

## Accreditation for coaching – Where is it heading?

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### Introduction

This article aims to raise questions in your mind about the ways professional standards are developing in the coaching profession. It is relevant to coaches and training providers regarding recognised and relevant accreditation and as someone who procures training for others. The author is a coach working in a corporate context who decided to share some research conducted when she was determining her own path for accreditation.

By researching the various bodies that are emerging to govern this field, it became clear there are some interesting connections. In several cases the “independent awarding body” is strongly linked to a coaching provider and one wonders how this demonstrates independence. When describing the governing body you might like to ask how this is selected and who the representatives are. The links are provided at the end of this article and you are invited to make up your own mind with your eyes open.

### Different approaches – which is right for you?

Many people call themselves coaches and their approach, capabilities and results will vary from teaching skills to working at a transformational level. Asking questions to understand what is appropriate for you whether a coach, client or HR professional is critical.

How can an organisation or an individual determine what constitutes a good coach? Which accreditation is the most relevant?

This is going to depend on what you are seeking. Decide what you are aiming to achieve and research thoroughly. Each website offers you an insight into their approach, ethical guidelines and standards. Find out who are the key people guiding the body forward, what do they believe in? Ask whether they are strongly aligned to a provider and if there are financial links. This will help you to decide independence.

Often there are links to coaches and you can call a variety up to establish what they provide.

### Primary coaching bodies in UK/ Europe

From initial searches it would appear that the primary groups who are currently relevant in the UK market as providing a broader direction of travel for setting standards for coaching are in alphabetical order: the AC, APECS, BPS through the CPF, CIPD, ECI, EMCC, and the ICF. Some of these are UK specific whilst others are European or US based. ENTO is currently developing National Occupational Standards for coaching activity in the workplace.

### Association for Coaching. [www.associationforcoaching.com](http://www.associationforcoaching.com)

‘The AC is an independent and non-profit organisation which aims to operate as an ethical and responsible association of members, and to advance the professionalism of Coaching across the industry’. Offers a ‘grandparenting’ accreditation scheme for coaches and a recognition scheme for coach training providers.

**The Association for Professional Executive Coaching and Supervision.**

[www.apecs.org](http://www.apecs.org)

APECS is relatively new and states it is 'a top level professional body for fully qualified Executive Coaches and Executive Coaching Supervisors'. Offers accreditation for qualified coaches and supervisors.

**Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development** [www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk)

'CIPD is the professional body for those involved in the management and development of people'. Spring 2006 launched coaching training for people at work.

**Coaching Psychology Forum** [www.coachingpsychologyforum.co.uk](http://www.coachingpsychologyforum.co.uk)

For members or affiliate members of the British Psychological Society. Does not offer qualifications.

**European Coaching Institute.** [www.europeancoachinginstitute.org](http://www.europeancoachinginstitute.org)

'Europe's Accreditation Body for Coaches and Coach Training Providers'

**European Mentoring and Coaching Council.** [www.emccouncil.org](http://www.emccouncil.org)

'EMCC exists to promote good practice and the expectation of good practice in mentoring and coaching across Europe'. Does not offer qualifications.

**The International Coach Federation** [www.coachfederation.org/ICF](http://www.coachfederation.org/ICF)

'The International Coach Federation is an international professional association of personal and business coaches that seeks to preserve the integrity of coaching around the globe'. Offers three levels of coach certification.

**Summary**

There is a plethora of offerings for accreditation if you are a coach and a minefield of choice as an organisation in choosing the right awarding body. The best advice is to research with your eyes wide open. When choosing the style of coaching ask questions and establish what you can expect.

This article will end with an appropriate quote "We do not receive wisdom we must discover it for ourselves." Marcel Proust (1871 - 1922)

If you have any queries and comments to make about this article please contact [Anne.Archer2@btinternet.com](mailto:Anne.Archer2@btinternet.com)

If you have found this article helpful and would like further information on any aspect of coaching, please contact [www.associationforcoaching.com](http://www.associationforcoaching.com)

The Association for Coaching is an independent professional body promoting best practice, raising awareness and standards across the UK and Ireland Coaching Industry, while providing value added benefits to its members – whether they are Professional Coaches or Organisations involved in Coaching.

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