

# European Mentoring & Coaching Council

## The EMCC CODE OF ETHICS

(updated 2015)

### INTRODUCTION

The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) has been established to promote best practice and ensure that the highest possible standards are maintained in the different disciplines of the EMCC (coaching, mentoring and supervision), so that the coach/mentoring/supervising environment provides the greatest opportunity for learning and development.

### TERMINOLOGY

- The term “coach/mentoring” is used to describe all types of coaching or mentoring that may be taking place, both in the work environment and outside. The EMCC recognises that there will be many types of coach/mentoring taking place and these will need to be defined when more detailed standards are produced.
- The term “EMCC member” is used to denote any individual whether a coach, mentor or supervisor of coaches/mentors, or any organisation that is a paid-up member of the EMCC. Individual EMCC members aim to be professionals trained according to EMCC competence frameworks and applicable legal obligations.
- The term “EMCC professional” is used to denote the EMCC member who is active as a professional, whether a coach, mentor or supervisor of coaches/mentors, delivering professional services to a client.
- The term “client” denotes anyone using the services of an EMCC member. It is recognised that there are circumstances where the EMCC member may have more than one “client”, the individual/group being coached/supervised, and the organisation, who may have commissioned the coaching/mentoring. In this Code we have used the term “sponsor” to differentiate the latter.
- In the case of supervision it is possible that the supervisor works in a relationship where three ‘clients’ are involved: the supervisee, the coachee and the sponsor.

- The term “supervision” describes the process by which the work and well-being of the coach/mentor is overseen and advice/guidance sought. Supervision with a properly trained supervisor provides space and time to reflect on professional functioning in complex situations. Supervisors focus on the ongoing personal development of coaches/mentors to enable them to deliver best practice with their clients.

## PURPOSE

This Ethical Code sets out what the clients and sponsors can expect from the EMCC member in either a coach/mentoring, or supervision relationship and should form the starting point for any contract agreed.

All members of the EMCC accept the principles and aims of the EMCC. We recognise that members may not always maintain these ethical principles. The EMCC have therefore agreed a process by which breaches of the Code by a member can be reported and investigated. This is referred to later in this document.

All EMCC Members will make the sponsoring organisation and the client aware, at the contracting stage, of the existence of this Code of Ethics.

## THE CODE

The EMCC member will acknowledge the dignity of all humanity. They will conduct themselves in a way which respects diversity and promotes equal opportunities.

It is the primary responsibility of the EMCC member to provide the best possible service to the client and to act in such a way as to cause no harm to any client or sponsor.

The EMCC member is committed to functioning from a position of dignity, autonomy and personal and professional responsibility.

The EMCC Code of Ethics covers the following:

- Competence
- Context
- Boundary Management
- Integrity
- Professionalism

## COMPETENCE:

The EMCC member will:

- a. Ensure that their level of experience and knowledge is sufficient to meet the needs of the client.
- b. Ensure that their capability is sufficient to enable them to operate according to this Code of Ethics and any standards that may subsequently be produced.
- c. Develop and then enhance their level of competence by participating in relevant training and appropriate Continuing Professional Development activities.
- d. Maintain a relationship with a suitably-qualified supervisor, who will regularly assess their competence and support their development. The supervisor will be bound by all the requirements referred to in this Code.

## CONTEXT:

The EMCC member will:

- a. Understand and ensure that the working relationship reflects the context within which the coach/mentoring/supervision is taking place.
- b. Ensure that the expectations of the client and the sponsor are understood and that they themselves understand how those expectations are to be met.
- c. Seek to create an environment in which client, EMCC member and sponsor are focused on and have the opportunity for learning.

## BOUNDARY MANAGEMENT:

The EMCC member will:

- a. At all times operate within the limits of their own competence, recognise where that competence has the potential to be exceeded and where necessary refer the client either to a more experienced EMCC member, or support the client in seeking the help of another professional, such as a counsellor, psychotherapist or business/financial advisor.

- b. Be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest of either a commercial or emotional nature to arise through the working relationship and deal with them quickly and effectively to ensure there is no detriment to the client or sponsor.

## INTEGRITY:

The EMCC member will:

- a. Maintain throughout the level of confidentiality which is appropriate and is agreed at the start of the relationship.
- b. Disclose information only where explicitly agreed with the client and sponsor (where one exists), unless the EMCC member believes that there is convincing evidence of serious danger to the client or others if the information is withheld.
- c. Act within applicable law and not encourage, assist or collude with others engaged in conduct which is dishonest, unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory.

## PROFESSIONALISM:

The EMCC member will:

- a. Respond to the client's learning and development needs as defined by the agenda brought to the working relationship.
- b. Not exploit the client in any manner, including, but not limited to, financial, sexual or those matters within the professional relationship.
- c. Ensure that the duration of the contract is only as long as is necessary for the client/sponsor.
- d. Understand that professional responsibilities continue beyond the termination of any professional relationship. These include the following:
  - Maintenance of agreed confidentiality of all information relating to clients and sponsors.
  - Avoidance of any exploitation of the former relationship
  - Provision of any follow-up which has been agreed to
  - Safe and secure maintenance of all related records and data

- e. Demonstrate respect for the variety of different approaches to coaching and mentoring and supervision, and other individuals in the profession.
- f. Never represent the work and views of others as their own.
- g. Ensure that any claim of professional competence, qualifications or accreditation is clearly and accurately explained to potential clients and that no false or misleading claims are made or implied in any published material.

## BREACHES OF THE CODE

EMCC members will at all times represent coaching and mentoring in a way which reflects positively on the profession.

Where a client or sponsor believes that a member of the EMCC has acted in a way, which is in breach of this Ethical Code, they should first raise the matter and seek resolution with the member concerned. Either party can ask the EMCC to assist in the process of achieving resolution.

If the client or sponsor remains unsatisfied they are entitled to make a formal complaint. Complaints will be dealt with according to the EMCC's 'Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure'. EMCC Members will provide a copy of this document upon request. A copy can be obtained by emailing [EMCC.Administrator@emccouncil.org](mailto:EMCC.Administrator@emccouncil.org)

In the event that a complaint should be made against an EMCC member, that member must co-operate in resolving such a complaint.

EMCC members will confront a colleague when they have reasonable cause to believe they are acting in an unethical manner and, failing resolution, will report that colleague to the EMCC.