

Statistical Report



Coaching in the UK, 2019

Coach Survey

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UK Coaching is the brand name of The National Coaching Foundation and has been such since May 2017.

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Contents

Introduction	4
Section 1: Incidence, profile and background	5
Incidence of coaching in the UK	5
Diversity of the coaching population	5
Sports and activities.....	8
Coaching roles / titles	10
Coaching status	12
Primary occupation	13
Coaching hours and sessions	14
Level of coaching	14
Entry into coaching	15
Section 2: Confidence and competence	17
Participant groups	17
Understanding participant needs	18
Confidence to deliver sport or physical activity	19
Competence to deliver sport or physical activity	20
Inclusive coaching	21
Section 3: Experience and attitudes	23
Primary role of a coach.....	23
Experience of coaching	24
Barriers to coaching	25
Perceptions of good coaching.....	26
Section 4: Learning and development.....	28
Qualifications and CPD	28
Qualification level.....	28
Ease of obtaining a qualification	30

Section 5: Mentoring and support.....	31
Access to a mentor	31
Membership of sporting body	32
Section 6: Coach development workforce.....	34
Section 7: Physical and mental health	36
Physical activity of coaches	36
Physical health of coaches	36
Mental health and wellbeing of coaches	37
Summary.....	39
Appendix 1: Methodology.....	41
Appendix 2: Glossary	42
Appendix 3: Population Estimates	44
Appendix 4: Sports / activities.....	46

Introduction

In 2019, UK Coaching commissioned YouGov to undertake the largest ever survey into coaches and coaching, building on a previous survey conducted in 2017. A nationally representative sample of over 50,000 adults and 2,000 children were surveyed about their experience of receiving coaching and their experience of being a coach.

This research encompasses a broader definition of coaching, which includes anyone involved in, or receiving coaching, across the whole sport and physical activity sector. It recognises that participants receive coaching in a range of different settings and that coaches play a number of different roles, from coaches in sports clubs, to community activators and helpers, PE teachers, and exercise and fitness instructors. All contribute towards an active nation.

This report presents a summary of the key findings from the coach section of the survey. It includes coaches who have recently coached sport or physical activity and those who have coached at some point in the past.

This is the first statistical release of findings from 2019 and the results are compared, where possible, to the 2017 survey findings. Throughout this report * denotes a statistically significant finding.

Further background information, details about the methodology, and a glossary of terms, can be found in Appendix 1 and 2 at the end of this report.

A separate report is available for coached participants.

Requests for data access or additional data analysis can be made to UK Coaching via email: researchteam@ukcoaching.org.

Section 1: Incidence, profile and background

Incidence of coaching in the UK

Six percent of UK adults reported that they had coached, instructed, trained, taught or led sport or physical activity in the 12 months prior to the survey, consistent with 2017. Two thirds (68%) reported they had never coached, and a quarter (25%) had coached at some point in their lifetime.

Figure 1. Incidence of coaching by year

Frequency of those who have coached	2017	2019
In the past 12 months	6%*	6%*
In the past 2 years	2%	2%
In the past 3 years	2%	2%
In the past 5 years	2%	2%
Longer than 5 years ago	14%*	14%*
Never	66%*	68%*
Unweighted N	20,688	50,797

Base: All UK adults (2017=20,688; 2019=50,797)

Six percent of the adult population equates to an estimated three million coaches across the UK in 2019, a slight decrease in the workforce since 2017 (less than one percentage point). Figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Figure 2. Incidence and population estimates of coaches by year

Frequency of those who have coached	2017		2019	
	Incidence	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Incidence	Number in population: mid-point estimate
In the past 12 months	6.47%	3,300,000	5.74%	3,000,000

Base: All UK adults (2017=20,688; 2019=50,797)

Further information about the population estimates can be found in Appendix 3.

Diversity of the coaching population

Consistent with 2017, men are more likely to coach than women: 7% of men had coached in the 12 months prior to the survey, compared to 5% of women.

Also consistent with 2017, people from an ethnic minority background (BAME) are more likely to coach than those who are white: 9% of BAME adults compared to 5% of white adults.

People from higher social groups (7%) are more likely than those in lower social groups (4%) to coach.

It remains that coaches are most likely to be younger, and the likelihood of coaching decreases with age: from 10% of people aged 18 to 24; to 2% among those aged 65+.

With the exception of people aged 45-54, there has been a decrease in the number of people coaching across all demographic groups since 2017.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Figure 3. Incidence and population estimate of coaches by year and demographic group

Frequency of those who have coached	2017		2019	
	Incidence	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Incidence	Number in population: mid-point estimate
18-24	11.10%	600,000	10.08%	600,000
25-34	8.75%	800,000	7.46%	700,000
35-44	8.84%	700,000	6.92%	600,000
45-54	5.80%	500,000	6.07%	600,000
55-64	4.34%	300,000	4.12%	300,000
65+	2.73%	300,000	2.38%	300,000
Men	7.16%	1,800,000	6.63%	1,700,000
Women	5.82%	1,500,000	4.90%	1,300,000
Higher social group	7.34%	2,200,000	6.78%	2,000,000
Lower social group	5.30%	1,200,000	4.35%	1,000,000
White	5.85%	2,600,000	5.21%	2,300,000
NET: BAME	10.34%	600,000	9.21%	500,000

Base: All UK adults (2017=20,688; 2019=50,797)

Looking specifically at the those who coached in the 12 months prior to the survey, those who coached are more likely to be male (55% male compared to 43% female). There has been a slight increase in the proportion of coaches who are male, and a three percentage point decrease in those who are female.

There has been a decrease in the proportion of coaches from a BAME background (18% compared to 22% in 2017); a slight increase in the proportion of coaches from higher

social groups (67% compared to 65% in 2017) and a slight decrease in those from lower social groups (35% compared to 33% in 2017).

Figure 4. Demographic profile of coaches by year

Demographic group	Coaches in 2017	Coaches in 2019
18-24	20%	19%
25-34	22%	21%
35-44	23%	21%
45-54	15%	19%
55-64	11%	10%
65+	10%	10%
Male	54%	55%
Female	46%	43%
Higher social group	65%	67%
Lower social group	35%	33%
White	78%	76%
NET: BAME	22%	18%

Base: All who have coached in the last 12 months (2017 n=1,348; 2019 n=2,823)

Across the whole of the UK, the incidence of coaching has declined in most regions between 2017 and 2019, with the exception of Yorkshire and Humberside, and East and West Midlands. As in 2017, Londoners are significantly more likely to coach than adults across the rest of the UK. Seven percent of Londoners coached within the 12 months prior to the survey, which equates to 16% of all coaches in the UK living in London.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

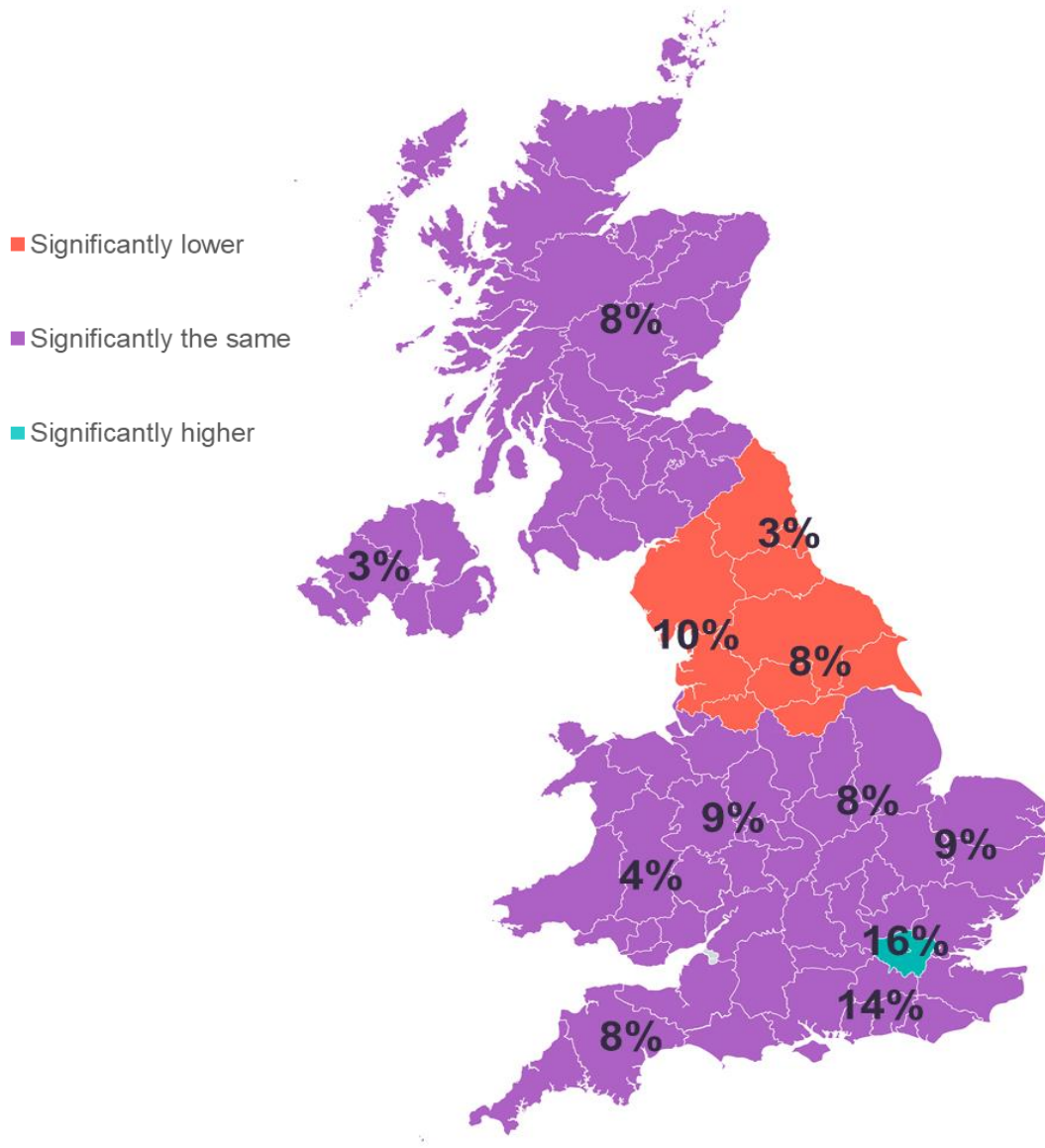
Figure 5. Incidence and population estimate of coaches by year and UK region

Frequency of those who have coached	2017		2019	
	Incidence	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Incidence	Number in population: mid-point estimate
North East	5.13%	100,000	4.68%	100,000
North West	5.70%	300,000	5.39%	300,000
Yorks and Humber	5.18%	200,000	5.38%	200,000
East Midlands	5.54%	200,000	6.12%	200,000
West Midlands	5.45%	200,000	6.03%	300,000
East of England	6.91%	300,000	5.25%	300,000
London	8.42%	500,000	7.17%	500,000
South East	6.85%	500,000	5.84%	400,000
South West	6.64%	300,000	5.50%	200,000
Wales	6.77%	200,000	5.00%	100,000
Scotland	6.92%	300,000	5.39%	200,000
Northern Ireland	6.68%	100,000	5.15%	100,000

Base: All UK adults (2017=20,688; 2019=50,797)

The map below shows the proportion of coaches and where they live in the UK in 2019, again showing the greatest proportion in London. Whilst 21% of all coaches live in the North of England, Northerners are less likely to coach than the UK population overall.

Figure 6. Breakdown of the active coaching population by where they live in the UK (map)



Base: All UK Adults aged 18+ (n=50,797)

Sports and activities

When asked which sports or physical activities they coach, the most common response was football, with 18% stating this. Football is followed by athletics and dance (both 11%).

When grouped into categories, a quarter (26%) of all coaches, coach invasion games (e.g. football, rugby), followed by net, wall or racket games (e.g. tennis, squash) (at 13%).

A full list of all sports / activities can be found in Appendix 4.

Figure 7. Sport or activity coached by gender

Top activities coached (2019 only)	Male	Female	All 2019
Athletics	11%	12%	11%
Badminton	5%	5%	5%
Basketball	6%	4%	5%
Cricket	9%	5%	7%
Dance	5%	19%	11%
Exercise / movement	4%	10%	7%
Football	24%	9%	18%
Gymnastics	3%	9%	5%
Rounders	3%	8%	5%
Swimming	7%	9%	8%
Tennis	6%	6%	6%
Weightlifting	7%	3%	5%
Other	19%	18%	19%
Don't know	3%	8%	5%
Unweighted N	1,352	1,398	2,783

Base: All who have coached in the last 12 months

There are key gender differences in the type of activity coached. Whilst a third (32%) of male coaches currently coach invasion games, this is the case for only 18% of female coaches. Conversely, 19% of female coaches currently coach dance, compared to only 5% of male coaches.

Location of coaching

Coaches are most likely to coach in a sports club (25%), although this has reduced slightly since 2017 (27%). Since 2017, there have been considerable increases in the proportion of coaches coaching in a college or university (by eight percentage points); an outdoor urban space (by seven percentage points); and in outdoor countryside settings (by five percentage points).

It is important to note that this data is not statistically significant and should be treated with some caution, due to methodological changes in 2019 affecting this particular question¹.

Figure 8. Locations coached in by year

Locations coached in	2017	2019
Sports club	27%	25%
In an outdoor urban space (park or playground, etc.)	9%	16%
Community group, youth group or similar	14%	15%
In an outdoor/countryside setting (river, forest, etc.)	9%	14%
Local Authority leisure centre	8%	12%
Private leisure centre, gym or health club	9%	12%
College or university	4%	12%
Sports Institute or similar	3%	5%
Private sessions with my own clients	8%	5%
Other	14%	22%
Unweighted N	1,350	2,460

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Male coaches are significantly more likely than female coaches to coach in a sports club (32% compared to 15%), sports institute (6% compared to 3%) and outdoor urban spaces (19% compared to 11%). Whereas, female coaches are more likely than male coaches to be coaching in a community or youth group (17% compared to 14%).

Younger coaches aged 18-24 (31%) and 25-34 (30%) are more likely than older coaches to coach in a sports club. Conversely, older people aged 55-64 (21%) and 65+ (18%) are more likely than younger coaches to coach in an outdoor setting.

Coaching roles / titles

As in 2017, coaches are most likely to refer themselves as a 'coach' in some way (43%). Within this group, a fifth (19%) now refer to themselves specifically as a 'Coach'. Also consistent with 2017, males are more likely than females to refer to themselves as a 'coach' in some way (51% compared to 32%).

¹ **Note for interpretation:** The approach to this question changed between 2017 and 2019. In 2017 it was asked as one multiple choice question, while in 2019 it was shown against a series of separate grid statements each pertaining to a specific activity. Due to this change in method, we advise against making direct comparisons between the 2017 and 2019 results.

Figure 9. What titles coaches use by year

Coaching titles	2017	2019
Activator/Facilitator	10%	10%
Advanced/Senior Coach	5%	5%
Assistant coach	14%	15%
Coach	18%	19%
Fitness or exercise instructor	9%	10%
Head Coach	5%	5%
Helper	25%*	22%*
PE teacher	8%	8%
Performance Coach	4%	4%
Personal trainer	6%	6%
Specialist Coach (e.g. positional, skills)	5%	5%
Sports Leader/Leader	10%*	8%*
Teacher (outside school)	8%	7%
Trainee coach	6%*	4%*
Unweighted N	2,536	5,756

Base: Those who have coached in the last 5 years

Female coaches are significantly more likely to call themselves a 'PE teacher' (11%) than male coaches (6%). Meanwhile, male coaches are significantly more likely to cite a title that implies leadership. Ten percent of male coaches' state they are a 'Sports Leader' compared to 6% of female coaches, and 7% state they are a 'Head Coach' compared to 4% of female coaches.

Coaches in activities such as dance or exercise, fitness and personal training are the least likely to refer to themselves as a 'coach' (both 26% and 32% respectively) whereas those coaching combat sports (66%), invasion games (51%) or water sports (68%) are the most likely to refer to themselves as a 'coach' in some way.

Those who are most likely to refer to themselves as a 'teacher' in some form tend to coach athletics (35%), dance (34%), or gymnastics and trampolining (46%). Those coaching in combat sports (9%) are the least likely to describe themselves as a 'teacher'.

There is a clear link between coaching title, gender and activity. Women predominantly refer to themselves as teachers and are most likely to be involved in activities such as dance, gymnastics and trampolining, and exercise, fitness and personal training. Men are more likely to describe themselves as a coach and are most likely to be involved in invasion games, target sports and combat sports.

Figure 10. Grouped sports coached by what title coaches use

Coaching titles	Net: Coach	Net: Teacher
Net: Athletics	37%	35%
Net: Combat sports	66%	9%
Net: Cycling	37%	15%
Net: Dance	26%	34%
Net: Exercise, fitness and personal training	32%	21%
Net: Fielding/ striking games	34%	35%
Net: Gymnastics and Trampolining	33%	46%
Net: Invasion games	51%	23%
Net: Net/ wall/ racket games	42%	23%
Net: Outdoor/ adventure sports and activities	34%	19%
Net: Skiing or snowboarding	65%	23%
Net: Swimming and aquatics	40%	26%
Net: Target sports	51%	15%
Net: Water sports	68%	13%
Net: Other	43%	8%

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Coaching status

In 2019, just under half (46%) of coaches only coach in a volunteer capacity in a typical week; a fifth (21%) only coach in a paid capacity, and 16% are involved in both paid and voluntary coaching.

Although there has been no change since 2017 in the proportion of coaches who coach in a volunteer only capacity, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of coaches who receive at least some pay (overall from 34% in 2017 to 37% in 2019); and a significant decrease in the proportion who are neither paid or volunteer (from 20% in 2017 to 17% in 2019).

Figure 11. Paid or voluntary coaching status in a typical week

Paid/unpaid coaching status	2017	2019
Paid only	19%*	21%*
Volunteer only	46%	46%
Paid and volunteer	15%	16%
Neither (0 hours in a typical week)	20%*	17%*
Net: All paid	34%*	37%*
Unweighted N	1,350	2,745

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months.

Coaches are most likely to be paid for their time if they live in the East Midlands (45%), West Midlands (42%) or the East of England (43%). They are least likely to be paid if they live in Northern Ireland (25%), Scotland (28%) or the South West of England (28%).

Figure 12. Paid or voluntary coaching status in a typical week by region (2019)

Paid/unpaid coaching status	Paid only	Volunteer only	Paid and volunteer	Neither	Net: All paid
North East	18%	49%	16%	17%	34%
North West	19%	51%	16%	14%	35%
Yorks and Humber	24%	49%	14%	13%	38%
East Midlands	30%	36%	15%	19%	45%
West Midlands	21%	44%	20%	14%	42%
East of England	24%	42%	18%	16%	43%
London	21%	37%	20%	21%	41%
South East	23%	47%	15%	15%	38%
South West	14%	58%	13%	14%	28%
Wales	22%	51%	9%	18%	32%
Scotland	17%	52%	12%	19%	28%
Northern Ireland	18%	50%	7%	26%	25%

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Female coaches are significantly more likely to receive some pay, with nearly half (45%) receiving some monetary compensation compared to nearly a third (31%) of male coaches. Furthermore, female coaches are more likely to be involved in paid only coaching, with a third (32%) not involved in volunteer coaching, compared to 13% of male coaches.

Excluding those who describe their role as a 'PE Teacher', coaches are most likely to be involved in paid only coaching whilst coaching dance (36%), gymnastics and trampolining (39%) and exercise, fitness and personal training (31%). Conversely, coaches are most likely to be volunteering only, when coaching cycling (55%), combat sports (46%) and outdoor/adventure sports (46%).

Primary occupation

Whilst a fifth (21%) reported that they coach in a paid only capacity, just 8% of coaches stated that coaching is their primary occupation. Coaches are most likely to report coaching as their primary occupation if they are aged 18-24 (10%) or live in London or the East Midlands (10% respectively).

Coaching hours and sessions

Of coaches who are paid, 49% are only paid for 1 or 2 hours coaching a week. Meanwhile, 61% of coaches who volunteer, coach around 1 to 2 hours a week. Overall, those who are coaching 1 or 2 hours a week in an unpaid capacity make up a significant proportion of the coaching workforce. The majority (60%) coach either one or two sessions a week; a fifth (21%) coach less than once a week, and 3% coach more than 10 sessions a week.

Level of coaching

The majority of coaches are involved in coaching at a recreational level (67%), followed by club level (19%), academy-level (8%), county level (5%), national level (3%) and international level (2%). Overall, 8% of coaches coach at a regional level or above.

Overall, male coaches are significantly more likely to coach at a regional level or above (10% compared to 6% of female coaches) and at an academy or club level (32% compared to 16%). Female coaches are more likely to report they coach at an 'other' level (6% compared to 3% of male coaches).

Figure 13. Level of activity by gender (2019)

Level of activity coached (2019 only)	Male	Female	Total
Recreational level	66%*	69%*	67%
Academy level	10%*	6%*	8%
Club level	25%*	12%*	19%
District, county or regional level	7%*	3%*	5%
National level	4%	3%	3%
International level	2%*	1%*	2%
Other	3%*	6%*	4%
Don't know	5%*	11%*	8%
Unweighted N	1,352	1,398	2,823

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months (2019=2,823)

Younger coaches aged 18 to 24 are the most likely to coach at club level (25%) and those aged 35 to 44 are the most likely to coach at a recreational level (71%). Those aged 25 to 34 are the most likely to coach those participating at an international level (3%).

Figure 14. Level coached by age of coaches

Level of activity coached (2019 only)	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Recreational level	64%*	62%*	72%*	71%*	66%	69%
Academy level	12%*	12%*	8%	5%*	5%*	2%*
Club level	25%*	17%*	15%*	18%	21%	22%
District, county or regional level	8%*	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%
National level	3%	3%	4%	2%*	4%	5%
International level	1%	3%*	3%	0%*	1%	2%
Other	2%*	3%	3%*	7%*	6%*	5%
Don't know	6%	12%*	8%	6%	7%	5%*
Unweighted N	555	524	566	569	328	281

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Entry into coaching

Entry into coaching is closely associated with participation in sport and physical activity. Consistent with 2017, a quarter (25%) of coaches stated that they became involved in coaching as a result of participating themselves. A further 24% said they wanted to support their local club or team; and a fifth (22%) to keep active and stay involved in the activity.

Contributing to their local community, and supporting their local club or team, remains a strong narrative. Coaches who volunteer only are significantly more likely to state they became involved to support their local club or team than those who are paid only (32% compared to 9%). For coaches who are paid only, career development is the most common response (32% compared to 8% of volunteer only coaches).

Figure 15. Reasons for getting into coaching by year

Why did you become a coach	2017	2019
I began coaching other participants whilst still playing	23%	25%
I was inspired by my own coach	14%	13%
To stay involved in sport or physical activity	22%	22%
To contribute to my local community	19%	19%
To support my local club/team	22%	24%
As a result of child's involvement in the sport	17%	17%
Progressed from volunteering	18%	20%
Career development	16%	15%
Other	13%	13%
Don't know	7%	7%
Unweighted N	1,350	2,823

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Coaches within less common sports or activities (such as combat sports and water sports) are the most likely to become involved as a result of participating themselves (41% and

38% respectively); whilst those teaching dance or exercise, fitness and personal training are most likely to list career development (both 31%).

Coaches involved in cycling, invasion games and swimming are most likely to state they became involved as a result of their child's involvement in the sport (32%, 29% and 24% respectively).

Male coaches are significantly more likely to have progressed to coaching through participating themselves than female coaches (31% compared to 17%), and to support their local club or team (29% compared to 16%). Female coaches are more likely to list career development as a reason for their initial involvement (19%) than male coaches (13%).

Figure 16. Reasons for becoming a coach by gender (2019)

Why did you become a coach	Male	Female
I began coaching other participants whilst still playing	31%*	17%*
I was inspired by my own coach	14%*	12%*
To stay involved in sport or physical activity	25%*	19%*
To contribute to my local community	20%*	18%*
To support my local club/team	29%*	16%*
As a result of child's involvement in the sport	19%*	15%*
Progressed from volunteering	22%*	17%*
Career development	13%*	19%*
Other	10%*	17%*
Don't know	5%*	10%*
Unweighted N	1,352	1,398

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Section 2: Confidence and competence

Participant groups

Coaches are most likely to state that they coach mixed gender groups (43%). More than a third (38%) coach adults (18-50), or older adults (over 50); and more than half (55%) coach children under 18.

Twelve percent coach those with either a learning or physical disability, or a long-term illness or other health condition. A quarter (23%) of coaches currently coach those who are new to the sport or activity, and 11% coach those who are inactive.

Women are more likely than men to coach children (59% compared to 52% - grouped data) whilst male coaches are more likely to coach adults (43% compared to 32% - grouped data). Female coaches are also more likely to coach those with a disability (learning or physical), or those with long-term health problems (15% compared to 10% of male coaches – grouped data).

Figure 17. Types of participants that coaches coach by gender

Types of participants coached (2019 only)	Male	Female	All
Mixed gender groups	44%	41%	43%
Mixed ability groups	28%	29%	29%
Pre-school children (0-4)	5%*	11%*	8%
Younger children (5-9)	25%*	36%*	30%
Older children (10-13)	28%	27%	28%
Young people (14-17)	25%*	17%*	22%
Adults (18-50)	39%*	26%*	34%
Older adults (50+)	15%	16%	15%
Talented players/high performance athletes	6%*	4%*	5%
People new to the sport/physical activity	24%*	20%*	23%
People who are inactive/infrequently active	10%	11%	11%
People from low income groups	11%	9%	10%
People with a physical disability	6%*	9%*	7%
People with a learning disability	7%*	10%*	9%
People with a long-term illness or health conditions	4%*	8%*	6%
People from black and minority ethnic groups	10%	9%	10%
Women or girls only groups	3%*	9%*	6%
Men or boys only groups	6%*	1%*	4%
Other	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	4%*	8%*	5%
Unweighted N	1352	1398	2783

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Younger coaches aged 18 to 24 are more likely than those in any other age group to coach people who are new to the activity (30% compared to only 16% of 35 to 44 year olds). Meanwhile, those aged 35 to 54 are the most likely to coach children (63%): a third (33%) coaching older children aged 10 to 13; and 38% coaching younger children aged 5 to 9.

Younger coaches (aged 18 to 24) as well as older coaches (55 and over) are most likely to coach people who are a similar age to themselves. Young coaches are the most likely group to coach those aged 14 to 17 (26%) and those who are 55 and over are the most likely to coach older adults of this age (38%).

Understanding participant needs

Overall, coaches are most likely to feel they have a good level of understanding of coaching adults (46%), and least likely to feel they have a good level of understanding of people with a long-term illness or a health condition (14%). In fact, three in ten (30%) feel they have no understanding of coaching those with a long-term illness or health condition.

Of those who coach different groups of participants with different needs, most feel they have a good level of understanding of their specific sport or activity needs. Those who currently coach women or girls only groups are the most likely to feel they have a good understanding of this group's specific coaching needs (72%). This is followed by 68% of those coaching older adults and 64% of those coaching young people (14 to 17).

Interestingly, those coaching others who are of a similar age or gender to themselves report the best levels of understanding.

Figure 18. Percent of coaches with a good level of understanding in coaching different groups by year

Level of understanding in coaching different groups	2017	2019
Pre-school children (0-4)	19%	21%
Younger children (5-9)	29%	28%
Older children (10-13)	33%	33%
Young people (14-17)	38%	38%
Adults (18-50)	46%	46%
Older adults (50+)	27%	30%
Talented players/high performance athletes	22%	21%
People new to the sport/physical activity	37%	37%
People who are inactive/infrequently active	26%	27%
People from low income groups	30%	30%
People with a physical disability	16%	17%
People with a learning disability	17%	15%
People with a long-term illness or health conditions	15%	14%

People from black and minority ethnic groups	32%	30%
Women or girls only groups	35%	32%
Unweighted N	1350	2823

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Those who are least likely to have a good level of understanding of participants’ needs are those coaching people with a learning disability, with less than half (42%) of these coaches feeling they have a good level of understanding. Similarly, coaches are least likely to have a good level of understanding when coaching those who have a physical disability (45%) or a long-term illness or health condition (47%). Although those coaching these groups do not report the highest levels of ‘good understanding’, very few state they have no understanding of the specific needs (1%, 2% and 1% respectively). However, it is the case that 41%, 45% and 38% respectively feel they have only ‘some understanding’.

Figure 19. Coaches who have a ‘good level of understanding’ by the groups they coach

Level of understanding in coaching different groups	A good level of understanding
Women or girls only groups	72%
Older adults (50+)	68%
Adults (18-50)	67%
Young people (14–17)	64%
People new to the sport/physical activity	63%
Talented players/high performance athletes	61%
Pre-school children (0-4)	60%
Older children (10-13)	59%
People from low income groups	57%
People who are inactive/infrequently active	57%
People from black and minority ethnic groups	55%
Younger children (5–9)	50%
People with a long-term illness or health conditions	47%
People with a physical disability	45%
People with a learning disability	42%

Base: Those who have coached these specific groups

Since 2017, levels of understanding of different groups’ needs have increased in certain areas. A good level of understanding of the needs of older adults has increased from 27% in 2017, to 30% in 2019. However, a good level of understanding of women or girls only groups has decreased slightly from 35% to 32% in 2019.

Confidence to deliver sport or physical activity

Three quarters (73%) of coaches agree that they feel confident when delivering sport or physical activity sessions. Only 7% of coaches disagree with this statement. Male coaches

are significantly more likely than female coaches to state they feel confident when delivering coaching sessions (78% compared to 67% of female coaches).

Coaches with at least one coaching qualification are significantly more likely to state they feel confident (87%), compared to less than two thirds (63%) of those with no coaching qualification. This is also true for those coaches with access to a supportive figure or mentor (82% compared to 67% without a qualification).

Figure 20. Coaches who agree they feel confident when delivering sessions by the sessions they coach

I feel confident when delivering sport or physical activity sessions	% who agree
Mixed gender groups	81%
Mixed ability groups	82%
Pre-school children (0-4)	73%
Younger children (5-9)	72%
Older children (10-13)	80%
Young people (14-17)	84%
Adults (18-50)	84%
Older adults (50+)	90%
Talented players/high performance athletes	97%
People new to the sport/physical activity	86%
People who are inactive/infrequently active	86%
People from low income groups	89%
People with a physical disability	87%
People with a learning disability	86%
People with a long-term illness or health conditions	88%
People from black and minority ethnic groups	88%
Women or girls only groups	81%
Men or boys only groups	82%

Base: Those who have coached these specific groups

Overall, those most confident are those coaching talented players or high performance athletes (97%). Eighty six percent of those who coach people with a learning/physical disability or long-term health problem agree that they feel confident in delivering sessions, which is higher than among the coaching population overall. Meanwhile, those who are least likely to feel confident tend to coach children of any age (74% in total).

Competence to deliver sport or physical activity

Two thirds (68%) of coaches agree that they are able to coach to a standard they are pleased with. This increases to 71% of male coaches, and 71% of those aged 18 to 24. As with confidence, coaches are more likely to feel competent and pleased with the standard they deliver if they have at least some type of coaching qualification (80% compared to 58% without any qualification).

Those who coach children are less likely to agree that they are able to coach to a standard that they are pleased with, than the coaching population overall. Seven in ten (70%) of those coaching pre-school children and 65% of those coaching younger children agree with this statement, compared to 77% of those who coach young people or adults.

Coaches who are most likely to feel competent tend to coach talented players (88%), older adults (83%), those with a long-term illness (83%) or those with a physical disability (82%).

Figure 21. Coaches who agree they are able to coach to a standard they are happy with by those they coach

I am able to coach to a standard I am pleased with	% who agree
Mixed gender groups	76%
Mixed ability groups	74%
Pre-school children (0-4)	70%
Younger children (5-9)	65%
Older children (10-13)	71%
Young people (14-17)	77%
Adults (18-50)	77%
Older adults (50+)	83%
Talented players/high performance athletes	88%
People new to the sport/physical activity	78%
People who are inactive/infrequently active	77%
People from low income groups	80%
People with a physical disability	82%
People with a learning disability	75%
People with a long-term illness or health conditions	83%
People from black and minority ethnic groups	77%
Women or girls only groups	74%
Men or boys only groups	71%

Base: Those who have coached these specific groups

Inclusive coaching

Overall, three quarters (76%) of coaches feel they can adapt activities to be inclusive of all participants. Coaches who have recently been physically active themselves are more likely than those who have not done any physical activity in the last year to agree that they can adapt activities to be inclusive (77% compared to 66%).

Coaches who are paid at least something for their time are more likely than those who are volunteer only to feel that they can adapt activities to be inclusive (83% compared to 78% of volunteer only coaches).

Those who coach people with a physical disability (93%), a learning disability (93%) or a long-term illness (94%) are much more likely to agree that they can adapt sessions to be inclusive of participants, than the coaching population overall.

Coaches who are also used to coaching people who are frequently inactive (91%) or new to the sport (90%) also share high levels of agreement for this statement. A slightly lower proportion (87%) of those who coach mixed ability groups feel able to adapt their sessions.

Section 3: Experience and attitudes

Primary role of a coach

When asked what they see as their primary role, coaches were most likely to feel that their role is to build confidence and self-esteem in their participants (50%). This is a slight increase from 2017 (at 48%). This is closely followed by developing participants' technique and teaching skills and drills (36%), and promoting health and personal wellbeing (33%).

Since 2017, the proportion of coaches who believe their primary role is to help people achieve their goals has increased significantly from 27% to 31% in 2019. Whereas, coaches who feel their primary role is to inspire others has decreased significantly from a quarter (23%) in 2017 to 19% in 2019.

Figure 22. What coaches see as their primary role by year

Primary role as a coach	2017	2019
To teach the rules of the game/sport	19%	19%
To develop technique, and teach drills and skills	35%	36%
To prepare people for events or competitions	10%	9%
To promote health and personal wellbeing	34%	33%
To build confidence and self-esteem in participants	48%	50%
To help people achieve their individual sports/activity goals, whatever that might be	27%*	31%*
To inspire others	23%*	19%*
To get people active	25%	25%
To keep people active	23%	21%
To develop those who are talented	9%	9%
Other	3%	3%
None of these	4%	4%
Unweighted N	1,350	2,823

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Female coaches are significantly more likely to see their primary role as a builder of confidence and self-esteem (53%), than male coaches (49%). Secondly, they more often see their role as one of promoting health and wellbeing (41% compared to 27% of male coaches). Thirdly, they are more likely to see their primary role to get people active (30% compared to 22% of male coaches).

Conversely, male coaches are significantly more likely to see their primary role as developing technique and teaching skills (43% compared to 27% of female coaches) and helping people achieve their individual goals (33% compared to 27% of female coaches).

Those who coach people with a learning or physical disability, or other health problem, are more likely than others to see their primary role as building confidence and self-esteem (65%), as is the case for those who coach people who are infrequently active (61%) or new to the sport (61%).

Figure 23. What coaches see as their primary role by groups they coach

Primary role as a coach	People new to the sport/ physical activity	People who are inactive/ infrequently active	People with a physical disability	People with a learning disability	People with a long-term illness or health conditions
To teach the rules of the game/sport	22%	16%	10%	14%	8%
To develop technique, teach drills and skills	51%	38%	36%	41%	34%
To prepare people for events or competitions	9%	5%	8%	5%	8%
To promote health and personal wellbeing	33%	49%	52%	45%	52%
To build confidence and self-esteem	61%	61%	67%	72%	63%
To help people achieve their individual sports/activity goals, whatever that might be	40%	40%	41%	42%	44%
To inspire others	22%	19%	17%	19%	20%
To get people active	25%	32%	25%	24%	22%
To keep people active	17%	23%	24%	18%	28%
To develop those who are talented	6%	4%	8%	6%	4%
Other	3%	4%	6%	5%	6%
None of these	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unweighted N	653	305	219	258	181

Base: Those who have coached these specific groups

Experience of coaching

Generally, coaches are positive about their experience of coaching. Two thirds (68%) agree that they look forward to coaching, and a further three quarters (78%) feel that their coaching makes a difference to their participants. In 2019, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of coaches who now feel they have the right resources or equipment to coach effectively (63% in 2017 and 66% in 2019).

Those living in the Midlands or Wales are the least likely to agree they have the resources they need (63% and 62% respectively), whilst those in the South of England (68%), Scotland (67%) and Northern Ireland (77%) are the most likely to agree.

Whilst coaches are more likely to agree that they have the right resources than in 2017, 2019 sees an increase in the proportion of coaches who would like some help from others when they coach, from 44% in 2017 to 47% in 2019.

Over a third (38%) of coaches agree it is hard to balance coaching alongside their other commitments. Male coaches are more likely to agree with this statement (42% compared to 33% of female coaches).

Barriers to coaching

The cost of qualifications and training, and balancing work/home life, remain the biggest barriers to coaching in the UK (36% respectively in 2019), although there has been a slight decrease in both since 2017. In 2019 there has been a significant decrease in the proportion of coaches who feel that the length of time it takes to undertake qualifications, training or CPD is a barrier (from 24% in 2017 to 17% in 2019).

Figure 24. Biggest barriers to coaching by year

Barriers to coaching	2017	2019
Lack of support from employers, clubs or national governing bodies	21%	21%
Lack of experienced or qualified coaches	16%	18%
The voluntary nature of coaching/lack of pay	32%	31%
Declining participation rates	18%	18%
The cost of training/qualifications	37%	36%
Lack of opportunity to take additional training/CPD	17%	15%
The length of time it takes to undertake qualifications/training/CPD	24%*	17%*
Dealing with parents (behaviour or interference)	28%	28%
Behavioural issues of players/participants	22%	22%
Lack of investment in facilities and equipment	33%	31%
Balancing work/home life	38%	36%
Other	3%*	2%*
Not sure	15%*	20%*
Unweighted N	1350	2823

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Whilst the cost of training/qualifications and work/life balance are the top barriers for those who coach all different groups of participants, a key barrier for those who coach children is the lack of investment in facilities or equipment, and dealing with parents (both 36%).

For those who coach talented players or high performance athletes, over half (53%) feel the voluntary nature of coaching is a key barrier. This is also a key factor for those who coach people from low income groups (48%).

People who coach team sports list work/life balance as a key barrier (40%) and are significantly more likely to find dealing with parents (38%) an issue, compared to those who coach individual sports (31%). Furthermore, those who coach team sports are

significantly more likely to struggle with behavioural issues of participants than those coaching individual sports (29% compared to 25%).

Female coaches are more likely to find the cost of training and qualifications a barrier (38% compared to 34% of male coaches).

Figure 25. Biggest barriers to coaching by gender (2019)

Barriers to coaching	Male	Female
Lack of support from employers, clubs or national governing bodies	23%*	19%*
Lack of experienced or qualified coaches	18%	18%
The voluntary nature of coaching/lack of pay	31%	30%
Declining participation rates	19%*	16%*
The cost of training/qualifications	34%*	38%*
Lack of opportunity to take additional training/CPD	15%	15%
The length of time it takes to undertake qualifications/training/CPD	18%	17%
Dealing with parents (behaviour or interference)	30%*	26%*
Behavioural issues of players/participants	22%	22%
Lack of investment in facilities and equipment	31%	30%
Balancing work/home life	37%*	34%*
Other	2%	2%
Not sure	18%*	22%*
Unweighted N	1,352	1,398

Base: Those who have coached in the last 12 months

The cost of training and qualifications is an equally important barrier for those from higher and lower social groups (36% respectively), and those from higher social groups are significantly more likely to feel that the voluntary nature of coaching is a barrier (33% compared to 27% of lower social groups).

Perceptions of good coaching

Overall, coaches feel that giving constructive feedback and corrections (54%), improving peoples' skills or ability (50%) and being friendly and approachable (43%) are the top three things that make a good coach. They are significantly more likely to state these than the general population who have never coached.

Coaches are less likely to agree that being qualified makes a good coach (31%) than those that have never coached (35%).

Figure 26. What makes a great coach by coaches and those who have never coached

What makes a good coach	Coaches	Never coached
Give constructive feedback and corrections	54%	45%
Improve peoples' skills/ability	50%	41%
Are friendly and approachable	43%	39%
Build good relationships and rapport	38%	32%
Treat all participants as individuals	36%	35%
Create a warm and welcoming environment	35%	29%
Are qualified	31%	35%
Are highly skilled in the sport/activity	30%	25%
Listen to participants	27%	22%
Maintain high levels of safety	22%	23%
Are confident	20%	13%
Know the rules of the game	18%	18%
Have previous experience of coaching	16%	14%
Get good results (i.e. win matches/games)	14%	11%
Other	1%	0%
I'm not sure, I don't know anything/enough about coaching	3%	18%
Unweighted base	2,823	34,556

Base: Those who have coached in the last 12 months

Female coaches are significantly more likely to feel that being friendly and approachable makes a great coach (48%) than male coaches (40%). Female coaches are also more likely to feel that having a good rapport and relationship, whilst creating a warm and welcoming environment, are key qualities of a great coach (both 41%) compared to 37% and 31% of male coaches, respectively.

Male coaches are more likely than female coaches to feel improving people's skills or ability is key (54% compared to 45% female). A third of male coaches feel that being friendly and approachable is important; a fifth (21%) feel knowing the rules of the game (compared to 15% of female coaches) and getting good results (16% compared to 12%) are important.

Those who coach people with long-term illnesses (52%) or physical disabilities (51%) are the most likely to feel that treating all participants as individuals makes a good coach. This is also true for those who coach older adults (47%) and those from an ethnic minority background (46%).

Section 4: Learning and development

Qualifications and CPD

Nearly half (47%) of coaches in the UK have never completed any kind of coaching or instructor qualification, although 14% have in the last 12 months and over a third (35%) have in the last five years.

Figure 27. Last time qualifications or training were taken

Last time qualifications were taken (2019 only)	A coaching/instructor qualification	Any informal or formal learning or development related to coaching
Within the last 12 months	14%	27%
In the past 2 years	10%	12%
In the past 3 years	6%	6%
In the past 5 years	6%	6%
Longer than 5 years ago	14%	11%
Never	47%	34%
Don't know	4%	5%
Unweighted N	2823	2823

Base: Those who have coached in the last 12 months

Coaches are more likely to have undertaken informal training or development, with 27% having completed this in the last 12 months. Whilst a half (51%) of coaches have completed some type of learning or development in the last five years, a sizeable third (34%) have never done any at all.

Overall, 30% of coaches have never completed any type of coaching qualification, or any learning and development (formal or informal).

Qualification level

Overall, over half (54%) of coaches have no specific coaching qualifications (e.g. leader qualification, Level 1 or 2, etc.). This has reduced significantly from 2017 (58%), by four percentage points. This is highest among female coaches (59% compared to 51% of male coaches with no qualification).

Since 2017, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of those who report having an Activator or Leader qualification (8% compared to 6% in 2017).

Figure 28. Coaching qualifications by year

Highest level of coaching qualification, grouped	2017	2019
No coaching qualification	58%*	54%*
Activator/leader qualification	6%*	8%*
Level 1/2 (or equivalent)	19%	19%
Level 3/4 (or equivalent)	8%	9%
HE/FE Degree or Diploma, or above	5%	5%
Other	4%	4%
Net: Has listed qualification	38%*	42%*
Unweighted N	1,350	2,823

Base: Those coached in the last 12 months

Those coaching water sports (62%), swimming and aquatics (57%), or combat sports (54%) are the most likely to have a coaching qualification. Those who are least likely tend to coach dance (34%), cycling (40%) or gymnastics and trampolining (41%).

Those who coach talented or high performance players are more likely to have a coaching qualification, with three quarters (74%) stating they have one. A quarter (24%) of this group have a Level 3 or 4. Conversely, those who coach children are the least likely to have a qualification (40% of those who coach children aged 5 to 9; 44% of those who coach pre-school children).

Figure 29. Coaching qualifications by type of activity coached

Highest level of coaching qualification, grouped	No coaching qualification	Net: Has listed qualification
Net: Athletics	48%	49%
Net: Combat sports	41%	54%
Net: Cycling	56%	40%
Net: Dance	61%	34%
Net: Exercise, fitness and personal training	45%	50%
Net: Fielding/ striking games	56%	41%
Net: Gymnastics and Trampoline	58%	41%
Net: Invasion games	48%	50%
Net: Net/ wall/ racket games	52%	47%
Net: Outdoor/ adventure sports and activities	51%	45%
Net: Skiing or snowboarding	37%	58%
Net: Swimming and aquatics	39%	57%
Net: Target sports	45%	51%
Net: Water sports	36%	62%

Base: Those who have coached these specific activities

Just over half (55%) of coaches who currently coach people with learning or physical disabilities or long term illnesses have a coaching qualification. However, 10% of this group have a coaching related HE/FE degree or above.

There is little difference in coaches' qualifications related to age. However, coaches aged 55 and over are less likely than average to have a qualification (38%).

Ease of obtaining a qualification

For those coaches with a qualification, half (52%) found their last qualification easy to obtain. A further third (31%) found it neither easy nor difficult, but 16% found it difficult.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the higher the qualification level, the more difficult coaches found it to obtain. A majority (58%) found it easy to obtain their Activator or Leader qualification or a Level 1 or 2 qualification, but only a third (36%) found it was easy to obtain their HE/FE degree or above.

Significantly fewer coaches found it easy to obtain their Level 3 or 4 (41%) in comparison with their Level 1 or 2 (58%), and a quarter (25%) of those with a Level 3 or 4 found it difficult.

Figure 30. Ease of obtaining most recent qualification by qualification type

Ease of obtaining qualification (2019 only)	Activator/leader qualification	Level 1/2 (or equiv)	Level 3/4 (or equiv)	HE/FE Degree or Diploma, or above	Other	Net: Has listed qualification
Easy	58%*	58%*	41%*	36%*	29%*	52%*
Neither easy nor difficult	33%	30%	33%	29%	24%*	31%*
Difficult	7%*	11%*	25%*	31%*	29%*	16%*
Don't know	1%	1%*	1%*	5%	18%*	1%*
Unweighted N	223	533	258	139	127	1,153

Base: Those who have each level of qualification

Section 5: Mentoring and support

Access to a mentor

Half of coaches (51%) reported they either already have a mentor (32%) or have access to one should they want it (19%). Whereas, 43% said they do not have access to someone who can support them in their coaching role.

Younger coaches aged 18 to 24 are the most likely to say they have someone currently supporting them (40%); whilst only a quarter (28%) of those aged 55 and over have someone currently supporting them.

Those coaching cycling (23%), fielding or striking games (28%), or gymnastics and trampolining (29%), were the least likely to already have support; whereas those coaching combat sports (55%), water sports (47%) or invasion games (36%) were the most likely to have a mentor or support.

Figure 31. Access to support in their coaching by activity coached

Do you want a coaching mentor (2019 only)	Yes – I currently have someone supporting me	Yes – I have access to someone but they don't currently support me	No	Don't know
Net: Athletics	32%	24%	39%	5%
Net: Combat sports	55%	16%	25%	4%
Net: Cycling	23%	16%	55%	6%
Net: Dance	32%	21%	40%	6%
Net: Exercise, fitness and personal training	29%	24%	44%	3%
Net: Fielding/striking games	28%	24%	43%	5%
Net: Gymnastics and Trampolining	29%	26%	39%	6%
Net: Invasion games	36%	23%	35%	6%
Net: Net/ wall/ racket games	31%	20%	44%	6%
Net: Outdoor/ adventure sports and activities	34%	26%	34%	6%
Net: Swimming and aquatics	36%	22%	40%	2%
Net: Target sports	38%	20%	38%	3%
Net: Water sports	47%	26%	25%	2%

Base: Those who have coached these specific activities

Those currently coaching talented players are the most likely to have support or a mentor (44%) and those coaching men or boys only groups the least likely (31%). Over a third (38%) of those currently coaching people with a learning or physical disability, or a long-term health condition, have someone currently supporting them in their coaching.

Membership of sporting body

Nearly two thirds (63%) of coaches are not a member of any sporting or activity body. Sixteen percent of coaches are a member of a national governing body of sport, and 6% are a member of UK Coaching.

Of those who are a member of a sporting body, 20% are a member of the national governing body for football, followed by 9% who are a member of the athletics governing body.

Figure 32. Sporting body membership by activities coached

Sport body membership (2019 only)	A national governing body of sport	CIMSPA	REPS	UK Coaching
Net: Athletics	18%	6%	7%	11%
Net: Combat sports	26%	10%	8%	15%
Net: Cycling	14%	3%	5%	9%
Net: Dance	8%	2%	4%	7%
Net: Exercise, fitness and personal training	9%	5%	11%	9%
Net: Fielding/ striking games	16%	4%	3%	8%
Net: Gymnastics and Trampolining	16%	2%	7%	7%
Net: Invasion games	21%	5%	6%	9%
Net: Net/ wall/ racket games	22%	5%	8%	12%
Net: Outdoor/ adventure sports and activities	21%	6%	4%	9%
Net: Swimming and aquatics	21%	6%	6%	13%
Net: Target sports	26%	8%	8%	14%
Net: Water sports	35%	9%	9%	12%

Base: Those who have coached these specific activities

Those coaching in water sports (58%), combat sports (51%), target sports (45%) and swimming and aquatics (39%) are the most likely to be a member of a sporting body. Those coaching dance (20%), fielding or striking games (24%), and gymnastics and trampolining (25%), the least likely.

Coaches who are members of a sporting body are significantly more likely to be paid for their coaching. Half (51%) of coaches who are a member of a sporting body are paid for at

least some of their coaching, in comparison to a third (32%) of coaches who are not a member of any sporting body.

Section 6: Coach development workforce

Overall, 7% of those who have ever coached sport or physical activity work with other coaches to educate, support, mentor or teach them about coaching.

This equates to two percent of the overall UK adult population, or approximately 900,000 people who are part of the coach development workforce.

Figure 33. Coach development workforce by when they last coached

Work with other coaches to educate, support, mentor or teach them (2019 only)	In the past 12 months	In the past 2 years	In the past 3 years	In the past 5 years	Longer than 5 years ago
Yes	17%*	15%*	11%*	4%*	1%*
No	78%*	79%*	83%*	91%	98%*
Don't know	5%*	6%*	6%*	5%*	1%*
Unweighted N	2,823	996	888	1,049	6,969

Base: Those who have ever coached

Men are more likely than women to be part of the coach development workforce (7% compared to 6%). Younger coaches aged 18 to 44 are also more likely to be part of the coach development workforce (10%) than 55 to 64 year-olds (5%).

Those from a BAME background are significantly more likely to be part of the coach development workforce (12%) than those who are white (6%). Those from higher social groups are also more likely than those from lower social groups to be part of the coach development workforce (8% compared to 5%).

Of those who would describe themselves as part of the coach development workforce, the majority (59%) have coached within the 12 months prior to the survey. Only 8% of this group have not coached for more than five years.

When asked which of the following best described their role as an educator, supporter, mentor, or teacher of coaches, 38% described their role as a 'Mentor'; a fifth (20%) a 'Coach Developer' and 13% a 'Coach Educator'.

Figure 34. Coaches' descriptions of their mentoring role

Description of mentoring role (2019 only)	All
I am a Coach Developer (support coaches through a blended approach of coaching conversions, in-situ observations, critical reflection and supportive challenge, etc.)	20%
I am a Mentor (I support the personal and professional development of an individual through discussion, advice and guidance)	38%
I am a Coach Educator (I work in a training, tutoring or teaching role)	13%
Quality assurance or assessment role	4%
I am a Head Coach (I line manage other coaches)	4%
Other	6%
Don't know	15%
Unweighted N	808

Base: Those who are currently mentoring other coaches (n=808)

In addition, they were asked if they had a specific job title for this role. Forty-one percent said they did not and 14% said their title was 'Head of Workforce', 13% 'Coach Development Officer' and 11% 'Workforce Manager'.

Figure 35. Coaches' titles in their mentoring role

Titles for mentoring role (2019 only)	All
Head of Coaching	9%
Head of Coaching and Qualifications	8%
Head of Workforce	14%
Workforce Manager	11%
Coach Development Officer	13%
Head of Coach Development	8%
Coach Development Manager	9%
Coach Engagement Manager	5%
Coach Qualification Manager	4%
Other	7%
I don't have a title for this role as a mentor	41%
Don't know	5%
Unweighted N	808

Base: Those who are currently mentoring other coaches

Section 7: Physical and mental health

Physical activity of coaches

Coaches are significantly more likely than those who have never coached to have taken part in any physical activity over the last year. Nearly nine in ten (87%) coaches have been active recently, compared to half (51%) of those who have never coached.

Figure 36. Daily physical activity of those who have been physically active in the past year – comparing coaches to those who have never coached

Days doing activity in a typical week (2019 only)	In the past 12 months	In the past 2 years	In the past 3 years	In the past 5 years	Longer than 5 years ago	Never	All
0 days per week	5%*	5%*	5%*	5%*	8%*	10%*	8%
1 day per week	14%*	17%	19%	21%*	15%*	17%*	17%
2 days per week	15%*	16%	18%	16%	17%	18%*	17%
3 days per week	19%	21%	21%	20%	20%	20%	20%
4 days per week	14%*	15%*	15%*	12%	12%	11%*	12%
5 days per week	14%*	10%	10%	13%	12%	12%*	12%
6 days per week	7%*	6%	4%	5%	5%	4%*	5%
7 days per week	12%*	9%	8%	7%*	11%*	9%*	9%
Unweighted N	2,448	625	536	688	3,863	17,645	27,589

Base: Those who have been physically active in the last 12 months and coached in the last 12 months (n=2,823) or never coached (n=34,556)

Among those who have been physically active in the past year, only 5% of coaches currently do not do any regular weekly exercise (of 30 minutes or more), compared to 10% of those who have never coached. Among this same group, 46% of coaches do at least four days a week of physical activity lasting for at least 30 minutes. This falls to a third (36%) when looking at those who have never coached, or 38% in the overall UK population.

Physical health of coaches

Just under half (45%) of coaches currently have a healthy BMI, compared to 38% of those who have never coached, or 33% of those who have coached at some point but not for at least five years. In addition, 50% of coaches are overweight or obese, which is slightly lower than the UK population average (57%).

Four in ten (41%) coaches would rate their physical health as excellent or good, compared to only 27% of the UK population, or 25% of those who have never coached.

Figure 37. Physical health rating by frequency of coaching

Physical health rating	In the past 12 months	In the past 2 years	In the past 3 years	In the past 5 years	Longer than 5 years ago	Never	All
1 - Excellent	14%*	8%*	8%*	6%	5%*	4%*	5%
2	27%*	24%*	22%	25%*	22%	21%*	22%
3	31%*	32%*	35%*	37%*	40%	41%*	40%
4	20%*	27%*	26%*	23%	23%	23%*	23%
5 - Poor	6%*	7%	5%*	6%*	9%*	8%*	8%
Refused	2%	3%	3%	3%	1%*	2%*	2%
Unweighted N	2,823	996	888	1,049	6,969	34,556	50,797

Base: Those who have been physically active in the last 12 months and coached in the last 12 months (n=2,823) or never coached (n=34,556)

Mental health and wellbeing of coaches

Over half (52%) of coaches would describe their mental health as excellent or good, compared to 43% of the general public and 43% of those who have never coached. Coaches are significantly more likely to feel they have better mental health than those who do not coach.

A fifth (21%) of coaches do, however, describe their mental health as being poor or slightly poor, compared to a quarter (25%) of the overall UK population.

Figure 38. Rating of overall mental health and wellbeing by coaches and those who have never coached

Mental health rating	In the past 12 months	In the past 2 years	In the past 3 years	In the past 5 years	Longer than 5 years ago	Never	All
1 - Excellent	22%*	14%*	13%*	15%	20%*	16%*	16%
2	30%*	28%	24%*	27%	29%*	27%	27%
3	23%*	27%	30%	28%	25%*	28%*	28%
4	15%*	18%	22%*	19%	17%*	19%*	19%
5 - Poor	6%*	8%*	7%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Refused	4%*	5%*	4%	5%*	3%*	3%*	4%
Unweighted N	2,823	996	888	1,049	6,969	34,556	50,797

Base: All UK Adults 18+

Overall, two thirds (64%) of coaches say they felt 'happy' yesterday. This is significantly higher than the national average or of those who have never coached (both 54%). In fact, 11% say they felt 'completely' happy yesterday, compared to 8% of UK adults overall.

Interestingly, coaches who are volunteer only are significantly more likely to state they felt happy yesterday than those who are paid only (48% compared to 22%). Coaches who are volunteer only are also significantly more likely to feel satisfied with their life nowadays (48%) than those who do not do any volunteer coaching (21%).

Figure 39. Positivity scores of happiness measures by frequency of coaching

ONS happiness measures (2019 only) - Positive score (10, 9, 8 and 7)	In the past 12 months	In the past 2 years	In the past 3 years	In the past 5 years	Longer than 5 years ago	Never
Overall how happy did you feel yesterday?	64%*	58%*	53%	55%	57%*	54%*
Overall to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?	68%*	57%	54%	58%	59%*	55%*
Overall how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	64%*	55%	53%	53%	56%*	53%*
Overall how anxious did you feel yesterday?	24%	31%*	31%*	27%*	20%*	24%
Unweighted N	2,823	996	888	1,049	6,969	34,556

Base: All UK Adults 18+

Overall, two thirds (64%) of coaches are satisfied with their life nowadays, compared to roughly half (54%) of UK adults overall.

Half (51%) of coaches state they find it easy to deal with important problems that come up in their lives, whilst 12% of coaches find this difficult. In contrast, 43% of those who have never coached say they find it easy to deal with important problems in their lives, whilst 44% of UK adults feel this way.

Summary

This report presents the key findings from Coaching in the UK, 2019 - the largest and most robust survey of coaching and coached-participation in the UK to date.

The size of the coaching workforce is significant: 6% of adults coached sport or physical activity in the 12 months prior to the survey, which equates to an estimated **3 million coaches in the UK**. Furthermore, an estimated 900,000 people support coaches in a coach development, mentor, educator or quality assurance role.

There has been a slight decrease in the coaching workforce since the last survey was conducted in 2017 (less than one percentage point), and UK Coaching will examine this data in further detail to try and understand this change.

Overall, the coaching workforce remains relatively diverse in relation to ethnicity and disability, but less diverse in relation to gender and social group. Since 2017, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of coaches who are female, from a BAME background, and from lower social groups. Some of the changes observed in 2019 might be a result of small changes in the survey methodology, and UK Coaching will examine this data in further detail and continue to monitor trends over time.

There are some variations in the data, particularly in relation to sport/activity, environment and level of coaching. Some of these variations are highlighted in the report and UK Coaching will be undertaking further sub-group analysis in the near future.

The survey has shown that coaching takes place in a wide range of sports/activities and in a variety of different environments, but overall most coaching takes place at a recreational and club level; and within sports club settings. Those who coach football make up a significant proportion of the workforce.

It is interesting to note the considerable increase of coaching in college/university, and in outdoor urban spaces and countryside settings, but this change should be treated with some caution due to small changes in the survey methodology in 2019.

Whilst there has been a slight decrease in the coaching population overall, it is interesting to note that at the same time there has been a significant increase in the proportion of coaches who receive some pay, and an increase in those with at least one coaching qualification. This may suggest a movement towards a more professional status for coaches and we will continue to monitor this trend closely.

Coaches are generally very positive about their experience of coaching. In 2019, they are more likely to feel they are recognised for their contribution to helping others and they are more likely to recommend coaching to a friend or colleague. Yet, they still find it hard to balance their coaching alongside their other commitments and almost half would like help from others when they coach.

The cost of qualifications and training remains one of the biggest barriers to coaching in the UK in 2019, and may explain why a large proportion of the workforce do not have a coaching qualification and do not engage in regular CPD. Furthermore, just under half of coaches do not have access to a mentor to support them in their role, and nearly two-thirds are not a member of a sporting body.

The findings show the benefits of qualifications and the benefits of having access to a coaching mentor. Coaches with a qualification, and those with access to a coaching mentor, are more likely to feel confident and competent when delivering sport and physical activity. UK Coaching will continue to support the learning and development of coaches across the UK by improving access to learning opportunities and developing high quality content.

The survey explored the physical and mental health benefits of coaching, and found significant differences between those who coach and those who do not coach. Those who coach are more likely to report excellent or good physical and mental health, and are more likely to rate themselves positively on a range of well-being measures, compared to those who have never coached and the UK population.

Although it is not possible to say that coaching leads to improved physical health, mental health and well-being, as there are likely to be several factors at play, these results do indicate that people who coach are more likely to be healthier, happier and satisfied with their lives.

Appendix 1: Methodology

The research aimed to measure the incidence of coaches and coached participants in the UK, to analyse any changes since the research was last conducted in 2017, and to develop an in-depth understanding of the characteristics and experience of the coaches and participants.

In 2017, a survey of 20,688 UK adults aged 18+ and 1,000 children aged 7 to 17 was conducted online between 2 and 21 August, 2017. The results were weighted to be representative of the UK population by gender, age, region and social grade.

In 2019, a similar approach was taken but with an increased sample size of 50,797 adults in the UK aged 18+ and 2,000 children aged 7 to 17. The research was carried out online from the 9 August to the 16 September 2019. The results are weighted to be representative of the UK population by gender, age, region, social grade and ethnicity.

The tables displayed in this report that show the total differences between 2017 and 2019 and any statistically significant differences, are highlighted by a *.

Figures in the main section of the report are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Appendix 2: Glossary

In order to explore all forms of coaching, 'coaching' has been defined for the purposes of this research as: "Coaching, instruction, training or tuition in ANY sport or physical activity, outside of formal education. This can include any environment, such as formal sports club settings as well as informal community settings. It can include any sport or physical activity, including recreational or competitive sport, exercise, fitness, gym, dance, etc."

Throughout the report, unless otherwise stated, any references to 'participants' or 'coached participants' refer to those who have been coached in any sport or physical activity in the last 12 months.

Throughout the report, unless otherwise stated, any references to 'coaches' refers to those who have coached any sport or physical activity in the last 12 months.

The social groups refer to the National Readership Survey social grades:

- Higher social groups (ABC1): A (upper middle), B (middle), C1 (lower middle). Defined as: A: Higher managerial, administrative or professional. B: Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional. C1: Supervisory or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional.
- Lower social groups (C2DE): C2 (skilled working), D (working), E (lowest). Defined as C2: Skilled manual workers. D: Semi and unskilled manual workers. E: Casual or lowest grade workers, pensioners and others who depend on the welfare state for their income.

Unless stated otherwise, 'LGBTQ+' refers to all respondents who have listed their sexuality as 'gay, lesbian, bisexual or other' and those who do not identify with the sex they were assigned with at birth, or those who define their gender in another way that is not male or female. 'Transgender and non-binary' refers to all respondents who have stated they now identify differently to the sex they were assigned at birth or those who were born as 'intersex'. 'Cis-gender' refers to all respondents who identify as either 'male' or 'female' and state this is the sex they were assigned at birth.

Throughout this report, sport and physical activities are discussed in groups, these groups are as follows:

Grouped activities	Activities included in sport groups
Net: Athletics	Athletics
Net: Combat sports	Boxing, Chinese martial arts, Fencing, Judo, Ju Jitsu, Karate, Taekwondo, Wrestling
Net: Cycling	Cycling
Net: Dance	Dance
Net: Exercise, fitness and personal training	Exercise, fitness and personal training, Yoga
Net: Fielding/ striking games	Cricket, Rounders
Net: Gymnastics and Trampolining	Gymnastics, Trampolining
Net: Invasion games	Lacrosse, Basketball, Football, Netball, Rugby (league or union), Hockey (field or ice)
Net: Net/ wall/ racket games	Volleyball, Badminton, Squash, Table tennis, Tennis
Net: Outdoor/ adventure sports and activities	Climbing, Orienteering, Parkour
Net: Skiing or snowboarding	Skiing, Snowboarding
Net: Swimming and aquatics	Swimming, Diving, Polo
Net: Target sports	Shooting, Archery, Golf
Net: Water sports	Canoeing, Rowing, Sailing/yachting, Surfing, Water skiing, Windsurfing
Net: Other	Ice Skating, Weightlifting, Equestrian, Roller skating, Skateboarding

Appendix 3: Population Estimates

Any population estimates listed in this report are based upon the 2016 ONS mid-year population estimate of 51,767,543 people aged 18+ in the UK for any data reported on from 2017. For any 2019 data, these are based on the 2018 ONS mid-year population estimate of 52,383,965 people aged 18+ in the UK.

These estimates have been rounded to the nearest thousand, and a lower and upper bound estimate have been provided to account for the margin of error.

Figure 40. Incidence and population estimate of coaches by year

Frequency of those who have coached	2017 incidence	Number in population: low estimate	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Number in population: high estimate	2019 incidence	Number in population: low estimate	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Number in population: high estimate
In the past 12 months	6.47%	3,210,000	3,349,000	3,520,000	5.74%	2,881,000	3,007,000	3,091,000

Base: All UK adults

Figure 41. Incidence and population estimate of coaches by year and demographic group

Frequency of those who have coached	2017 incidence	Number in population: low estimate	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Number in population: high estimate	2019 incidence	Number in population: low estimate	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Number in population: high estimate
18-24	11.10%	565,000	647,000	729,000	10.08%	531,000	576,000	623,000
25-34	8.75%	705,000	780,000	865,000	7.46%	620,000	671,000	728,000
35-44	8.84%	660,000	738,000	810,000	6.92%	535,000	579,000	619,000
45-54	5.80%	463,000	537,000	611,000	6.07%	514,000	557,000	606,000
55-64	4.34%	274,000	330,000	380,000	4.12%	295,000	328,000	359,000
65+	2.73%	260,000	323,000	378,000	2.38%	255,000	290,000	328,000
Men	7.16%	1,693,000	1,809,000	1,945,000	6.63%	1,612,000	1,697,000	1,766,000
Women	5.82%	1,431,000	1,542,000	1,643,000	4.90%	1,233,000	1,313,000	1,393,000
ABC1	7.34%	2,007,000	2,166,000	2,302,000	6.78%	1,941,000	2,024,000	2,120,000
C2DE	5.30%	1,068,000	1,180,000	1,291,000	4.35%	924,000	980,000	1,059,000
White	5.85%	2,474,000	2,584,000	2,739,000	5.21%	2,209,000	2,301,000	2,385,000
NET: BAME	10.34%	512,000	575,000	634,000	9.21%	467,000	513,000	556,000

Base: All UK adults

Figure 42. Incidence and population estimate of coaches by year and UK region

Frequency of those who have coached	2017 incidence	Number in population: low estimate	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Number in population: high estimate	2019 incidence	Number in population: low estimate	Number in population: mid-point estimate	Number in population: high estimate
North East	5.13%	78,000	112,000	144,000	4.68%	82,000	101,000	120,000
North West	5.70%	273,000	330,000	388,000	5.39%	277,000	311,000	346,000
Yorks & Humber	5.18%	180,000	228,000	277,000	5.38%	202,000	231,000	262,000
East Midlands	5.54%	166,000	209,000	249,000	6.12%	203,000	234,000	264,000
West Midlands	5.45%	200,000	248,000	301,000	6.03%	244,000	278,000	309,000
East of England	6.91%	274,000	333,000	390,000	5.25%	229,000	256,000	287,000
London	8.42%	475,000	540,000	603,000	7.17%	453,000	492,000	535,000
South East	6.85%	422,000	482,000	549,000	5.84%	380,000	419,000	452,000
South West	6.64%	242,000	292,000	339,000	5.50%	216,000	248,000	279,000
Wales	6.77%	132,000	172,000	213,000	5.00%	103,000	126,000	148,000
Scotland	6.92%	248,000	301,000	352,000	5.39%	204,000	234,000	265,000
Northern Ireland	6.68%	78,000	100,000	123,000	5.15%	56,000	76,000	97,000

Base: All UK adults

Appendix 4: Sports / activities

Figure 43. Sport or activity coached by gender

Coached sports (2019 only)	Male	Female	All 2019
Archery	5%	3%	4%
Athletics	11%	12%	11%
Badminton	5%	5%	5%
Basketball	6%	4%	5%
Boxing	3%	1%	2%
Canoeing	2%	1%	2%
Chinese martial arts (i.e. Kung Fu)	1%	1%	1%
Climbing	3%	1%	3%
Cricket	9%	5%	7%
Cycling (including BMX, mountain biking, etc.)	5%	2%	4%
Dance	5%	19%	11%
Diving	2%	1%	1%
Equestrian (e.g. Horse Riding, jumping, etc.)	1%	4%	2%
Exercise and movement (e.g. Zumba, Aerobics, Boxercise, etc.)	4%	10%	7%
Fencing	1%	1%	1%
Football	24%	9%	18%
Golf	3%	1%	2%
Gymnastics	3%	9%	5%
Hockey (including field hockey and ice hockey)	3%	3%	3%
Ice skating	1%	1%	1%
Judo	1%	0%	1%
Ju Jitsu	1%	0%	1%
Karate	2%	1%	2%
Lacrosse	1%	0%	1%
Netball	2%	7%	4%
Orienteering	2%	3%	3%
Parkour	0%	1%	0%
Polo (including water polo)	0%	0%	0%
Roller skating	0%	1%	1%
Rounders	3%	8%	5%
Rowing	2%	1%	1%
Rugby (league or union)	4%	2%	3%
Sailing/ yachting	2%	1%	2%
Shooting (e.g. clay pigeon)	2%	1%	2%

Skateboarding	1%	0%	1%
Skiing	1%	1%	1%
Snowboarding	0%	0%	0%
Squash	1%	0%	1%
Surfing	1%	0%	1%
Swimming	7%	9%	8%
Table tennis	4%	2%	3%
Taekwondo	1%	1%	1%
Tennis	6%	6%	6%
Trampolining	1%	1%	1%
Volleyball	2%	1%	2%
Water skiing	1%	0%	0%
Weightlifting	7%	3%	5%
Windsurfing	0%	0%	0%
Wrestling	0%	0%	0%
Yoga	2%	7%	4%
Other	19%	18%	19%
Don't know	3%	8%	5%
Unweighted N	1,352	1,398	2,783

Base: All who have coached in the last 12 months