

Code of Ethics for Coaching and Mentoring



ACC requires our coach and mentor members to sign up to the ACC Coaching and Mentoring Code of Ethics. ACC recognises that many of our practitioners are also members of one of the professional bodies that accredit the profession, and that these members will also follow their professional body's code of ethics.

1. Definitions

ACC recognises there are numerous definitions of coaching and mentoring within the profession. The following definitions are taken from The Professional Charter for Coaching, Mentoring and Supervision 2021 which has European Mentoring and Coaching Council, Association for Coaching and International Coaching Federation as signatories.

The following definitions and quotations are from the [Professional Charter for Coaching, Mentoring and Supervision of Coaches, Mentors, and Supervisors 2021](#).

1.1 Coaching and mentoring

"Coaching, mentoring and supervision are activities within the area of professional and personal development with focus on individuals, groups and teams and relying on 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 or supervisor 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."

"Professionals in coaching, mentoring and supervision are individuals who adhere to ethical standards and hold particular knowledge and skills derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others. As professionals, they adhere to a Code of Ethics that requires behaviour and practice in respect of the services provided to the public and in dealing with professional colleagues that goes beyond the personal moral obligations of an individual."

1.2 Coaching

“Coaching can be described as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. Coaching is based on trust and listening, where the coach accompanies without advising, taking contextual factors into consideration. It is a dialogue which facilitates the client’s learning process by using professional methods and techniques to help the client to improve what is obstructive and nurture what is effective, in order to reach the client’s goals.”

“Coaching can be said to be based upon three axes: professional identity (values, qualities of being in relationship and interpersonal skills); frames of reference (expressed through professional knowledge, technical skills, and education in coaching and related fields) and practice (methods, tools, mobilization of strategic skills, and awareness of the social roles played by the coach). Within organisational contexts, coaching may include one-to-one (individual coaching) or one-to-several (group or team coaching) interactions.”

1.3 Mentoring

“Mentoring can be described as a learning relationship, involving the sharing of skills, knowledge, and expertise between a mentor and mentee through developmental conversations, experience sharing, and role modelling. The relationship may cover a wide variety of contexts and is an inclusive two-way partnership for mutual learning that values differences.”

1.4 Christian coaching and mentoring

At the core of Christian coaching and mentoring is the integration of the teachings of the Christian faith and the work of the Holy Spirit through practice. Christian coaches and mentors have a range of coaching and mentoring skills, and tools they offer their clients. They also believe in the transformational work of the Holy Spirit. It is the expectation that God is at work, and through him, in Christian coaching and mentoring, clients will experience greater wholeness and fullness of life.

This sacred context of the work of Christians coaches and mentors is upheld within a professional ethical framework and scope of practice that ensures that the client’s wellbeing, rights and autonomy are respected.

ACC recognises that Christian coaches and mentors will work with clients of all faiths and none. They may work across a range of contexts (some explicitly faith based and others secular).

In all situations they will:

- Work within the law.
- Recognise safeguarding concerns and respond appropriately.
- Adhere to a professional code of ethics.

Please also see the [Churchill Framework for Coaching and Mentoring](#).

2. Contracting practice

ACC coaches and mentors will follow rigorous contracting processes.

Coaches and mentors will contract with each of their clients/client sponsors (where appropriate). A written contract at the commencement of the coaching and mentoring relationship will be followed up by regular verbal re-contracting during sessions as appropriate.

The contracting process will include a conversation about how faith informs practice and what the client's expectations/preferences are in integrating their faith and belief in the coaching and mentoring relationship.

3. Why ACC code of ethics

Practitioners working as a coach or mentor may use different approaches but the need for a common faith-inclusive framework of ethics and good practice is shared, reflecting the expected and responsible actions and attitudes of coaches and mentors towards both their clients and themselves. Having an ethical framework that underpins work with clients who wish to integrate faith provides not only a supportive context for the client but enables safe practice and an opportunity for accountability.

3.1 Scope of practice and competence

ACC members must keep within their scope of practice by only practising in areas where they have appropriate competence, knowledge, skills and experience. They will signpost a client to other services if at any point they assess the client's needs as being beyond their scope of practice. Members must ensure that any information used to advertise or promote their practice does not mislead members of the public about their competency.

3.2 Personal integrity

ACC coaching and mentoring practitioners will act and behave in a professional manner during the mentoring/coaching relationship by adhering to the following:

- Not misleading others in the way they present themselves in terms of competency and qualifications.
- Maintaining appropriate professional confidentiality throughout the coaching/mentoring relationship and afterwards.
- Valuing all things shared in confidence, unless there is a likelihood of harm to self or others, or there has been a disclosure of abuse.
- Always acting within the law and not encouraging, colluding or assisting in law-breaking behaviour.
- Dealing with any potential conflicts of interest as soon as they are aware of them and resolving them swiftly and professionally.
- Acting with fairness and respect in any financial transactions they make in mentoring/coaching relationships.
- Being open to the exploration of different Christian viewpoints, expressions of faith and spirituality and allowing the coachee/mentee to come to their own conclusions.
- Caring for themselves physically, psychologically and spiritually, so that they are fit to provide support to others.
- When communicating in any public sphere, do so in ways that are respectful to all, avoiding discrimination and hate speech/crimes.

3.3 Professionalism in practice

ACC coaching and mentoring practitioners will strive to provide a supportive and professional experience during the mentoring/coaching relationship by adhering to the following:

- Continuing to develop their personal relationship with God and grow in maturity of faith.
- Actively seeking knowledge, experience and wisdom to develop as a coach/mentor.
- Using a variety of mentoring and coaching tools, techniques, gifts and skills to support the coachee/mentee's decisions and growth.
- Using an agreed contract/covenant which outlines the parameters of the relationship.
- Respecting the right of others to make decisions for themselves.
- Signposting to other services when they are conscious that continuing in the relationship would be outside their individual limits of competence.
- Seeking to provide a suitable and appropriate framework for the coaching/mentoring relationship through a process of contracting, reviewing and ending the relationship.
- Appropriately managing expectations within the coaching/mentoring relationship.
- Appropriately managing dual/parallel relationships with clients and colleagues.
- Considering safeguarding best practice, with all clients, not just vulnerable people.
- Refraining from conversion therapy practices in line with ACC's commitment to the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy.
- Maintaining a relationship with a suitably qualified person (supervisor) to whom they can be accountable in the coaching/mentoring work they undertake.
- Having the provision of an appropriate insurance policy when working as an independent practitioner.
- Keeping updated and complying with changes in relevant UK laws including the equality and data protection acts, and statutory guidance including safeguarding.
- When based overseas ensuring that they take due account of laws and regulations relevant to their work in the country of residence.
- When working with overseas clients ensuring that they take due account of the client's setting when considering safeguarding actions.

ACC are grateful for the input of Alison Cansdale, Jennie Fytche and Sue Iqbal in drawing up this code of ethics.