evidence from the Coach's pre-assessment mentor session, practical coaching session/s, Assessor questioning, past experience and professional discussion that is assessed against the required standards.

During the assessment the Coach is required to show that they can use sophisticated coaching practices to enhance and optimise participants' and groups of participants' long term development and wellbeing. The required standards must not be considered in isolation but in the context of each other, their alignment with each other and in the context of the demands of the specific coaching moment.

### Pre-Assessment Mentor Session Presentation

During the online Pre-Assessment Mentor Session coaches are required to present and discuss their coaching philosophy and provide context and background into how and why the Coach goes about their coaching practice as they do.

This gives the Coach the opportunity to articulate their thinking and share examples to highlight the influences on their coaching practices. There are strong links between this presentation and the practical coaching assessment.

After the Coach has completed the Pre-Assessment Mentor Session, the Delivery Centre will provide the agreed Assessor with a copy of the recorded session and any supporting materials used. It is **essential** that these are reviewed by the Assessor prior to the practical coaching assessment, as the evidence is considered alongside both the observations from the practical coaching and professional discussion.

Please see the 'Performance Coach Pre-Assessment Presentation Guidance' and the 'Performance Coach Coaching Philosophy Task' for the brief.

## Practical Coaching

Coaches are required to organise, plan and deliver a minimum of 3-hours' quality coaching for a minimum of 2, maximum of 4, genuine learners (5-6 learners for Polo). The learners should be typical of the people they normally coach, and suitable for coaching in the stated award environments.

The 3-hours' quality coaching needs to be organised to suit the needs of the learners, in a realistic coaching environment. It could be through separate (linked) practice-based sessions, multiple smaller sessions, or one long session. Practice (not competition) based sessions that aim to develop technical and/or tactical performance must be used.

**Example:** A Performance Slalom Coach organises two learners with whom they have a long-term working relationship, and delivers two separate (linked) 60-minute practical gate-technique training sessions; each with at least 30-minutes of post session video analysis.

**Example:** A Performance White Water Kayak Coach (Advanced Water) arranges for a group of four unknown paddlers who are looking to develop their skills to become more independent in the advanced white water environment. The coaching takes place during a 5-hour river trip with some coaching breaks built in.

During the practical assessment the Coach is responsible for participants' safety, enjoyment and learning. They are responsible for gathering information about the participant needs, the environment and any safety-related matters, and using this information to ensure their session content and delivery meets the needs and motivations of the participants.

The Coach is responsible for recruiting and organising the participants they will be coaching, selecting venues, etc. This responsibility continues through until the participants depart and the practical assessment is concluded. Assessors must be a helpful and supportive resource, but should only take on responsibility where safety dictates or for matters that are not directly related to the assessment.

The Coach should coach participants typical of those they normally coach (e.g. age, ability, craft/class). Participants need to be suitable for coaching in the stated environmental definitions, and have goals relating to improving their performance in that environment. For example:

- Participants are able to paddle (and are looking to improve performance) in moderate sea conditions for Performance Sea Kayak Coach assessment;
- Participants are able to paddle (and are looking to improve performance) in advanced white water (grade 4) for Performance White Water Kayak Coach (Advanced Water) assessment.

The Coach is required to select venues/coaching to facilitate meaningful learning based on the needs of their participants; they need to be coaching either IN or FOR improved performance in the stated environmental definitions. The selection of appropriate venues and the recruitment of suitable participants are essential and interlinked components of the assessment process.

An assessment may need to be rescheduled if the required conditions are not forecast. The specifics of when this may happen will be pre-agreed with the Assessor. It is expected that the coach's repertoire includes all environments stated in the environmental definitions.

The Assessor and Coach should discuss and agree the length and content of the session/s; and how and when feedback will be provided. It is expected that both formative and summative feedback should be provided during the assessment process. It should be recognised that sharing information about what the Assessor has seen/still needs to see is important to support the Coach through the process. This may occur during appropriate breaks in the practical coaching.

## **Coaching in a Dynamic Environment**

The following guidance has evolved from the views and perceptions of British Canoeing Awarding Body coaches who deliver in the dynamic environment.

British Canoeing Awarding Body's framework and approach to learning is that we develop appropriate opportunities for the individual to progress. While supporting a flexible approach to delivery and not being restrictive, coaches need to consider selecting an environment that is most conducive to student learning.

With this in mind, when coaching to develop performance and understanding, coaches should consider setting practices and deliver coaching sessions to develop skills and understanding in a more controlled, less dynamic environment before committing a performer to an advanced/more complex environment. In doing this the learner's understanding and skill should develop so that the learner and Coach would feel comfortable to move to advanced, more complex environments. When in these environments, setting appropriate and structured practices and constraints will allow further learning to occur, before perhaps returning to a lesser environment for additional coaching input.

Such approach would require the ability to carry out a robust learner profile and select a venue that allows easy transition between various environmental conditions. This would take into account the stage of learning and allow monitoring of performers' comfort and stretch zones, allowing for safe skill progression as well as psychological and physiological development.

### **Professional Discussion**

Evidence will, in the main, be gathered from observation of performance. This will be supplemented by questioning and discussion regarding the observed behaviour, previous experience, the pre-assessment mentor session and/or scenario type situations. Questioning and discussion are important to support the Assessor's observations and to understand the coach's decision making process. Questioning and discussion would normally take place before, in between and after the observed sessions.

## Coaching Experience

In order to demonstrate the use of sophisticated coaching practices that enhance and optimise participants' and groups of participants' long-term development and wellbeing, the Coach must have a bank of extensive, recent and relevant coaching practice.

It is expected that by assessment the Coach has:

- extensive coaching experience, working in a full range of different conditions relevant to the award;
- experience of coaching an extensive range of technical and tactical topics relevant to the award and to the types/level of performers they typically coach;
- extensive experience utilising a wide range of coaching and leadership strategies relevant to the award and to their coaching scenario/s.

Note that the coaching experience may be limited to a specific participant population group (e.g. age, ability, craft/class) or cover a diverse range, depending on their normal coaching role.

The Assessor must be confident that the Coach has adequate evidence of experience. The experience will be used to underpin the coach's decision making process (see assessment criteria #13), and as the base for their reflection for action, reflection in action, and reflection on action (see assessment criteria #14). This evidence can be gathered through observation of performance and discussion/questioning regarding the observed performance, the pre-assessment mentor session, and through specific questioning regarding the coach's previous experience, its range and depth and how it has been used to develop and inform their coaching practices and decisions.



## Required Standards

During the assessment the Coach is required to show that they can use sophisticated coaching practices to enhance and optimise participants' and groups of participants' long term development and wellbeing. The following required standards must not be considered in isolation but in the context of each other, their alignment with each other and in the context of the demands of the specific coaching moment.

### **LO1. Inspire and motivate participants and groups of participants to achieve their goals:**

1. The Coach uses behaviours to inspire and motivate participants/groups of participants with an agreed vision. For example, the Coach:
  - works with participants to develop and articulate a positive, agreed and clear vision of the future that is relevant to each individual and the group;
  - motivates and inspires each individual participant to achieve that vision;
  - expresses belief, optimism and enthusiasm that the vision is achievable;
  - recognises and responds when motivation levels require a boost.
2. The Coach nurtures an environment with both team and individually-focused goals. For example, the Coach:
  - promotes cooperation among participants;
  - supports and develops both the group's vision and each individuals' vision;
  - encourages participants to work together towards the common goal/s;
  - encourages participants to support others to achieve their goals;
  - recognises and responds if there is conflict between team and individual goals;
  - develops a strong team attitude, team spirit and promotes teamwork.
3. The Coach sets the example they want to see in the group. For example, the Coach:
  - is a positive role model, sets an example for others to follow which is consistent with their values and their organisation's values;

- behaves as they want the participants to behave (e.g. cares about and respects the environment, the group, the sport, equipment, other people);
  - shows passion and enthusiasm for paddlesport, for the activity, for the task at hand, and for what others can/have achieved.
4. The Coach utilises and adapts their coaching practice to exploit or enhance existing motivations and boost intrinsic motivations. For example, the Coach:
- involves participants in their own goal setting and decision making;
  - uses their awareness of the participant's motivations<sup>1</sup> and motivation levels to steer coaching practices;
  - enhances and exploits participant's existing motivations;
  - uses and encourages a bias of mastery (rather than ego) focused performance and process goals and feedback;
  - uses/adapts coaching practices to influence feelings of competence, relatedness and autonomy to create a motivating learning environment;
  - creates a structured learning environment where informed participants can better achieve success and meet the set objectives.

**LO2. Prioritise accurate assessments of participant's and groups of participants' current medium-term and long-term performance development needs and wants:**

5. The Coach undertakes robust needs analysis that takes into account the 'whole' individual; considering all elements impacting/influencing performance. For example, the coach:

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<sup>1</sup> When we refer to 'motivations' throughout this assessment guidance we are referring to both the objective aspect (e.g. goal/s they aspire to achieve) and the internal or subjective aspect (factors that make their participation enjoyable). The 'enjoyment' element being influenced by satisfaction of basic human needs (e.g. food, water, sleep, warmth) and safety (e.g. physical and emotional), followed by need for feelings of competence, autonomy and relatedness.

- has strategies to gather accurate information about the participants (the whole person) and their current performance levels, strengths and weaknesses, stability of performance, stage of learning (e.g. observation, objective measures of performance, questioning, task setting);
  - accurately profiles the participants' changing technical, tactical, physical, psychological needs against the relevant performance demands associated with their aims or the task in hand;
6. The Coach utilises analysed information to plan, prioritise, set and amend goals with participants to support their ongoing and future development. For example, the Coach:
- considers and prioritises appropriate content and interventions to achieve the participant's short and long-term aims;
  - prioritises the most important/impactful areas of performance to reinforce or change;
  - works with participants in their own goal setting, contributing to developing goals that are relevant to their specific needs (and wants);
  - monitors the impact of goals on, and refocuses goals to influence, participants' motivation levels;
  - plans learner-centred, progressive activities to help each participant achieve their short and long-term aims;
  - reviews and measures performance with participants to support the ongoing analysis and revision of plans or goals.

**LO3. Utilise comprehensive technical and tactical understanding within their coaching practice:**

7. The Coach applies specialist knowledge of the performance demands of the discipline within their coaching practice. For example, the Coach:
- understands what it takes to develop and perform within their specialism;
  - understands the key techniques, tactics and their underpinning foundations;

- is grounded by safe, recognised and contemporary performance models for the core skills of the discipline;
- can adapt performance models to suit individual needs, physiology, psychology, equipment, motivations and goals in context of the environmental and task demands;
- recognises the influence that an individual participant's equipment (size, design, fit, use) has on their technical and tactical performance outcomes (and takes action to modify when appropriate);
- enables and supports participants to find their own effective solutions to technical and tactical performance challenges;
- integrates comprehensive technical and tactical understanding into selection of coaching strategies (and content) that are/is relevant to individual needs, in the context of the environmental and task demands.

**LO4. Use considered coaching strategies and practices to enhance and optimise performance of participants and groups of participants:**

8. The Coach selects from an extensive range coaching and leadership strategies<sup>2</sup>, practice methods and approaches;
9. The Coach responds and adapts to changing/developing wants and needs;
10. The Coach balances attention on meeting individual needs within groups of participants; and meeting the group's needs.

The range includes all coaching and leadership strategies, practice methods and approaches covered by the British Canoeing Awarding Body Coach Award. See Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria. 1.4–1.12 referencing session planning and delivery. This requires the Coach to be able to:

- plan progressive activities to achieve agreed aims;
- prepare the coaching environment;

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<sup>2</sup> Short-, medium- and/or long-term strategies will be used as required by the coach's specific coaching environment.

- prepare the participants for the coaching session/s and activities;
- identify technical and/or tactical focus for the session/s;
- select participant focused coaching and leadership strategies;
- appropriately structure progressive skill development activities;
- use effective communication to enhance the learning environment;
- ensure participants receive relevant feedback on performance;
- conclude the session.

The Coach is required to utilise an advanced level of sophistication compared to the Coach Award assessment requirements. Coaching tools, strategies and technologies are selected to maximise impact on both short-, and long-term learning, development and motivation. They are required to meet individual needs within groups of participants, whilst also meeting the group's needs (#10); skilfully using differentiation when required. They are also required to respond and adapt to changing and developing wants and needs (#9), both in the moment and within their planning. This requires the Coach to recognise when something is not working for the learner and to have a broad range of alternative ways to select from as possible alternatives. Skilfully utilising reflection for action, reflection in action (#14).

**LO5. Use strategies to develop and maintain high quality relationships with, and between, participants:**

11. The Coach connects with participants in a way that allows the Coach and participant to trust and commit to each other, work effectively together, and know and understand one another. For example, the Coach:
- implements strategies to help participants feel welcome and at ease, promotes mutual trust, respect and appreciation;
  - commits to getting to know the participant; their values, strengths, ambitions, fears, etc., seeks common ground and similarity with participants;
  - shows a commitment to maintain a close relationship with participants, with a sense of connectedness;
  - is calm, friendly, caring, trustworthy, empathetic and responsive/receptive towards participants' needs, feelings and perspectives;

- takes action when an effective, high quality relationship is not functioning, is compromised, or is at risk;
- treats everyone fairly, consistently, and ethically with their best interests at heart, ensures all participants feel included and valued equally;
- creates an environment where participants are free to express their thoughts;
- maintains clear boundaries between coaching relationships and personal friendships;
- sets and agrees relevant ground rules, boundaries, or codes of conduct;
- works with participants to share and agree what they expect of each other.

12. The Coach supports the social dynamics within groups of participants, encouraging them to trust and commit to each other; work effectively together, know and understand one another. For example, the Coach:

- supports an environment where participants can build and maintain positive relationships with each other, get to know and actively support each other; promoting a sense of connectedness, trust and respect between each other;
- utilises coaching strategies to promote social learning opportunities; a strong team attitude, team spirit and teamwork;
- takes action when effective, high quality relationships are not functioning, are being compromised, or are at risk;
- encourages and rewards participants when they behave positively towards each other, does not tolerate negative behaviour.

**LO6. Manage the complexities of maintaining participants' engagement, motivation, enjoyment and development:**

13. The Coach utilises decision-making and problem solving skills; monitoring and evaluation strategies; review and reflection to support participants' engagement, motivation, enjoyment and development within the coaching environment.

This requires the Coach to be able to integrate their understanding of the WHO, WHAT, HOW, WHERE and SELF, to inform both their slow and deliberate, and their fast and intuitive reasoning and decision making, through the Plan, Do, Review process. To do this, the Coach will need:

- to commit to understanding each participant and their needs (the WHO);
- understanding the discipline specific performance demands, and models (the WHAT);
- a broad range of coaching strategies and tools to draw upon to maximise development and motivation (the HOW);
- understanding of the context within which they are working (e.g. organisational values, accepted practices and traditions, resources, physical constraints, the influences of other people) (the WHERE);
- understanding of their own beliefs, behaviours and values (the SELF);
- a bank of extensive, recent and relevant coaching practice to underpin the decision making process;
- effective and practiced, planning, delivery and review skills.

This provides the foundations for the Coach to be able to:

- effectively select and adapt coaching strategies and content to enhance learning, motivation and engagement for participants and groups of participants;
- tailor coaching strategies, practices and content to individual needs in the context of the environmental and task demands;
- utilise the accurate review and evaluation of participants' performance, to progress or adapt participant goals and to further influence coaching delivery/activities.

#### **LO7. Demonstrate exceptional professional standards:**

14. The Coach uses reflection for action, reflection in action, and reflection on action, to enrich, refine and increase the effectiveness of their coaching practice. For example, the Coach:

- utilises the review of participants' performance to progress or adapt participant goals and to influence the effectiveness of coaching delivery/activities;
- the Coach utilises their bank of extensive, recent and relevant coaching practice, in a range of reflection tools to enrich, refine and increase the effectiveness of their coaching practice, and to generate/consider alternative approaches to coaching.

15. The Coach must demonstrate exceptional professional standards within their coaching environment in line with the British Canoeing Awarding Body Code of Conduct, including:

- respect and champion the rights of every individual to participate in sport and physical activity;
- develop relationships with their participants (and others) based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect;
- demonstrate proper personal behaviour and conduct at all times;
- demonstrate the competence and commitment to maximise the benefits and minimise the risks to the participants they coach.

16. The Coach maintains a high-quality, participant-focused environment, supporting the health, wellbeing, safety and all round development of participants in their care. The Coach is required to show they:

- care for participants' health, personal welfare and wellbeing;
- are committed to developing the whole person, and to developing their sporting performance in a sustainable way;
- are inclusive, recognising and valuing diversity;
- fulfil their safety responsibilities with due diligence, minimising the risk of injury to participants;
- can deal with a range of scenarios using well practiced rescue methods (see note regarding the assessment of rescue skills overleaf);
- have efficient and effective personal skills (see note regarding the Assessment of Personal Skills overleaf).



## **Assessment of Rescue Skills**

The expected range includes scenarios where:

- a paddler has capsized;
- an upright paddler is incapacitated;
- a paddler is unconscious with/in their craft;
- an upright paddler is entrapped (or swamped);
- the Coach themselves has capsized or fallen in the water (a self-rescue).

It is at the Assessor's discretion whether or not to sample specific rescues (if they did not occur naturally). Practical scenarios or questioning relating to the practical coaching assessment and the stated award environment or exploration and questioning in relation to previously gained experienced can be utilised. For further details regarding the expected standards, see the British Canoeing Awarding Body Coach Award Assessment Guidance.

## **Assessment of Personal Skills**

This element of assessment is applicable to all Performance Coach Awards with the exception of Freestyle, Polo, Racing, Slalom or Wild Water Racing Performance Coach assessments.

Coaches need to demonstrate efficient and effective personal skills to facilitate safe, quality, enjoyable coaching sessions in the upper end of the environments defined by the specific Award. Evidence from performance during the practical coaching assessment is likely to be adequate, supplemented with exploration and questioning in relation to previously gained experienced. If enough evidence has not been generated, the Assessor can use specific practical task setting. For further details regarding the expected standards, see the British Canoeing Awarding Body Coach Award Assessment Guidance.

17. The Coach applies knowledge of relevant legislation, deployment matters and professional responsibilities in their coaching practice. Including, for example:

- health and safety;
- child protection training and disclosure;
- first aid training;
- keeping up-to-date with current best practice;
- equality;
- data protection;
- medical declaration, working with injuries, physical competence;
- Duty of Care;
- Code of Conduct;
- incident reporting;
- injury prevention and manual handling;
- insurance;
- deployers' risk assessment and operating procedures.

**LO8. Demonstrate a sense of self-awareness; being able to illustrate how their values and beliefs underpin and shape their coaching practice:**

18. The Coach can explain and demonstrate how their values and beliefs underpin their coaching practice. The Coach:

- underpins coaching practice with a compatible and considered coaching philosophy (compatible with the British Canoeing Awarding Body Educational Philosophy<sup>3</sup> and the context in which they are operating);
- demonstrates coaching practice that is consistent with their declared values and beliefs.

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<sup>3</sup> See the 'Performance Coach Course Guide' for the British Canoeing Awarding Body Educational Philosophy.

Note: Utilise evidence from the Coach's pre-assessment mentor session and presentation, their practical coaching assessment, and professional discussion.

19. The Coach manages their emotions within the coaching environment. For example, the Coach:

- understands their actions, behaviours, words and expressions can affect participants' enjoyment, motivation, learning and performance;
- is attentive to how they react to others, and how others react to them;
- is aware of how they react in situations they find stressful, and can self-regulate or use coping strategies to avoid negative consequences;
- can utilise energy and emotions to direct attention and influence others;
- is skilful in handling social situations, conflict or negotiation;
- can portray a generally optimistic mood.

20. The Coach utilises awareness of their own bias, skills, values and beliefs in the management of the coaching environment. For example, the Coach:

- can mitigate against differences (and utilise alignments) between own bias, skills, values and beliefs, and that of participants, organisations, or the demands of the coaching situation;
- pays attention to personal bias, skills, values and beliefs to effectively maximise participant learning and motivation;
- uses a range of reflective tools to enhance self-awareness and monitor the effect of personal bias, skills, values and beliefs on the coaching environment.

## **The Appeals Procedure**

### **Appeals Arrangements**

Whenever Delivery Centres or candidates do not agree with BCAB assessment decisions or other decisions affecting them, they may lodge a formal appeal.

Whether it is the centre or the candidate wishing to appeal, an appeal must always be submitted in writing by the Delivery Centre and clearly outline the reason why it is

being submitted. Candidates should note that appeals must go through the appropriate process, and it is more than likely that these are resolved at an assessor and Delivery Centre level. For such a process, candidates should contact the specific Delivery Centre that is responsible for the assessment, rather than the Delivery Centre they are registered, if this is different. Appeals on a British Canoeing Awarding Body decision should be made within one month of the decision having been made and should be directed to the BCAB Responsible Officer. At this stage, due to an appeal against a decision made either by the Responsible Officer or the British Canoeing Awarding Body Committee, the appeal will be elevated to the Governance Department for an independent review and decision.