UK Coaching

National Population Survey: Results
October 2017
This report presents findings from a study commissioned by UK Coaching to explore public opinion of coaches and coaching, as well as to address the following key objectives:

- Measure the incidence of coaches and people receiving coaching in the UK
- Build a picture of the demographic characteristics of these coaches and participants
- Investigate coaches’ activities and perceptions
- Explore participants’ experiences of being coached

The results are broken out by three key audiences:

1) Coaches
2) Participants
3) The general public
Method and background

- A survey of 20,688 UK adults aged 18+ was conducted online between 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 21\textsuperscript{st} August, 2017. The results are weighted to be representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).
- 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.”
- Below are definitions for various terms used throughout the report:
  - Current coaches: people who have coached in last 12 months
  - Inactive coaches: people who have coached in past five years, but not in last 12 months
  - Participants: people who have received coaching in the last 12 months
  - BAME: Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (used to refer to members of non-white communities in the UK)
  - Social grade: defined by the Market Research Society as a series of demographic classifications based on the occupation of the head of the household. The categories are classified as follows: AB: upper middle and middle class; C1: lower middle class; C2 skilled working class; DE: working class and non-working class. For our analysis, they have been grouped into ABC1 and C2DE.
Key findings
Key findings: Current coaches

- Six percent of UK adults have coached within the last 12 months
- While coaches are a diverse group, they are more likely than the UK population overall to be male, aged 18-24, of a minority ethnic group and from a higher social grade
- Across the UK regions, London has the highest proportion of coaches among its population
- More than half started coaching before the age of 26
- They most commonly coach in a sports club, however this group represents only a quarter of the coaching population. Coaches at sports clubs are more likely to be male and White – potentially representing coaches in the more ‘traditional’ sense
- The majority are coaching less than three hours a week, and are more likely to be working on a volunteer than a paid basis
- More than half of coaches do not have any formal coaching qualifications, although are more likely to have these if they work in a sports club/institute or private gym, or if they conduct private sessions
- Coaches identify the cost of training/qualifications and balancing work/home life as the top barriers facing coaches in the UK
Key findings: Inactive coaches

• Six percent of UK adults are inactive coaches who have coached in the past five years, but not in the last 12 months.
• They are similar demographically to current coaches in most ways except that they tend to be younger, indicating that young people may be most likely to give it up.
• One in four inactive coaches began coaching before they were 17 years old – a higher proportion than among current coaches, further indicating that those who start young could be more likely to stop coaching.
• Inactive coaches identify the same top two barriers as current coaches: the cost of training/qualifications followed by balancing work/home life.
• They mainly stopped coaching due to external factors, like not having enough time or moving away, as opposed to issues related to the coaching system.
• Payments for sessions and expenses are two of the things most likely to encourage recently inactive coaches to start coaching again.
Key findings: Those who have never coached

- Sixty-six percent of UK adults have never coached or taught any type of sport or physical activity.
- One in five UK adults who have never coached indicate they might be interested in doing so.
- Those who might be interested in coaching most often feel they could be helped to become a coach with a free introduction to coaching session or further information about qualifications and training opportunities.
- A third of those who are not interested in becoming a coach/instructor believe they are not fit/active enough, the reason cited most often. This could highlight a disconnect, as findings evidence that current coaches see their role as being more about building confidence and self-esteem than about teaching technique/skill or developing those who are talented.
Key findings: Participants

- Eighteen percent of UK adults have received coaching, instruction, training or tuition in the last 12 months.
- Current recipients of coaching represent a range of age groups, and are more likely than the UK population overall to be female and from a higher social grade.
- People are more likely to be receiving coaching in London than in any other region in the UK.
- Perceptions of the coaching experience are overwhelmingly positive; the vast majority say they enjoy being coached, feel their coach motivates, encourages and supports them, and would recommend him/her to others.
- Those who have been receiving coaching report that being motivated to do better and pushed to do more are top reasons why they have a coach instead of exercising independently.
- Most participants do not find it important that their coach is similar to them (e.g. gender, age, background) but rather value their experience, people skills and reputation within the community.
- Among the 14% of the UK population who have been coached in the past five years but not in the most recent 12 months, cost is the biggest barrier for returning to coaching – most commonly they say they’d be encouraged to take part again if the cost of sessions was reduced.
- However, close to half of inactive participants would not be interested in receiving coaching again in the future.
- Among those who have never received coaching and are not interested in doing so, their top reason is that they prefer to exercise on their own, followed by feeling it’s not for people like them. This draws attention to another possibly key gap; while findings indicate that recipients of coaching are diverse and highly satisfied, there is a group in the population who are under the impression that it is not for them.
Key findings: General public

• A majority of UK adults believe that coaches have a positive influence on people’s personal and professional lives, as well as that they are effective at increasing physical activity and promoting emotional health and wellbeing.

• Although nearly three quarters of the general public believe that sports coaches are trustworthy, over a quarter do not. The more active someone is, whether through physical activity or receiving coaching, the more likely they are to think that coaches are trustworthy.

• Eight percent of UK adults say they’ve heard of UK Coaching/Sports Coach UK, and among current coaches this figure rises to 25%.
Spotlight: Qualifications

- More than half of those who coach do not have any coaching qualifications.
- Coaches are most likely to have qualifications if they coach in a sports club/institute or in private sessions/gyms.
- More than half of coaches who usually or always coach alone do not hold any coaching qualifications. This is higher among those who coach in community centres or outdoors, but still close to half of those who coach alone in sports clubs/institutes do not have any coaching qualifications.
- A lack of qualifications is an important topic, as two thirds of those receiving coaching state it is one of the most important factors to consider when choosing a coach. Notably, however, only a minority report checking that their coach has qualifications – much more commonly they left it up to the club/gym/facility to check. Also, a third of all UK adults feel that being qualified makes a great coach.
- Additionally, coaches are significantly more likely to feel they can deliver the style of coaching they aspire to if they have qualifications.
- Coaches themselves acknowledge that a lack of qualifications is a problem; over a third feel that the cost of training/qualifications is a major barrier to coaching in the UK.
Spotlight: Perception vs. reality

• The picture painted by those who have recent experience receiving coaching does not always align with the perceptions of those who don’t
• Coaching is delivered for a wide variety of activities and audiences, but consistently across the board people receiving coaching are highly satisfied with their experience and positive about the benefits of coaching
• Those who do not receive coaching, however, can sometimes feel that it is not for people like them. Perhaps in relation to this, they appear to more often see coaches as being competitive, athletic and aggressive, which does not in reality match the experience of participants or the perspective of coaches.
• The UK public believe that a great coach is constructive, friendly and approachable above all else, and participants place high value on a coach with people skills who understands them and their specific needs. Notably, coaches themselves mirror these preference with their belief that their primary role to be about building confidence and self-esteem ahead of developing technique/skills.
Coaches
Current coaches
Coaches are more likely to be male and ethnically diverse

**6%** of UK adults have coached within the last 12 months, which can be extrapolated to an estimate of approximately **3,106,000** coaches in the UK*.

Coaches are more heavily weighted towards being male than female, with men representing a higher proportion overall than within the UK population.

**22%** of coaches in the UK are Black, Asian, or minority ethnic (BAME), while **78%** are White. This is higher than the nationally representative proportion of the BAME population (14%).

**65%** of those who coach are in the higher social grade ABC1, which is a higher proportion than in the overall UK population (57%).

One in five coaches (**20%**) are under the age of 25, meaning that they are heavily weighted towards being younger. In the UK adult population, only **12%** are aged 18-24.

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*Based on the 2016 ONS mid-year population estimate of 51,767,543 people aged 18+ in the UK

**Gender**

- Male: 54%
- Female: 46%

**Social Grade**

- ABC1: 65%
- C2DE: 35%

**Ethnicity**

- White: 78%
- BAME: 22%

**Age**

- 18-24: 22%
- 25-34: 15%
- 35-44: 20%
- 45-54: 11%
- 55-64: 10%
- 65+: 10%
London has the highest proportion of coaches in the UK, while Yorkshire has the lowest.

The incidence of those coaching around the UK varies from 5% in Yorkshire to 8% in London.

The south of England has a significantly higher proportion of coaches than the North or the Midlands – 7% compared with 5%.

6% of the English adult population have coached within the last 12 months.

There are significantly more coaches in London than in Yorkshire, East and West Midlands and in the South West and East.

United Kingdom

Scotland

There is a significantly higher proportion of people currently coaching in Scotland than in Yorkshire.

East of England

There is a significantly higher proportion of coaches in the East of England than in Yorkshire.

London

There are significantly more coaches in London than in Yorkshire, East and West Midlands and in the South West and East.

q26. When, if ever, was the LAST time you coached, instructed, trained, taught or led ANY sport or physical activity, to children or adults? 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. Base: All UK adults (20687)
Coaches are less likely than the UK population overall to have a long-term physical or mental health condition

88% of coaches in the UK have done physical activity within the last 12 months, and among that group 3hrs and 45mins is the average amount of time they spend doing physical activity a week.

You are less likely to be overweight than the average UK population if you are a coach, however a significant minority (46%) are overweight or obese.

Coaches are also more likely to be positive about the physical activity they partake in.

q6. Thinking about your overall experience of sport and physical activity, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? q3. Can you estimate how many minutes of sport or physical activity you did in a typical week? q1. When, if ever, was the LAST time you took part in any sport or physical activity, outside of formal education? q2. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?

Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350); all UK adults (20)
More than half started coaching before the age of 26

39% of coaches started coaching between the ages of 17-25, while 16% started before they were 17. 23% became a coach while still participating in sport or physical activity themselves. 22% became involved to support their local team/club or to stay involved in physical activity. Most coaches started coaching as a result of already participating in sport or physical activity in some capacity and often within their local community.

**At what age did you start coaching?**

- 16 and under: 16%
- 17-21: 24%
- 22-25: 18%
- 26-30: 13%
- 31-40: 15%
- Over 40: 14%

**Why did you first become involved in coaching?**

- I began coaching other participants whilst still playing: 23%
- To support my local club/team: 22%
- To stay involved in sport or physical activity: 22%
- Progressed from volunteering (e.g. helping out in the club): 18%
- To contribute to my local community: 19%
- As a result of child’s involvement in the sport: 17%
- Career development: 16%
- I was inspired by my own coach: 14%
- Other: 13%
- Don’t know: 7%

q43. At what age did you first start to coach?
q44. And why did you first become involved in coaching? Please tick all that apply. Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Men are significantly more likely to coach at sports clubs, while women more commonly coach school sessions.

Coaches are more likely to coach in a sports club than anywhere else – although this does only represent a quarter of the coaching population. These coaches at sports clubs are predominantly male, with men making up 73% of the group. They are also more likely to be White (79%) than coaches in some other venues.

14% coach at a school session as part of PE, among whom 70% are female.

Overall, 29% coach in a sports club or institute, 25% in school, 21% in a community or public group, 16% in private sessions or a gym and 17% outdoors.

### Where do you coach?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports club</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community group, youth group or similar</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sessions (as part of PE)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sessions (e.g. outside PE, Active Schools)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an outdoor urban space (park or playground, etc.)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In an outdoor/countryside setting (river, forest, etc.)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private leisure centre, gym or health club</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sessions with my own clients</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Authority leisure centre</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further or Higher Education sessions</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Institute or similar</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a talent/performance environment (e.g. first selective environment, regional or national age group team)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

q32. Where do you coach? Please tick all that apply. Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
The majority are coaching less than 3 hours in a typical week – and they are more often volunteers

In a typical week, coaches are most often coaching for 1-2 hours (35%).

As might be expected, a majority (52%) of those working 1-2 hours do so on a volunteer basis, but surprisingly half (50%) of those working over 10 hours a week are also volunteers.

Women are significantly more likely to do paid work than male coaches.

61% of coaches are doing at least some coaching voluntarily in a typical week.

Only 19% of coaches are coaching in a paid only capacity.

q27. On average, in a typical week, how many hours do you spend coaching or instructing sport or physical activity? - In a paid capacity
q28. On average, in a typical week, how many hours do you spend coaching or instructing sport or physical activity? - In a voluntary capacity (volunteering excludes payment except for expenses)

Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Over half of current coaches do not have any formal coaching qualifications

42% of coaches have some kind of qualification, but 58% do not have any coaching qualifications.

Coaches are most likely to have coaching qualifications if they work in a sports club/institute or private gym, or if they conduct private sessions.

The proportion of coaches with any level of qualification – by venue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports club/Institute</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sessions/gyms</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community or public groups</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School session</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

q40. What is your highest level of coaching qualification?
q32. Where do you coach? Please tick all that apply.
Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Paid and volunteer coaches are equally likely to describe themselves with the title of Coach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching title(s)</th>
<th>Paid</th>
<th>Volunteer only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helper</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant coach</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activator/Facilitator</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE teacher</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness/exercise instructor</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Leader/Leader</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher (outside school)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal trainer</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Coach (e.g. positional, skills)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced/Senior Coach</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Coach</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Coach</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainee coach</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39% of current coaches refer to themselves as a ‘coach’ in some capacity, however 36% of this group do not have any qualifications. 65% of those who refer to themselves as ‘Coach’ are male, while the title of ‘Teacher’ is more heavily weighted towards women (58%).

25% of current coaches who are volunteer only refer to themselves as a ‘helper’ while only 16% of those who are paid do so.

16% of paid current coaches refer to themselves as a ‘fitness or exercise instructor’ in comparison with 6% of volunteer coaches.

q39. Which of the following job titles best describes your coaching role either now or in the past when you were coaching? Please tick all that apply.
Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Half of current coaches always or usually work alone – and half of those coaches do not have any formal coaching qualifications.

**Do you coach alone?**

- 23% I always coach alone, never with others
- 16% I usually coach alone, but sometimes I coach with others
- 13% I regularly coach alone and regularly coach with others
- 27% I usually coach with others, but sometimes I coach alone
- 21% I always coach with others, never alone

**50%** of current coaches either always work alone or only occasionally with others. **57%** of those who usually work alone do not have any formal qualifications. **42%** of those who usually or always work alone in a sports club or institute do not have any qualifications.

**50%** of current coaches either never or rarely use digital technology in their coaching (**31%** and **19%** respectively). Those who regularly coach alone are significantly more likely to use technology, as are those who work in private gyms or conduct private sessions.

**How often do you use digital technology in your coaching?**

- 31% All of the time
- 11% Most of the time
- 13% Some of the time
- 19% Rarely
- 22% Never
- 4% Don't know

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q35. When you coach, do you coach alone or with another/others?

q38. How often do you use digital technology (such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, or wearable products) in your coaching? Include use of technology during the planning of your sessions, during the delivery of your sessions, and following your sessions, i.e. for review.

Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Female coaches tend to think they have a better understanding of the specific needs of children, while male coaches think they have a greater understanding of adults.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>A good level of understanding</th>
<th>Some understanding</th>
<th>A little understanding</th>
<th>No understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older adults (50+)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (18-50)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people (14-17)</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older children (10-13)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger children (5-9)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school children (0-4)</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male coaches are more likely to feel they have a good understanding of adults (18+).

Female coaches are more likely than male coaches to feel they have a good understanding of pre-school children and younger children.

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**YouGov**

Q34. To what extent do you feel that you understand the specific sport and physical activity needs of each of the following? Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Male coaches are more likely to think they have an understanding of high performance athletes

As you might suspect, women are more likely to feel they have a good understanding of this than men. No coaches at a specific sporting location have a notably different understanding of women’s groups.

Consistently, coaches from both sports clubs/institutes and private sessions/gyms claim to have a better understanding of most groups, particularly those new to physical activity or the sport.

Male coaches are significantly more likely to feel they have a good understanding of talented players or high performance athletes AND those who are new to sport/physical activity.

Those who have any kind of coaching qualification are more likely to feel they have a good understanding of people with learning disabilities.

q34. To what extent do you feel that you understand the specific sport and physical activity needs of each of the following?

Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Only half of coaches say they feel proud to tell others they are a coach

Experiences of current coaches

- I feel that my coaching makes a difference to my participants: 27% strongly agree, 78% tend to agree, 51% neither nor, 18% tend to disagree, 2% strongly disagree.
- I look forward to coaching: 25% strongly agree, 68% tend to agree, 43% neither nor, 25% tend to disagree, 4% strongly disagree.
- I am able to deliver the style of coaching that I aspire to: 18% strongly agree, 62% tend to agree, 44% neither nor, 30% tend to disagree, 6% strongly disagree.
- I am recognised for the contribution I make to helping others through coaching: 14% strongly agree, 52% tend to agree, 38% neither nor, 32% tend to disagree, 10% strongly disagree.
- I feel proud when I tell others I am a coach: 21% strongly agree, 52% tend to agree, 31% neither nor, 40% tend to disagree, 5% strongly disagree.
- I feel part of a network or community of coaches: 13% strongly agree, 40% tend to agree, 27% neither nor, 33% tend to disagree, 14% strongly disagree.
- It's hard to balance coaching alongside my other commitments: 15% strongly agree, 24% tend to agree, 28% neither nor, 20% tend to disagree, 14% strongly disagree.

Coaches with a level 1 and/or higher coaching qualification are more likely to say they look forward to coaching.

Male coaches are more likely to agree that it’s hard to balance coaching with other commitments.
Male coaches are more likely to feel they have access to resources, equipment and sufficient opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither nor</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coaching keeps me physically active</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend coaching to a friend or colleague</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the right resources or equipment to coach effectively</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a choice in deciding when and where I coach</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient opportunities to coach in my chosen sport/activity</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like some help from others when I coach</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working as a coach, I sometimes feel alone or isolated</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male coaches are more likely to believe that they have autonomy over where they coach and also more likely to think they have better access to equipment and opportunities.

Younger coaches between 18-24 are more likely to think they have sufficient opportunities as a coach.

q37 Thinking about your experience of being a coach or physical activity instructor, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Most coaches think balancing home/work life is a major challenge

42% say they want to spend more time coaching in the future. However, the majority of those currently coaching would not or are not sure if they want to spend more time coaching (30% and 28% respectively).

Almost 2 in 5 (38%) believe the top challenge for coaches in the UK is balancing work/home life. Cost of training is also a major barrier for coaches with over a third mentioning the cost of qualifications. A third also state that lack of investment in facilities and equipment is a barrier. Those who coach in either schools or outdoors are significantly more likely than those who coach elsewhere to say this.

28% state that dealing with parents is a main barrier – which is significantly higher for those who coach in PE (36%) and after school (40%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think are the main challenges or barriers facing coaches in the United Kingdom?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The cost of training/qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing work/home life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The voluntary nature of coaching/lack of pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of investment in facilities and equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with parents (behaviour or interference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural issues of players/participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The length of time it takes to undertake qualifications/training/CPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support from employers, clubs or national governing bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declining participation rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunity to take additional training/CPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of experienced or qualified coaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

q45. Would you like to spend more time coaching in the future?
q46. What do you think are the main challenges or barriers facing coaches in the United Kingdom? Please tick all that apply.
Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Inactive coaches
Inactive coaches tend to be younger than current coaches, indicating that young people may be most likely to give it up.

6% of UK adults are inactive coaches who have coached less than 12 months ago, but more recently than 5 years ago.

65% of those who used to coach are in a higher social grade, which is a higher proportion than the UK population overall (57%).

Inactive coaches are often younger, with nearly a third aged 18-24. Interestingly, there is a higher proportion of inactive coaches aged 18-24 than current coaches of the same age group, indicating that young people may be most likely to stop coaching.

---

**Social grade**

- ABC1: 35%
- C2DE: 65%

**Ethnicity**

- White: 79%
- BAME: 21%

**Age**

- 18-24: 31%
- 25-34: 12%
- 35-44: 24%
- 45-54: 17%
- 55-64: 8%
- 65+: 8%
Over half of inactive coaches do not have any qualifications.

Over half (55%) of inactive coaches do not have any coaching qualifications.

Inactive coaches who might want to get back into coaching are more likely than those who don’t to have a qualification (51%) compared with 33%.

1 in 4 (27%) inactive coaches began before they were 17 compared with only 16% of current coaches, further highlighting the fact that inactive coaches tend towards being younger. Overall, more than two thirds (69%) started coaching before they were 26.

Coaching Qualifications

- No coaching qualification: 55%
- Activator/leader qualification: 24%
- Level 1 or 2 (or equivalent): 7%
- Level 3 or 4 (or equivalent): 8%
- Other: 7%

What age did you start coaching?

- 16 and under: 27%
- 17-21: 9%
- 22-25: 14%
- 26-30: 28%
- 31-40: 11%
- Over 40: 10%
- Don’t know: 1%

q40. What is your highest level of coaching qualification?
q43. At what age did you first start to coach?
Base: Those who have coached within the last 5 years, but not the last 12 months (1186)
Balancing home/work is perceived as the biggest barrier facing coaches by men, while women identify cost and lack of pay the main challenges.

Roughly two in five (38%) feel that the cost of training and qualifications is a main barrier for coaches in the UK.

58% of those who feel cost of training and qualifications is a barrier do not hold any coaching qualifications.

Other key challenges identified by inactive coaches are balancing work and home life (36%) and the voluntary nature of coaching (31%).

Balancing work and home life is perceived to be a barrier by men more often than women, while women are more likely to see lack of pay and the cost of training as challenges.

What do you think are the main challenges or barriers facing coaches in the United Kingdom?

- The cost of training/qualifications: 38%
- Balancing work/home life: 36%
- The voluntary nature of coaching/lack of pay: 31%
- Dealing with parents (behaviour or interference): 28%
- Lack of investment in facilities and equipment: 27%
- Behavioural issues of players/participants: 25%
- Lack of support from employers, clubs or national governing bodies: 23%
- The length of time it takes to undertake qualifications/training/CPD: 22%
- Declining participation rates: 15%
- Lack of experienced or qualified coaches: 13%
- Lack of opportunity to take additional training/CPD: 13%
- Other: 2%

q46. What do you think are the main challenges or barriers facing coaches in the United Kingdom? Please tick all that apply.
Base: Those who have coached within the last 5 years, but not the last 12 months (1186)
Those no longer coaching mainly stopped due to external factors like not having enough time, as opposed to issues related to the system.

1 in 3 (34%) inactive coaches feel they no longer had enough time to keep coaching, while 1 in 5 (18%) moved away and 12% felt they were getting too old.

Although the cost of training/qualifications is the top challenge identified for coaches in the UK, only 8% of inactive coaches cite this as their reason for no longer coaching.

Male coaches are somewhat more likely to say that they ‘fell out of love with coaching’ than women, whereas women are more likely to feel there was ‘too much responsibility being a coach’.

There is no clear consensus on what made coaches leave coaching, however a significant amount seem to have stopped coaching as a result of an external factor like not having enough time or moving away rather than having an issue with the system.
Payments for sessions/expenses are two of the things most likely to encourage inactive coaches to start coaching again.

1 in 4 (26%) inactive coaches say they would like to return to coaching in the future. This group is more likely to be male and under 50. An equal proportion are unsure about whether or not they would like to.

When inactive coaches are asked what might encourage them to start coaching again, payment for sessions (14%) and expenses (13%) along with training to update their skills (13%) are mentioned most often.

q45. Would you like to return to coaching in the future?
q48. Is there anything that might encourage you to start coaching again? Please tick all that apply.

Base: Those who have coached within the last 5 years, but not the last 12 months (1186)
People who have never been a coach
You are less likely to have coached if you are female or of a White ethnic background

You are more likely to have never done any coaching if you are White (68% compared with 57% among BAME ethnic groups)

Ethnicity

People of a lower social grade are more likely to have never coached (69% among C2DE compared with 64% among ABC1)

Social grade

66% of UK adults have never coached or taught any type of sport or physical activity.

Women (70%) are significantly more likely than men (62%) to have never been a coach.

The older you are, the less likely you are to have ever coached.

q26. When, if ever, was the LAST time you coached, instructed, trained, taught or led ANY sport or physical activity, to children or adults? 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.

Base: Those who have never coached (13691)
One in five (21%) UK adults who have never coached indicate they might be interested

Among those who could be interested, 21% feel a free introduction to coaching session would help them become a coach, while 19% say further information about qualifications and training opportunities would be beneficial.

Those who may be interested in coaching are more likely to be:

- Male
- Younger (18-34)
- BAME
- Have done physical activity within the last 12 months
- Have received coaching in the past 5 years

**What, if any, kind of information or support would you need to help you become a sport or physical activity coach or instructor?**

- Free introduction to coaching sessions: 21%
- Further information about qualifications, learning and training opportunities: 19%
- Further information about paid opportunities: 12%
- Further information about volunteer opportunities: 11%
- More information in my local area (e.g. leisure centres, library): 11%
- Meet and greet type events with other coaches in my area: 8%
- Signposting to relevant websites: 7%
- Social events at my local club/venues: 6%
- Social media groups or forums, or discussions with other coaches: 5%
- Other: 5%
79% of those who have never coached are not interested in coaching in the future.

Among this group, 1 in 3 (34%) believe they are not fit enough to become a coach/instructor. Women state this more often than men and these individuals are more likely to be obese.

Roughly 1 in 4 (27%) state they have no interest in sport/physical activity or any relevant training or qualifications.

1 in 5 (21%) believe coaching isn’t for people like them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am not active or fit enough</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no interest in sport or physical activity</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't have any relevant training or qualifications</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching isn't for people like me</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work full-time in another role</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no experience of sport or physical activity</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know enough about coaching</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel confident enough</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly paid/unpaid work</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of childcare</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't have access to any clubs or facilities near me</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know where to find information about coaching</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

q51. Are there any specific reasons why you are not interested in becoming a sport or physical activity coach or instructor? Please tick all that apply.
Base: Those who have never coached (13691)
Participants
Current recipients of coaching
You are more likely to be receiving coaching if you’re a woman or from a higher socioeconomic group.

18% of UK adults have received coaching, instruction, training or tuition in the last 12 months. This can be extrapolated to an estimate of approximately 9,318,000 people receiving coaching in the UK*.

68% of those being coached are ABC1, significantly higher than their representation in the UK population (57%).

62% of those receiving coaching are female, a stark contrast against coaches, among whom the majority are male.

Younger adults (18-34) are more likely to currently be receiving coaching.

q8. When, if ever, was the LAST time you received coaching, instruction, training or tuition in ANY sport or physical activity, outside of formal education? (Please select the option that BEST applies). 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.

Base: all those who have received coaching within the last 12 months (3788)

*Based on the 2016 ONS mid-year population estimate of 51,767,543 people aged 18+ in the UK.
London holds the highest proportion of adults currently receiving coaching

The incidence of those receiving coaching in the UK varies from **15%** in the North West and Wales to **22%** in London.

Overall, the south of England (18%) has a higher proportion of people receiving coaching than the North or Midlands (16%).

**18%** of the English adult population have received coaching in the past 12 months, equivalent to Scotland and Northern Ireland but significantly higher than in Wales.

There is a significantly higher proportion of people receiving coaching in London than in all other regions of the UK, with the exception of the East of England.

q8. When, if ever, was the LAST time you received coaching, instruction, training or tuition in ANY sport or physical activity, outside of formal education? (Please select the option that BEST applies). 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.

Base: All UK adults (20687)
Almost half of people receiving coaching are overweight

Weight (based on BMI)

- 48% of those who are currently receiving coaching are overweight or obese
- 71 minutes is the average amount of time spent receiving coaching a week.
- Over half (54%) of those who have coached others in the last 12 months have also received coaching in the last year. However, only 1 in 4 (25%) inactive coaches are currently receiving coaching.

Minutes spent being coached in a typical week

- Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Don't know
  - Prefer not to say

q10. You said you typically did around [x] minutes of sport or physical activity in a typical week. How many of those minutes were led by a coach, instructor, teacher or trainer?
q19a. And thinking about the last time you attended a coached-session, how would you rate your overall experience?
Base: all those who have received coaching within the last 12 months (3788)
Two in five UK adults receiving coaching choose to have a coach instead of exercising independently because their coach motivates them to do better.

Thinking about the sessions that are led by a coach, instructor, teacher or trainer, why do you choose to participate in a coached-session, rather than independently?

- The coach motivates me to do better: 43%
- The coach pushes me to do more: 37%
- The sport/activity is new to me, I need the advice of a coach: 26%
- The coach encourages me to come back: 25%
- The coach understands my motivations and goals: 19%
- I can't participate in the sport/activity without a coach: 17%
- I like the individual attention of a coach: 16%
- I have specific individual needs that my coach can help with: 16%
- I can only access the competition/event via the coach: 9%
- Other: 9%
- Don't know: 6%

Those who have been receiving coaching indicate that motivation and being pushed are their main reasons for having a coach instead of exercising independently.

One in four (26%) UK adults currently receiving coaching feel they need the advice of a coach because the activity is new to them.

Q13. Thinking about the sessions that are led by a coach, instructor, teacher or trainer, why do you choose to participate in a coached-session, rather than independently? Please tick all that apply.
Base: all those who have received coaching within the last 12 months (3788)
Those who are coached are overwhelmingly positive about their experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither nor</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My coach motivates me to be better</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My coach encourages me to come back</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching meets my individual sport and physical activity needs</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My coach pushes me to do more</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My coach listens to me</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My coach supports me to achieve my individual goals</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coaching I receive helps to improve my skills/performance</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coaching I receive helps to improve my fitness</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coaching I receive helps to improve my physical health</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The coaching I receive helps to improve my mental health and well-being</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

77% say they enjoy being coached, and the vast majority feel that this coaching helps improve various aspects of their health, beyond just fitness and performance. 83% believe the coaching they receive helps to improve their physical health, and 72% their mental health and well-being.

YouGov
Four in five people receiving coaching would recommend their coach to others

- 85% positivity about the coaching participants are receiving continues, with saying they have confidence and trust in their coach.
- 75% reporting a good relationship with their coach.
- 82% agree that they would recommend their coach to others.

However, a lesser majority feel part of a team or community through being coached (58%) and less than half (42%) say that coaching gives them access to social opportunities.

Q17. And thinking specifically about your coach and the coached-sessions you attend, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Base: all those who have received coaching within the last 12 months (3788)
Although two thirds of those receiving coaching feel that qualifications/training are one of the most important things to consider when choosing a coach, only 17% actually checked whether their coach has qualifications.

When choosing a coach, which five of these do you think are the most important?

- **Level of experience**: 72%
- **Personal and people skills**: 70%
- **Qualifications and training**: 65%
- **Understands me and my specific needs**: 57%
- **Has a good reputation in the community**: 42%
- **Has similar values to me**: 17%
- **Has a similar personality to me**: 11%
- **Is the same gender as me**: 7%
- **Is a similar age to me**: 6%
- **Has similar life experiences to me**: 4%
- **Is from a similar background to me**: 3%
- **Other**: 4%
- **None of these**: 6%

65% think qualifications/training are one of the most important factors to consider when selecting a coach.

However, only 17% checked whether their coach has qualifications; most often they say they left these relevant checks up to the facility (41%).

Relatively, it is less important to participants that a coach is similar to them – they more often value a coach who is personable and understands their specific needs.
Inactive recipients of coaching
Cost is the biggest barrier for those who would consider returning to coaching in the future

14% of UK adults have received coaching in the last 5 years, but not in the last 12 months.

Although significant minority of those who have received coaching in the past (45%) say they are not interested in receiving coaching again in the future, the remainder indicate that they might be encouraged to return to coached-sessions.

Those who could be encouraged to return to coaching are more likely to be:
- Women
- Younger (18-34)
- Living in London
- Taken part in physical activity with the last 5 years, but not during the past year

Is there anything that might encourage you to take part in coached-sessions again in the future?

- Reduce the cost of sessions: 34%
- Provide sessions at more convenient times for me: 19%
- Introduce more fun: 13%
- Introduce more social activities: 8%
- Improve the facilities: 8%
- Provide more sessions: 7%
- Improve the quality of coaching: 6%
- Reduce the number of competitions or events: 3%
- Introduce more competitions or events: 3%
- Other: 6%
- No, I'm not interested in receiving coaching again: 45%

q21. Is there anything that might encourage you to take part in coached-sessions again in the future? Please tick all that apply.
Base: Received coaching over a year ago (9004)
People who have never received coaching
Those who have never received coaching are more likely to be overweight

31% of UK adults have never received coaching, instruction, training or tuition. You are more likely to have never received coaching if you are:
- Older (aged 45+)
- White
- Of a lower social grade

q8. When, if ever, was the LAST time you received coaching, instruction, training or tuition in ANY sport or physical activity, outside of formal education? (Please select the option that BEST applies). 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.

Base: Those who have never received coaching (6283)
Three quarters of those who have never been coached say they are not interested in finding a coach

74% of those who have never received coaching state that they would not be interested in doing so.

People who are not interested in receiving coaching are more likely to be:
- Older (aged 55+)
- White
- Last took part in physical activity over 5 years ago
- Have a physical or mental health condition

29% of those not interested in coaching feel that coached sessions are not for people like them, and this is particularly pronounced among those who are overweight or obese (30% and 31% respectively).

Cost is also a factor, with 24% stating that receiving coaching costs too much. This response is highest among younger people and those who live in the South of England.
General public
General attitudes towards coaches
A majority of UK adults believe that coaches have a positive influence on people’s personal and professional lives.

**61%** of UK adults agree that coaches are effective at having a positive influence on people’s lives, while **62%** believe they promote emotional health and wellbeing.

People who have received coaching in the past year are significantly more likely to feel they are effective at promoting emotional health and wellbeing (79%).

### How far do you agree or disagree that coaches are effective at ...?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither nor</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the physical activity of participants</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting emotional health and personal wellbeing</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a positive influence on people’s personal and professional lives</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to society, through employment and volunteering</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing people from different communities together</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on your experiences and what you know, how far do you agree or disagree that coaches are effective at ...?*

*Base: All UK adults (20687)*
Over a quarter of UK adults think sports coaches are not trustworthy

Although a majority of the general public believe that sports coaches are trustworthy (71%), only 6% think they are very trustworthy. Women are more likely than men to think sports coaches are trustworthy, as are those who are aged under 65. The more active you are, whether through physical activity or receiving coaching, the more likely you are to think that coaches are trustworthy (72% and 77% respectively).

20% of those who currently coach feel that sports coaches are untrustworthy, which perhaps indicates that the term ‘sports coach’ does not encapsulate how all coaches/instructors describe their role.

### How trustworthy do you think people working in the following roles are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Very trustworthy</th>
<th>Quite trustworthy</th>
<th>Not very trustworthy</th>
<th>Not at all trustworthy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officers</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Coaches</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankers</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalists</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Base:** All UK adults (20687)

**s1. Thinking about people working in the following roles, how trustworthy do you think they are?**
Coaching: Perception vs. reality
Those who have received coaching think that coaches are much more effective at promoting physical fitness than those who aren’t coached

Attitudes towards coaches differ significantly when comparing those who have been coached in the last 12 months with those who have never received coaching.

A significant majority (88%) of those who are currently receiving coaching believe coaches are effective at increasing physical activity, compared with 60% of those who have never received coaching. Over three quarters (77%) of those receiving coaching agree that coaches have a positive influence on people’s personal and professional lives, whereas less than half (46%) of those who’ve never received coaching hold this belief.

Three in five (62%) UK adults believe that coaches promote emotional health and wellbeing. People who have received coaching recently are much more likely to agree (79%), while men are significantly less than women likely to have this belief (57% compared with 66%).

A significant minority of 46% agree that coaches are effective at bringing people from different communities together, which rises to 58% among those who have received coaching in the past year.

How far do you agree or disagree that coaches are effective at ... ?

- Increasing the physical activity of participants
  - Never received coaching: 60%
  - Received coaching in the last 12 months: 88%

- Promoting emotional health and personal wellbeing
  - Never received coaching: 48%
  - Received coaching in the last 12 months: 79%

- Having a positive influence on people's personal and professional lives
  - Never received coaching: 46%
  - Received coaching in the last 12 months: 77%

- Contributing to society, through employment and volunteering
  - Never received coaching: 35%
  - Received coaching in the last 12 months: 61%

- Bringing people from different communities together
  - Never received coaching: 34%
  - Received coaching in the last 12 months: 58%
Those who received coaching think about coaches very positively

When asked what three words they associate with ‘Coach’, those who are currently participants of coaching were overwhelming positive. Words that stand out are both positive and informative, with ‘motivating’, ‘knowledgeable’ and ‘inspirational’ being the most commonly mentioned. Those who currently receive coaching consistently used adjectives that describe their relationship with their coach rather than physical attributes they associated with ‘coaches’.

Q55a. When you think of a sports or physical activity coach, what words or phrases come to mind? You can type in up to 3.
Base: Those who have received coaching in the last 12 months (3788)
Those who have never received coaching appear to have more of a view of coaches being competitive and athletic.

When those who have never been coached were asked which words they associate with ‘Coach’, they tended to be less overtly positive than those currently being coached. Although ‘knowledgeable’ stood out for both groups, those who have never received coaching also said they associated coaches with ‘committed’, ‘competitive’, and ‘athletic’. Others used words such as ‘bully’ and ‘aggressive’.

Q55a. When you think of a sports or physical activity coach, what words or phrases come to mind? You can type in up to 3. Base: Those who have never received coaching (6283)
Those who feel that coaches are untrustworthy think they are knowledgeable and encouraging, but also sometimes strict and pushy.

Although only 29% of UK adults think sports coaches are untrustworthy, this rises to 33% among those who have never received coaching. This visualisation shows which words those who feel sports coaches are untrustworthy felt about coaches. This highlights a stereotype about coaches being ‘pushy’ ‘strict’, ‘fit’ and ‘male’.
The UK public believe that good coaching is about being constructive, friendly and approachable above all else.

Roughly two in five UK adults believe that a great coach is someone who gives constructive feedback (42%), is friendly and approachable (40%), and improves people’s skills (39%). This indicates that although the public agree that coaching is about improving skills and ability, it is about doing it in an approachable manner that suits the needs of different people.

It is especially important to women that coaches are friendly and approachable, and slightly more important to men that they know the rules of the game and get good results.

In your opinion, what do you think makes a great sport or physical activity coach?

- Give constructive feedback and corrections: 42%
- Are friendly and approachable: 40%
- Improve peoples' skills/ability: 39%
- Are qualified: 35%
- Treat all participants as individuals: 33%
- Build good relationships and rapport: 32%
- Create a warm and welcoming environment: 29%
- Are highly skilled in the sport/activity: 25%
- Listen to participants: 22%
- Maintain high levels of safety: 20%
- Know the rules of the game: 17%
- Have previous experience of coaching: 15%
- Are confident: 15%
- Get good results (i.e. win matches/games): 11%
- Other: 18%

I'm not sure, I don't know anything/ enough about coaching: 18%
Coaches perceive their primary role to be about building confidence and self-esteem ahead of developing technique/skills

Coaches’ perceptions of their primary role mirror the public’s opinion that coaching should be about their approach and delivery, and not just skills and technique. **48%** of coaches see their primary role as being about building confidence and self-esteem, while only much smaller proportions believe it is about preparing for events/competitions **(10%)** or developing those who are talented **(9%)**.

A quarter **(27%)** feel their primary role is to help people achieve, whatever their goals might be.

**What do you think is/are your primary role(s) as a coach?**

- To build confidence and self-esteem in participants **(48%)**
- To develop technique, and teach drills and skills **(35%)**
- To promote health and personal wellbeing **(34%)**
- To help people achieve their individual sports/activity goals, whatever that might be **(27%)**
- To get people active **(25%)**
- To inspire others **(23%)**
- To keep people active **(23%)**
- To teach the rules of the game/sport **(19%)**
- To prepare people for events or competitions **(10%)**
- To develop those who are talented **(9%)**
- Other **(3%)**

q36. And what do you think is/are your primary role(s) as a coach? Please select up to three options.  
Base: all those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
For many people, coaching may not be what is seems

When people currently receiving coaching think about what is most important when choosing a coach, their perspective very much echoes coaches’ perceptions about what their role should be. **70%** of those being coached say that personal and people skills are one of the most important factors when choosing a coach, and **57%** feel that understanding them and their specific needs is important.

Findings throughout this report have demonstrated that there are all different kinds of people receiving coaching/instruction, and that the majority of coached physical activity is not done within the traditional confines of a sports club or sports team.

Those who are not involved with coaching can sometimes feel that it is not for people like them, but it could be argued that they have been exposed to a perception that is not in fact the reality for an overwhelmingly positive group of coaching participants.
Awareness of UK Coaching
A relatively small proportion of the UK public have heard of UK Coaching/Sports Coach UK

8% of UK adults say they have heard of UK Coaching/Sports Coach UK.

Although those who have coached in the last 12 months are significantly more likely (25%) to have heard of UK Coaching, this is still only 1 in 4 current coaches.

Similarly, 24% of inactive coaches have heard of UK Coaching.

Current coaches who do both paid and volunteer work have most commonly heard of the organisation. (47%).

q54. Have you heard of UK Coaching (formerly Sports Coach UK)?
Base: All those who have coached within the last 12 months (1350)
Base: All UK adults (20687)
Awareness of UK Coaching across the UK is relatively consistent

These figures indicate the proportion of adults from each UK region who have heard of UK Coaching.

9% of the English adult population have heard of UK Coaching, significantly higher than in Scotland.
The general public’s relationship with physical activity

UK adults who have done any type of physical exercise within the last 12 months do an average of 2 hours a week.

When, if ever, was the LAST time you took part in any sport or physical activity, outside of formal education?

- In the past 12 months: 55%
- In the past 2 years: 18%
- In the past 3 years: 9%
- In the past 5 years: 5%
- Longer than 5 years ago: 5%
- Never: 9%
- Don’t know/ can’t recall: 2%

I would like to do more sport and physical activity

- Strongly agree: 33%
- Tend to agree: 41%
- Neither nor: 18%
- Tend to disagree: 6%
- Strongly disagree: 2%

I enjoy taking part in sport and physical activity

- Strongly agree: 29%
- Tend to agree: 42%
- Neither nor: 17%
- Tend to disagree: 9%
- Strongly disagree: 2%

I look forward to sport and physical activity

- Strongly agree: 23%
- Tend to agree: 38%
- Neither nor: 23%
- Tend to disagree: 13%
- Strongly disagree: 3%

I do more sport and physical activity now, than I did this time last year

- Strongly agree: 16%
- Tend to agree: 21%
- Neither nor: 30%
- Tend to disagree: 24%
- Strongly disagree: 9%

I have considered giving up sport and physical activity in the last 12 months

- Strongly agree: 3%
- Tend to agree: 18%
- Neither nor: 28%
- Tend to disagree: 43%

Attitudes towards physical activity

63% said they’ve never had an injury or felt unwell whilst taking part in sport or physical activity

37% have had an injury or felt unwell but only 10% of that number required treatment from a health care professional

q6. Thinking about your overall experience of sport and physical activity, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

q1. When, if ever, was the LAST time you took part 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. q7. And again thinking about the last 12 months, have you ever been injured or felt unwell whilst taking part in sport or physical activity? Please tick all that apply.

q3. Can you estimate how many minutes of sport or physical activity you did in a typical week?

Base: All UK adults (20687)
People associate coaches with being ‘fit’

“What three words do you associate with ‘Coach’?”

* FIT
* ENCOURAGING
* CONFIDENT
* ACTIVE
* FRIENDLY
* KNOWLEDGEABLE
* HEALTHY
* ENTHUSIASTIC
* SKILLED
* FITNESS

Q55a. When you think of a sports or physical activity coach, what words or phrases come to mind? You can type in up to 3. Base: All UK adults (20687)
Motivation, fitness and training are people’s perception of ‘coaching’

“What three words do you associate with ‘Coaching’?”

* FIT
* TRAINING
* FITNESS
* TEACHING
* MOTIVATION
* ENCOURAGING
* SUPPORT
* ENCOURAGEMENT
* FOOTBALL
* FUN