South West Coaching and Mentoring Pool: Code of Conduct

The SW Coaching & Mentoring Pool expect all of their coaches to maintain a high standard of coaching practice. SW Councils co-ordinates and oversees the operation of the Pool

All coaches working under the banner of the SW Coaching and Mentoring Pool are required to work to the following Code of Conduct which has been adapted from the Association for Coaching and EMCC Code of Ethics and Good Practice.

1. Coaches are required to maintain records appropriately and confidentially. They are also expected to encourage their coachees to complete evaluation forms if requested by SW Councils (who randomly sample coaching programmes to ensure quality standards are maintained).

2. Members of the Pool are prohibited from coaching to generate income or to generate other business via the Pool unless specifically agreed by South West Councils

3. Coaches are required to recognise both personal and professional limitations:
    - **Personal –** with respect to maintaining their own skill, knowledge and fitness to practice. Should this not be the case, coaches must inform South West Councils and withdraw from practice until such time as they are fit to resume. If a coach is currently coaching, their client will be offered an alternative coach.
    - **Professional** – with respect to whether their experience is appropriate to meet the client's requirements. When this is not the case, clients should be referred to other appropriate services e.g. counsellors, psychotherapists or other specialist services. Coaches can seek advice from and inform SW Councils of any action taken (without the need to disclose confidential information). In particular, coaches are required to be sensitive to the possibility that some clients will require more psychological support than is normally available within the coaching remit. In these cases, referral should be made to an appropriate source of care eg the client's, GP, a counsellor or psychotherapist, psychological support services or agencies.

4. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that clients are fully informed of the coaching contract, Terms and Conditions, and any evaluation processes, prior to or at the initial session. It is important to ensure that the coach is fully aware of matters including confidentiality and the commitment to attend the agreed sessions.

5. Coaches are required to be frank and willing to respond to their client's requests for information about the methods, techniques and ways in which the coaching process will be conducted. This should be done both prior to the contracting stage and throughout the coaching contract.

6. Coaches must be sensitive to issues of culture, religion, gender, race and diversity. If coaches require any additional support or information, South West Councils will endeavor to support coaches by researching and providing information or support on request.

7. Coaches must respect the right of the client to terminate coaching at any point during the coaching process. South West Councils must be advised if this occurs.

8. Coaches should ensure the strictest level of confidentiality is maintained unless release of information is required by law. Coaches are required to maintain and subsequently dispose of any records of their work with clients confidentially and securely. The client will have access to these records in accordance with their rights under current legislation. There should be clear agreement with clients (and sponsors as appropriate) about the conditions under which confidentiality will not be maintained (e.g. illegal activity, danger to self or others etc.).

9. Coaches are required to maintain the quality of their work and to utilise feedback wherever possible from clients and their organisations.

10. Coaches are required to undertake continuing professional development in the theory and practice of coaching and are encouraged to attend the Annual South West CPD Coaching Conference.

11. Coaches should ideally engage in supervision with a suitably qualified supervisor or peer supervision group and discuss any ethical dilemmas and potential, or actual, breaches of this code with their supervisor or peer supervision group for support/guidance.

12. Coaches are required to keep themselves informed of any statutory legal requirements that may affect their coaching work.

13. Where coaches from one Pool organsiations are working externally with a coachee from another Pool organisation, coaches are required to ensure that they have ongoing approval from their employing organisation to

operate as an external coach within the Coaching Pool so that they are covered by their organisation's Professional Liability Insurance. It is important to note that a coach who does not comply with this Code of Conduct (particularly in relation to 3 above) will not be covered by their organisation's Professional Liability Insurance. [Independently employed coaches must confirm to South West Councils that they hold Professional Liability Insurance].

14. Coaches are required to consider the impact of any dual relationship that they may hold with regard to their clients and/or their sponsoring organisations.

15. Where coaches engage in any media or publicity concerning the Coaching Pool they should ensure that South West Councils is aware, ideally in advance.

16. Complaints made against Coaches will be dealt with through SW Councils complaints procedure and coaches will be expected to co-operate with any investigation .

17. Coaches must act at all times in a manner that does not bring the coaching profession, the SW Coaching Pool, or their own organisation into disrepute. In particular, coaches must at all times respect the confidentiality of the coaching process only disclosing information with the express permission of the client, unless their professional concern for the welfare of the client or the organisation in which they work can justify such disclosure.

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