

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Coaching Supervisor Accreditation

Why has the AC introduced a Coaching Supervisor Accreditation scheme?

The coaching industry has now matured to the extent that buyers of coaching services, both individuals and organizations, require ways to compare and differentiate between coaches and having supervision is a clear indication of quality. Coaches therefore need a quality benchmark to use when selecting a supervisor.

An accreditation process requires a coaching supervisor to take considerable time and care to meet the criteria, demonstrate a commitment to client care and professional development. Although accreditation cannot eliminate bad practice completely, in conjunction with an effective Code of Ethics and Good Practice it does encourage standards of excellence.

I have already invested in Coaching Supervisor training, why do I need to be accredited as well?

The market for coaching is becoming more demanding and buyers want to be confident about the quality of coach supervision. Whereas a qualification indicates that at a point in time you had a certain level of competence, accreditation additionally illustrates that:

- you are applying that competence in practice;
- you have established a successful track record with clients over a substantial period of time;
- you recognize the emergent nature of your supervision practice and seek out regular supervision of your own work;
- you work professionally through:
 - adhering to a code of ethics; and
 - continuing your professional development and reflective practices.

What kind of person is expected to apply?

Anyone with sufficient experience of supervising coaches who believes they have the necessary skills, values and qualities. You will need to be a member of the AC.

How will the capability of applicants be assessed?



Recognising the complexity of approaches in the market for coaching supervisors, our main concerns when assessing an application are demonstration of the AC Coaching Supervision Principles and the congruence of approach. We will review a philosophy statement alongside a recorded supervision session and a reflective review of that session. Whilst individual supervision styles might vary we want to ensure that if a coaching supervisor is marketing their services to a potential client, the client will “get what it says on the tin”. As you might expect there are also some more quantitative elements – the number of coaching supervision hours delivered, the depth of the training and ongoing CPD as well as references from clients and the applicant’s supervisor.

What are the key advantages of becoming accredited for coaching supervisors?

Organisations see accreditation as an increasingly important factor in their choice when hiring an external coach, and those who use coaching supervisors will view accreditation in a similarly favourable light. It also allows you to benchmark yourself against high professional standards, and to provide reassurance to buyers of coaching supervision regarding your level of experience and capability. In a competitive situation, accreditation could give you an edge. Finally, applicants find the accreditation process a useful process of reflection and professional and personal development.

How much time and effort will it take to apply?

The AC has worked to make it as simple as possible to complete the necessary paperwork and provide evidence. For example you make a declaration of your coaching supervision hours rather than provide a detailed log. It’s possible that we could ask for this detail at a later stage and we will spot check a number of applications each year. It also depends on what you might already have available to “cut and paste” into your application form. For example some supervisor training programmes require you to articulate your own model of coaching supervision. If you are already an AC Accredited Coach you may be able to use some of that submission and build on it for your supervisor application. We have lots of guidance to support you. It is anticipated that it will take most applicants in the region of 10 – 20 hours to pull it all together.

As with coaching, supervisors come in all shapes and sizes from a multitude of disciplines, surely that will make it quite difficult to standardize?

The scheme is designed to be inclusive of coaching supervisors from different backgrounds, training and experience rather than prescribing a single route to accreditation. It focuses on accrediting fitness to practise rather than being overtly academic or theoretical. Applicants are



expected to broadly work within the AC Coaching Supervision Principles that we expect applicants to be observing.

What happens if I don't meet all of the criteria but I'd still like to be considered?

The AC aims to be an inclusive professional coaching body. If you are an experienced coaching supervisor, the AC encourages you to still consider applying. The AC will ask you to show how your coach and coaching supervisor related qualifications and experience have enabled you to work in a robust manner. Please refer to the AC Coaching Supervisor Accreditation Overview and, if you are not clear whether you qualify after reading this, please contact us on accreditationoffice@associationforcoaching.com.

I work as a Coaching Supervisor with groups rather than on a one-to-one, can I apply for accreditation?

Yes, we require you to confirm a minimum of 60 hours of group supervision experience.

I work with both groups and individuals, can I apply for accreditation?

Yes, we require you to confirm a minimum of 90+ individual and group coaching supervision hours (with a minimum of 45 hours in either category).

Will the AC require Accredited Coaches to have supervision from AC Accredited Coaching Supervisors?

No. We recognise that not all coaching supervisors will wish to become accredited with the AC and that Accreditation for coaching supervision is relatively new in the market, so it may take time for Accreditation to become the standard. There are however some minimum standards set out in the Coach Accreditation guidelines regarding whom it is appropriate for accrediting coaches to seek a Supervisor reference from.

I am already an accredited supervisor with another body. Can I be accredited automatically by the AC, without going through the full process?

Whilst we are keen to collaborate with the other professional coaching bodies, at the moment we do not have any reciprocal arrangements. However, if you have recently accredited as a coaching supervisor with another professional coaching body you are most welcome to re-use recordings or any other materials as part of your AC submission.



I have been supervising coaches for many years yet don't have formal coaching supervisor training. Will I be able to apply?

If you don't have formal coaching supervisor training you will need to demonstrate how you have acquired the underpinning theory and knowledge in order to practise. You are encouraged to apply as long as you can make a case for equivalence to coaching supervisor training.

I am a credentialed coach with a different professional body. Does that meet the requirement for an AC Accredited Coaching Supervisor?

Our intention is to be inclusive. Provided that the other professional body is a well known coaching association and you have accumulated a minimum of 250 hours of coaching experience, then this is likely to meet the AC's requirements. For example: If you are a PCC or MCC with the ICF this will meet the requirement.

How long will it take to get the results of my application?

A lot of this depends on demand – we aim to turn around all applications within three months, although it may take up to six months in busy periods. Please note the process will not begin until all your documentation has been submitted to the AC and payment received.

I have a very experienced and accredited supervisor who I also work with in another capacity (we train coaches together). Will my supervision meet the requirements?

As we are an inclusive body, we ask that you sign a declaration to say that you manage the boundaries of your Supervisor/Supervisee relationship in respect of any dual relationship you may have e.g. as Colleague, Business Partner or Manager

Why do I need to be an accredited coach in order to apply for accreditation as a Coaching Supervisor?

We have consulted with AC members about what was valuable to them when choosing a potential supervisor. In addition to the supervisor having appropriate training, there was a strong desire for the supervisor to have a depth and breadth in their experience of coaching. Requiring coach accreditation is a robust way of ensuring equivalence to the depth and breadth of the coaching expertise.



The AC requires evidence of my own supervision for at least the last 12 months. What happens if I have recently changed supervisors?

In these circumstances we would suggest you provide a reference from both your current and your previous Supervisor.

I have more than 10 hours of evidence of my own supervision, but for a period of less than 12 months, is this acceptable?

No, the AC require that you have had your own supervision spanning over a breadth of time, the minimum of which is 12 months.

I have 10 hours of evidence of my own supervision but this spans the last two years, not the last twelve months, is this acceptable?

Yes, as long as the ratio between your client session hours versus your own supervision is appropriate.

How long do I need to be an accredited coach for before I can be accredited as a supervisor?

There is no prescribed amount of time – you could accredit as both at the same time. What matters is that you meet all the criteria of the Coach Accreditation and the Coaching Supervisor Accreditation processes.

What experience or qualifications do I need to apply for accreditation with the AC?

There's no quick answer to this! Have a look at the AC Coaching Supervisor Accreditation Overview, and then you'll find more information in the Applicant Guide.



The Coaching Supervisor Accreditation application process - common mistakes and how to avoid them

- **Do read through the entire application form and applicant guide thoroughly before you begin collating your evidence**

Step one is to carefully read through all the documentation from start to end as it will help you understand the complete picture and know what needs to happen to successfully complete your application

- **Do ask questions if anything is unclear**

If your questions aren't answered by this 'Frequently Asked Questions' document, please contact accreditationoffice@associationforcoaching.com

- **If you do not meet the criteria, do build your written case before submitting**

The process aims to be flexible and inclusive, however please help us by drawing attention to any areas where you do not meet the official criteria and building a case (in 500 words or less) as to why your application should be considered e.g. If you have no formal qualification but have built up your expertise through other means.

- **Do be congruent in terms of what you say you do in your philosophy statement and what actually happens in your recorded session**

In your recorded session, we do not expect you to cover every possible model, theory, style etc that you have mentioned as influencing your work as a supervisor. But we do expect to recognise your philosophy in the approach we hear. A key question we are asking is "Do you do what you say you do?" We suggest that you choose a recording that showcases your approach to supervision and your style. If you do or say something that seems different to your philosophy, we expect you to notice this and comment in your reflective statement, explaining why you chose to take a different approach at this time.

- **Do adhere to the suggested maximum number of words for any section**

The maximum word count is an upper limit and we do not expect this to be exceeded. However, please use as much of the word count as possible to make your point, writing too little is not likely to provide the level of detailed analysis required.

- **Do separate your ‘CPD’ activity from your core training**

It will help your assessors if you can clearly identify what training you did that helped form your underpinning coaching supervision understanding (this would be your core training) and what you did by way of “top up” (this would be your CPD).

We expect your core training to directly relate to coaching supervision and form a comprehensive and complete programme of learning, however constituted. This training should have enabled you to acquire the core principles and competencies outlined in the AC Coaching Supervision Framework.

‘CPD’ activity is ongoing learning and could consist of less ‘formal’ training and include areas that inform your coaching supervision more indirectly. This could include both input and output activity, for instance ‘inputs’ could be: attending a conference or event, reading a book, etc. ‘Outputs’ could include: Delivering a presentation on coaching supervision, writing a paper, etc.

- **Do ensure you have had a sufficient amount of consistent supervision yourself – over an adequate time period**

We are looking to see that you have an ongoing relationship with a supervisor, as well as having reached the minimum number of hours for your own supervision. We suggest a minimum of 10 hours spread over a one year period to demonstrate that.

If your 10 hours were all conducted within a short space of time this would reflect an unusual level of intensity in the relationship with your supervisor and is unlikely to have afforded you adequate time for independent reflection between sessions. If the 10 hours was spread over a time period longer than one year, unless an explanation is provided it infers an absence of consistent supervision.