



Coach Competences and Standards in Academies and Schools

A partnership between Leadership Partners and Executive Edge

Academies and schools often use the term *coaching* to describe a leadership style or a method to improve classroom practice, as well as being an effective method used in staff development.

This is a process whereby *Academies and Schools* can provide a structured and *Sustainable* 3 tier **Coaching Accreditation System** together within a COACHING CPD programme.

This has been developed in Hong Kong by Accredited Coach Hugh Todd (www.toddexecutiveacademy.com) where coaching principles are seen by a growing number of international schools as a key pillar in classroom practice and leadership development.



Photo from: King George V International School. Hong Kong.

Accreditation Requirements:

- **Attendance at a Coach Accreditation Training workshop** (90 mins) to explain, illustrate, and build understanding of the 3 levels of coach competence and the evidence needed to apply for accreditation.
- **Registration and active participation in one of the 3 coaching programmes**
- **Assessment and Accreditation.**

Successful accreditation will be evidence based. The following sources of evidence are suggested:

1. **Written reflection** on learning from training courses, independent learning, reading, conferences, & workshops. A suggested template for such reflection is provided.
2. **Self evaluation** using our description of coaching standards – with evidence to support key strengths identified.
3. **Testimonials** from coaching clients
4. **Coaching Supervision** to review the validity and reliability of self assessment and to reflect on practice and learning
5. **Training and Leadership** – a demonstrated willingness and ability to effectively train others in coaching principles, mind-set and skills, and leadership by example. In the case of a masterful coach this would be over a sustained period of time.

Submitting the Accreditation:

The written evidence will be submitted *on the templates provided*. This will take an academic year at **Master** level (to include a Viva as part of the reflective final submission), no less than 6 months (2 terms) at **Practitioner** level, and no less than 3 months at **Foundation** level. Prior learning will be taken into account.

A school coach at Practitioner level, can top up to become a Master coach with evidence of additional learning, coaching practice and testimonials.

Feedback and action planning: Certification, acknowledgement, and suggestions on strategies for individual development going forward in the light of the level achieved will be communicated directly to the participant.

Master Coach: This comprises **extensive personal learning** about coaching principles and practice, and involves consistent application of coaching skills and learning over a significant period of time. Master coaches have reliable evidence of high levels of coaching skills, and help to lead the development of effective coaching in the academy/school community. This would represent the equivalent of 40 hours of underpinning learning from coaching texts or leaders.

To gain accreditation at Master Coach level each applicant will:

- Show that they have undertaken rigorous self reflection to identify their own priorities for growth and development. At school leader level for example, this might be represented by having undertaken the Leadership Edge 360.
- Provide evidence of championing and leading the systematic development of coaching skills and attitudes, and as a pedagogy in their organisation.
- Have records to demonstrate a minimum of **15** hours of coaching others, with a minimum of two coaches, and will include evidence of being a mentor-coach in their setting.
- Have selected from at least **6** of the range of learning opportunities from the programme's 'a la carte' menu of learning and have notes of their reflections.
- Have engaged in additional online learning and relevant independent study.
- Be able to demonstrate understanding of/or practice of relevant coaching models, such as -
Lesson Study based coaching; Performance coaching (Carol Wilson); Instructional coaching (Jim Knight); GROW (John Whitmore); Situational Leadership based coaching (Ken Blanchard.)
- Experience at least one observed 1-1 coaching session with a follow up coaching conversation with a suitably qualified external coach.
- Submit a reflection piece of **a minimum of 1600 words** providing evidence of the **Coach competencies** at **Master Coach** level:
 - Coaching Principles
 - Active and Reflective Listening
 - Reality Checking
 - Ideas into action (Praxis)
 - Partnership
 - Mindset and
 - Feedback skills
- Undertake a viva of 60 minutes with a representative of Leadership Edge, including a client scenario where the applicant can demonstrate their competence, and discussion of how they can continue to develop going forward.

Practitioner Coach: This comprises **personal learning** about coaching principles and practice, and involves consistent application of coaching skills and learning over a reasonable period of time, no less than 6 months. Applicants have reliable evidence of increased levels of coaching skills, and help to support the development of effective coaching in the school. This would represent the equivalent of 20 hours of underpinning learning from coaching texts or leaders.

To gain accreditation at Competent Practitioner School Coach level, each applicant will:

- Show that they have been willing to self reflect and to identify their own priorities for growth and development. Undertaking Leadership Edge's Coaching Skills 360 assessment would be an effective example.
- Demonstrate how they have actively supported the development of coaching practice in their organisation.
- Have records to demonstrate a minimum of **8** hours of coaching others with a minimum of two coachees in their setting.
- Have selected from at least **4** of the range of learning opportunities from the programme's 'a la carte' menu of learning and have notes of their reflections.
- Have engaged in additional online learning and relevant independent study.
- Experience an observed coaching session with feedback from a fellow coach.
- Submit a reflective piece of a **minimum of 1200 words** demonstrating evidence of the **Coach Competencies** at **Practitioner Coach** level.
 - Coaching Principles
 - Active and Reflective Listening
 - Reality Checking
 - Ideas into action (Praxis)
 - Partnership
 - Mindset and
 - Feedback skills
- Discuss this reflective piece with a Leadership Edge representative and explore strategies for further ongoing development of skills and learning.

Foundation School Coach Level: This comprises evidence of **personal learning** about coaching principles and practice. Successful applicants can demonstrate that they have consistently applied the competences in the way described for foundation level over at least one school term, and to have received coaching as a client.

To gain accreditation of Foundation Level School Coach each practitioner will:

- Have records to demonstrate a minimum of **5** coaching sessions received
- Show that they have studied and genuinely understood the coaching competences as described
- Also have read, watched and discussed available material on the subject of coaching.
- Submit a short reflective piece **no less than 600 words** providing evidence of the **Coach Competencies** at **Foundation Coach** level competencies:
 - Coaching Principles
 - Active and Reflective Listening
 - Reality Checking
 - Ideas into action (Praxis)
 - Partnership
 - Mindset and
 - Feedback skills

CONTENT & COSTS (year 1 pilot)

Master Coach	Practitioner Coach	Foundation Coach
Introductory face to face workshop	Introductory face to face workshop	Introductory face to face workshop
Online materials/personal learning	Online materials/personal learning	Online materials
Leadership Edge online coach- mentor	Leadership Edge online coach- mentor	Leadership Edge online coach- mentor
* 360 feedback report		
1-1 observed session by external coach	1-1 observed session by Master coach	5 received coaching sessions and 5 trainee coach sessions
Evidence of 15 hours of coaching delivered (evidence of testimonials within reflective piece)	Evidence of 8 hours of coaching delivered (evidence of testimonials within reflective piece)	Evidence of personal impact from coaching received within reflective piece
Assessment/feedback	Assessment/feedback	Assessment/feedback
Viva session		
PRICES PP £950	£550	£100

*£100 (deducted if recent 360 report is available)

Individual school package:

5 @ Foundation level	£ 500.00
2 @ Practitioner level	£ 1,100.00
2 @ Masters level	£ 1,900.00
Programme total:	£ 3,300.00

APPENDIX 1

Coach Competences and Standards in Academies and Schools

All coaches would be expected to demonstrate that they strongly value **empowering others to achieve their full potential, that they have the humility to know that they do not always know what is best, the honesty to be accurately self critical and aware, and the discipline to deliver on whatever they commit to and/or organise.** Specifically,

A Master Coach ...

... **has undertaken extensive learning** about coaching principles and practice, and has consistently applied that learning over a significant period of time. They have reliable evidence of high levels of skills, and help to lead the development of effective coaching in the school.

... **helps each of us to achieve clarity of mind** through their intense, active and reflective listening while remaining fully present and attentive at all times. They are able to take high quality notes while listening. They are non judgmental, yet think critically about what we share and ask thought provoking, open questions. They are able to point out blind spots and different perspectives that illuminate whatever we are struggling to understand. Their support, encouragement, honest reflection and observations brings out new clarity, and reduces or eliminates confusion and misunderstandings. Their own skills in self management provide a model that we strive to emulate.

... **gets us on track, and keeps us there** by encouraging us to make ourselves accountable. They are willing to nail the coachee down by honestly reminding us of our own previous commitments and values without blaming or judging. They are able to help us to turn abstract ideas into practical and realistic ways forward.

... **helps us to focus on the future and find solutions** by skilfully moving from the current reality to solution finding, using appropriate processes or frameworks to guide and structure the conversation. They help to open up new ideas and possibilities in our minds, then encourage us to make our choice of the best available strategy to achieve our goals. They ensure that we have clarity and optimism about our next and future steps, and that we are aware of whatever might get in the way of progress – and to have tactics ready to counter these.

... **works with the coachee in a partnership** where the coach is highly skilled in building a safe, trusting relationship where we each bring something of value to the conversations. They help us to form an essential agreement at the outset where mutual expectations are shared and clearly understood. The coach does not appear like an all-knowing expert, yet has plenty of high quality suggestions to provoke our thinking. They want us to succeed without owning the success or the way forward,

and remind us to retain responsibility for the challenges and strategies that emerge. They have the courage and the honesty to point out potential flaws in our own thinking and behaviour.

... **has unfailingly great attitudes.** They are brilliant at being able to maintain emotional distance while still caring enough about the coachee to move forward. They have high levels of empathy without resorting to sympathy. They have impeccable integrity and honesty. Remorselessly positive, they see possibilities and opportunities in every situation and are able to encourage and reassure without pretending that everything is okay. A masterful coach has the humility to assume that they still have something to learn, and that what worked for them in the past may not be ideal for others in their own unique situations.

... **skilfully helps us to find ways of achieving *our own* accurate, evidence-based self assessment** of whatever we are focusing on. This includes encouraging us to gather feedback from others. They make us think clearly and objectively about both strengths and needs in our professional and personal development, and challenge us to face up to truths that we might otherwise avoid, whether these be strengths or challenges that we fail to acknowledge.

They skilfully focus the conversation on ideas for how we can do things differently in the future (including 'feed-forward' suggestions from respected colleagues), then work together with us on how to improve practice.

They also understand that we react emotionally to feedback and help us to respond objectively, with curiosity and a willingness to evaluate observations and suggestions before deciding whether they are justified and helpful and how to change if appropriate.

A Practitioner Coach ...

... has taken additional training and learning about coaching and regularly coaches colleagues and others. They have continued to practise coaching skills over a reasonable period of time, and engage regularly in reflection on the quality of their practice as a coach.

... is a skilled and willing listener who asks relevant questions that help us to clarify our thinking. They reflect back accurately what we have been expressing and check understanding regularly. At times they notice something that we might be struggling to share or understand, and help us to identify this.

... regularly reminds us of our stated intentions and commitments and checks to find out if we are keeping on track. They draw coaching conversations to a close by helping us to decide on our best way forward.

... is able to use a logical process to guide our conversation towards the future and to find practical solutions. They help us to generate new ideas and to plan effective strategies.

... is able to establish a safe, trusting relationship from the outset and does not talk down to the coachee, offering ideas and suggestions without expecting these suggestions to be the right or best way forward.

... is usually able to remain positive whatever the circumstances, and to maintain objectivity while showing understanding and caring. They are open to new ideas and learning, are consistently authentic and honest.

... encourages us to think clearly and objectively about our practice and to seek out evidence of both strengths and needs for development. They help us to ask for suggestions from colleagues and to be open to feedback.

A Foundation Coach

... demonstrates that they have learned and understood basic coaching principles and skills.

... is willing to listen and try to use listening skills to help us to express ourselves more clearly.

... is willing to try to remind us of our stated commitments and intentions.

... reminds us to look ahead and to choose a way forward, and may suggest one or two alternative courses of action without becoming directive.

... is able to treat others like an adult without lecturing, and without leaving it entirely up to them to either sink or swim.

... shows caring and understanding, and tries to remain positive and optimistic.

... encourages us to ask for feedback and to take responsibility for listening openly to suggestions.
