



# ETHICS GUIDANCE FOR PROVIDERS OF COACHING, MENTORING AND SUPERVISION USING TECHNOLOGY AND AI (VERSION 1.0 JULY 2023)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1. EMCC Global believes technology and AI can provide solutions which, when implemented well, can enable the wider use of coaching, mentoring and supervision and lead to more people being helped by these services at a high quality.
2. These ethical guidelines are provided for providers of coaching enabled through technology and AI. The Global Code of Ethics for Coaches, Mentors and Supervisors, to which EMCC is a co-signatory, provides additional guidance for these groups and this document is intended to build on this, not replace it.
3. These ethical guidelines also serve as a guide to the buyers of digital CMS services, such as but not limited to Human Resources, Learning & Development, HRIS, and IT professionals, to create a safe space for the coaching, mentoring, and supervision processes to occur.
4. These guidelines were developed through consultation with a working group consisting of coaches, mentors, providers, supervisors and other relevant parties in 2022-2023. We recognise that technology is developing at pace and will seek to keep them refreshed and up to date as new developments in technology-enabled coaching occur.

## 2. WORKING WITH CLIENTS

### Integrity

1. Providers should market and advertise their services ethically, presenting coaching, mentoring and supervision ("CMS") as professional services and being clear about when these may and may not be appropriate for clients. Providers should also ensure that any claims they make about the impact and effectiveness of their services are appropriate and backed up by external or internal research.
2. Providers should seek to ensure clients are in a position of informed choice when making choices about CMS and should not present their services as better than other forms of CMS or make critical observations about other forms of CMS or competitors in their marketing.
3. Providers should ensure that they use definitions of coaching, mentoring and supervision which are accepted by the relevant professions when developing or describing their services and recruiting coaches, mentors and/or supervisors (for example, it is accepted that generally coaching, mentoring and supervision are not about dictating advice or solutions to the client but working with them to enable them to explore issues they face and develop solutions). Coaches, mentors and supervisors are not consultants, trainers or advisers and providers should not represent their services as providing this.

### Confidentiality

1. Providers should have confidentiality policies available to clients, their employers and independent CMS service providers. These policies should be clear about matters of confidentiality particularly relevant to use of technology and AI such as the use of any recordings of CMS conversations, questionnaires and other information provided by the client.
2. Providers should not routinely record audio or video of CMS conversations unless explicitly agreed with the client and for a specific purpose which they are aware of (e.g. Coach CPD or re-accreditation or supervision).

3. Providers should not use information provided by the client for any purposes which were not agreed originally when it was provided, such as marketing other services.
4. Providers policies should be explicit about any circumstances in which they may decide to share confidential information with employers or other authorities.
5. Providers should receive explicit informed consent from clients for the sharing of information with their employers or with coaches.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

1. To maintain a safe space for the CMS processes, providers should always place the interests of the client at the heart of their activity, while also taking account of the other interests of stakeholders such as the client's employer, coaches, mentors or supervisors or the interests of the provider.
2. Providers should put in place governance and controls to ensure that they do not place commercial interests over the interests of their clients.
3. While technology enabled coaching can lead to economies for clients which can enable wider engagement with coaching, providers should also ensure that offering lower pricing does not negatively impact the quality of coaching offered.

### **Quality of Services Provided**

1. Providers should seek to ensure that their technology is up to date and stable to ensure the best quality client experience and ensure controls are in place to prevent and mitigate any harmful CMS experiences because of poor quality technology.
2. Providers should recognise that the 'contracting' process with clients through technology and AI will often commence prior to the client's first contact with a coach, mentor or supervisor and should ensure that their solutions enable the client to consider their coaching and mentoring needs and requirements including during the selection and matching process
3. Providers should ensure transparency over the application of algorithms designed to enhance the service experience in order to build trust in the service provided and more generally in the provision of CMS through technology and AI.
4. Providers should put in place regular testing, and checks on the accuracy and sensitivity of any AI involved in their solutions to ensure no inadvertent harms are being generated in the service experience. They should take account of existing standards such as ISO 27001 which can assist with testing.
5. Providers have a responsibility for educating coaches, mentors and supervisors they work with in the use of their solutions to ensure they maximise their benefits and also ensure that they understand the risks of using the solutions and how to mitigate these.
6. Providers should be explicit to their clients about which parts of the CMS services are being held by machines and AI, and non-involvement of human beings.
7. In case of emergency or to make a serious complaint, where at all possible clients should always be able to reach out to a human being within the provider for help or support.
8. Providers should seek to understand the psychological implications for clients of being coached, mentored or supervised through technology and AI and seek to mitigate any potential harms in the design of its customer experience.

## **3. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **Maintaining the Reputation of the Profession**

1. Providers should behave in a way that at all times reflects positively upon and enhances the reputation of a professional service, ensuring that the use of technology is aligned with professional standards.
2. Providers should demonstrate respect for the variety of practices used by EMCC members and other individuals in the profession and all the different ethically informed approaches to coaching, mentoring, and supervision, including the use of data technologies and AI.

### **Acting Responsibly**

1. Providers should abide by professional coaching bodies' statements and policies on inclusion, diversity, social responsibility and climate change.
2. Providers should avoid discriminating on any grounds and will seek to enhance their own awareness of possible areas for discrimination and bias, including in the use of technology or inaccurate or fake data.
3. Providers should be aware of the potential for unconscious bias and systemic injustice and seek to ensure that they take a respectful and inclusive approach, which embraces and explores individual differences.
4. Providers should challenge constructively and offer support to any colleagues, employees, coaches, mentors, supervisors and clients who are perceived to be discriminatory or unwilling to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions.
5. Providers should monitor their spoken, written, and technology driven communication for implicit bias or discrimination.
6. Providers should encourage professional development activities that contribute to increased self-awareness in relation to inclusion, diversity, technology, latest developments in changing social and environmental needs.

### **Legal and statutory obligations and duties**

1. Providers should, at a minimum, comply with the data security and other legislation and regulation in each of countries in which deliver their services and where they are based. As good practice the requirements of the European GDPR can be seen as a benchmark of high standards.

## **4. EXCELLENT PRACTICE**

1. Providers should ensure that any coaches they recruit to their services are fully qualified to EMCC standards or equivalent and members of EMCC or other recognised professional bodies.
2. Providers should require coaches in their services to undertake regular Supervision to the standards required by EMCC and consider providing Supervision specific to the provision of coaching through technology and AI.
3. Providers should require their coaches to undertake appropriate CPD and consider providing CPD specific to the provision of coaching through technology and AI.
4. Providers should make their coaches, mentors and supervisors aware of the digital ethics set forth in this document (i.e. EMCC Ethics Guidance for Providers of Coaching, Mentoring and Supervision Using Technology and AI).
5. Providers of coaching, mentoring and supervision via AI should seek to ensure that their services reflect good practice and that 'coach-like' services reflect the EMCC standards of coaching competence.