



Coaching in Scotland 2017

A report prepared by the Research team at sports coach UK

April 2017

Introduction

At the start of 2017 **sportscotland** and sports coach UK surveyed 540 coaches in Scotland. The majority of these coaches were recruited through the **sportscotland** database of coaches. As such this survey should be seen as a survey of core coaching workforce in Scotland rather than all coaches.

Key points

The sample

- 58% of coaches in the survey were male and 40% were female.
- 13% were disabled and 97% were white. These figures are similar to last year.
- Two-thirds of the coaches were aged over 35.

Volunteering

- Just under three-quarters of coaches in Scotland will volunteer some their time to coach. This consists of 59% of coaches who only volunteer (80% or more of their coaching is unpaid) and 16% who's coaching is more evenly split between paid and unpaid coaching. The remaining 27% of coaches were classified as paid coaches in that they received payment for 80% or more of their coaching. These results are similar to previous years.
- Around half of volunteers coach for three hours or less per week with the most common answer given by volunteers being two hours per week (27%).

The entry into coaching

- Traditionally research has suggested two entry stages into coaching at 16-24 and 35-44 and these are also the key ages in Scotland.
- By a significant margin the most common reason for starting to coach was a love of the sport and wanting to share this with others (71%).
- 24% of coaches started coaching through their children and 20% wanted to start a career in coaching.

Coaching Sessions

- Coaches tend to specialise in some areas (such as sports coached and location) but are more generalist in others (coaching several different age groups).
- 60% of coaches worked with either one or two groups each week. 30% coached one group and 30% coached two groups.
- Generally coaches tended to stick to one sport and only 17% coached more than one sport
- Coaches were evenly split between those who only coached in one location and those who coached in multiple locations (51%/49% respectively).

Inclusive Sessions

- 40% of coaches stated that some participants in their sessions needed additional help or support.
- Generally coaches are confident that they can deliver inclusive sessions but levels of confidence vary between those with experience and those with no experience. Those with experience were more likely to rate themselves as 'very' or 'extremely confident' (56% compared to 43% of those with no experience).

Technology and coaching

- Coaches are marginally more likely to be infrequent users of technology for coaching, using it rarely or never.
- The most common use of technology among coaches in Scotland is social media to communicate with participants between sessions along with web tools for planning.
- Coaching Apps were more likely to never be used than used 'all the time' or 'sometimes'.
- Hardware, such as Smartphones, Tablets and cameras were regularly used by between 40% and 45% of coaches.
- Although there has been significant growth in the use of Smartphones and Tablets coaches are mainly using these devices as cameras while only 40% are using them to access the internet.
- 36% of coaches said that their participants used wearable technology however three-quarters of these coaches did not have access to the data and only 8% used the data.

Developing coaches

- The most popular sources of learning in Scotland are typical of all coaches and involve interacting with other coaches. After these the Internet is now firmly established as the next most commonly used source of learning.
- Other sources used by more than half of coaches include feedback from participants and more formal sources such as workshops and qualifications.
- Analysis of the value of different learning sources shows the importance of a blended approach to learning. Some sources were strong at answering quick questions or gaining knowledge while others were valuable for establishing a coaching philosophy and improving practice. No one learning source could do everything.

Development opportunities provided by sportscotland

- UKCC Education Subsidy and Positive Coaching Scotland were the most common **sportscotland** CPD options accessed by coaches (47% and 35% respectively). UKCC Education Subsidy was also the best rated option with 81% of coaches who accessed it saying it was 'above average' or 'excellent'.
- More than half of coaches from Scotland were unaware of the CPD options offered by **sportscotland**.
- Overall 19% of coaches felt that it was 'very easy' or 'extremely easy' to find out what support **sportscotland** provides for coaches. At the same time 38% felt it was 'not so easy' or 'not easy at all'.

Support for coaches

- Coaches were most likely to say that National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) should provide support to coaches (87%) followed by clubs (71%).
- A higher proportion of coaches in Scotland thought that Home Country Sports Councils should provide support compared to the UK average (67% compared to 62%).
- Coaches were most satisfied with the support they receive from clubs and employers (73% and 70% respectively). 63% felt supported by NGBs and training providers while 51% felt supported by **sportscotland**.

Benefits of being a coach

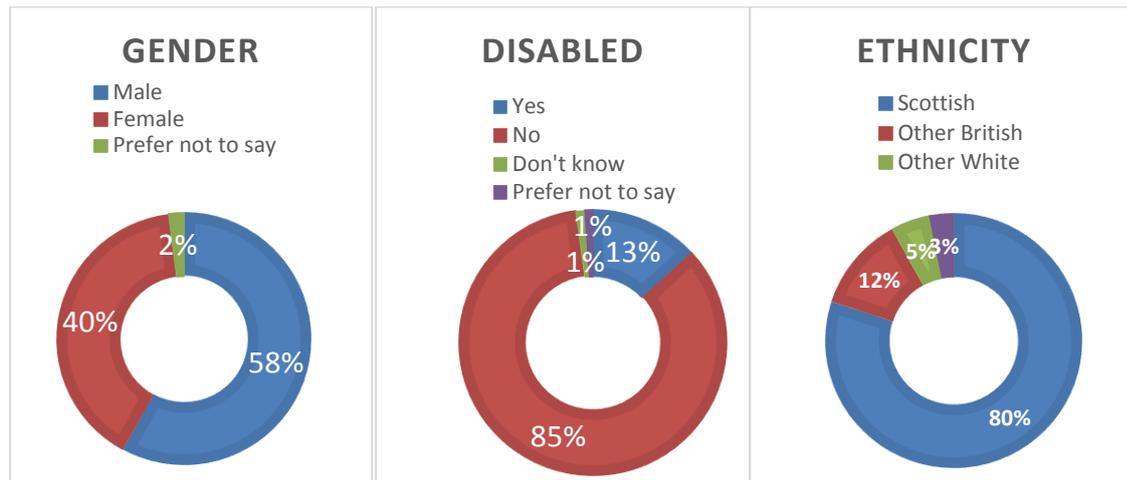
- Coaches in Scotland were almost unanimous that being a coach makes them feel proud to help others and make a positive contribution to their community. There were similar positive responses to comments around how being a coach leads to positive feelings, lasting friendships and keeping active.
- Although 78% of respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that being a coach helped them develop skills outside sport, they did not feel it helped their career outside sport (only 48% agreed).

1 Demographics

Key demographic details on the survey respondents were similar to 2016. These included:

- 58% of respondents were male and 40% female
- 13% of coaches were disabled compared to 20% of disabled people in Scotland.
- 80% of coaches identified themselves as Scottish with 17% stating other British or white. The percentage of non-white coaches was only 3%.

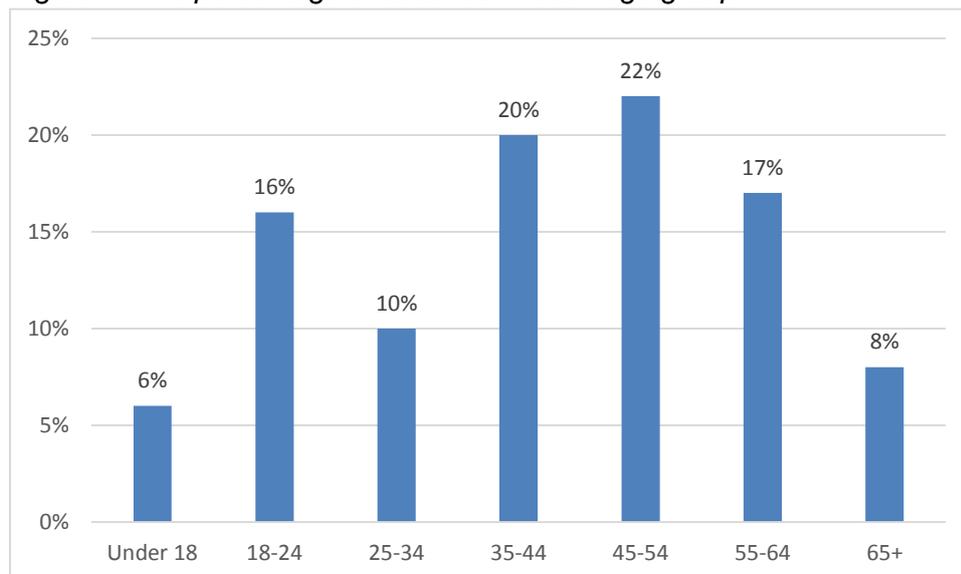
Figure 1: The percentage of coaches by gender, disability and ethnicity



1.1 The coaching population

Two-thirds of respondents were aged over 35 which is lower than previous years. This has been caused mainly by an increase in the proportion of young people completing the survey (26% in 2017 compared to 13% in 2016). It is unclear why this has changed so much.

Figure 2: The percentage of coaches in each age group

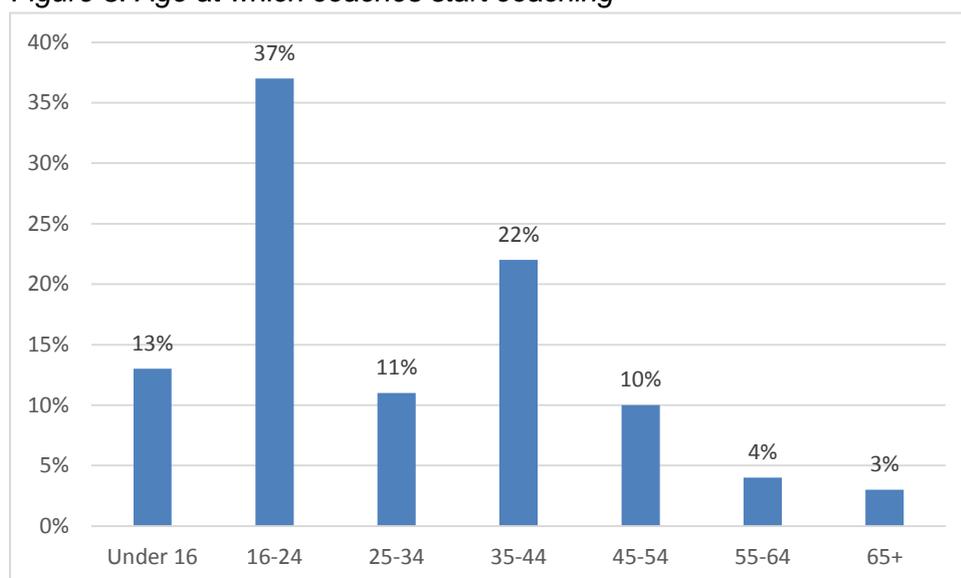


1.2 Entry into coaching

The peak entry ages for coaching are 16-24 and 35-44. This is consistent with previous coaching research which suggests major life changes around 25-34 create a drop-off in coaching that is filled by those who are more settled in life at 35-44 (especially parents).

Given the younger profile of survey respondents this year it is not surprising that the trend seen in previous years of people in Scotland entering coaching at an older age is not apparent.

Figure 3: Age at which coaches start coaching



By far the main reason for starting to coach is a love of the sport and wanting to share that with others – 71% of coaches agreed with this. Other popular motivations such as helping an old team and staying involved in sport support previous research that volunteering in sport is closely linked to past participation.

Around a quarter of coaches started coaching through their children and a fifth wanted a career in coaching.

Table 1: Motivations to start coaching

Motivation	% of coaches
I love my sport/activity and want to help others enjoy it	71%
I enjoy helping others	39%
To help my old team/club	26%
To stay involved in sport/physical	24%
My children were playing and I wanted to help	24%
I was asked	21%
I wanted a career in coaching	20%
I had already been coaching while playing	14%
There was no one else to do it	11%
I started at university	5%
It was a way to meet new people	3%

Note: coaches could select more than one motivation

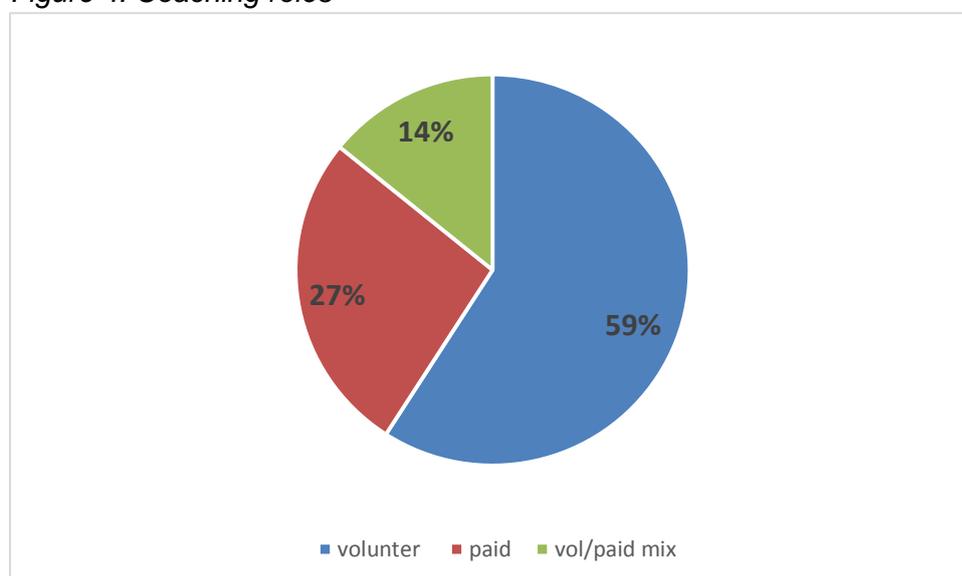
1.3 Coaching roles

This year coaching roles were based on hours coached and whether coaches received payment. The coaches were split into three categories: volunteers spending 80% or more of their time coaching without payment; paid coaches spending 80% or more of their time coaching with payment; and a hybrid role was a balance between paid and volunteer coaching¹.

59% of coaches were volunteers and 27% of coaches were paid. 14% were more evenly split between paid and unpaid coaching. These results are similar to previous years when coaches were asked to classify themselves as volunteers, paid coaches or part-time coaches – three quarters of coaches are giving at least some of their times as volunteers.

As will be seen from the analysis of hours later in this section it is important to remember that paid coaches are not necessarily full-time coaches.

Figure 4: Coaching roles

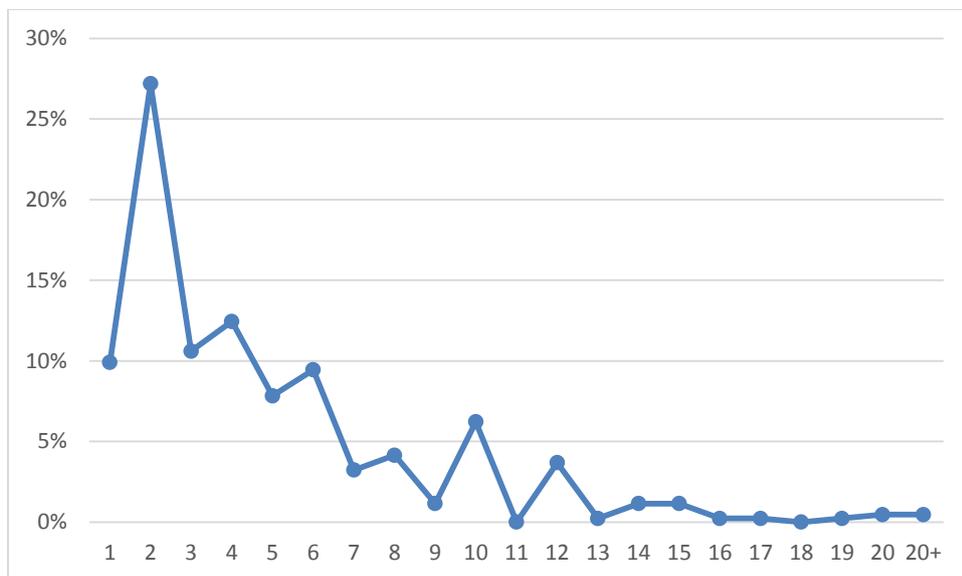


1.3.1 Volunteer hours coached

60% of volunteers coach for four hours or less per week with the most common answer given by coaches being two hours per week (27%). 12% of coaches volunteer between 10 and 15 hours per week but only 2% coached more than 15 hours. Compared to the UK average Scotland does have more coaches volunteering in the 10 to 15 hours per week range (12% compared to 8%).

¹ Coaches who received only expenses for coaching were asked to record this as volunteering.

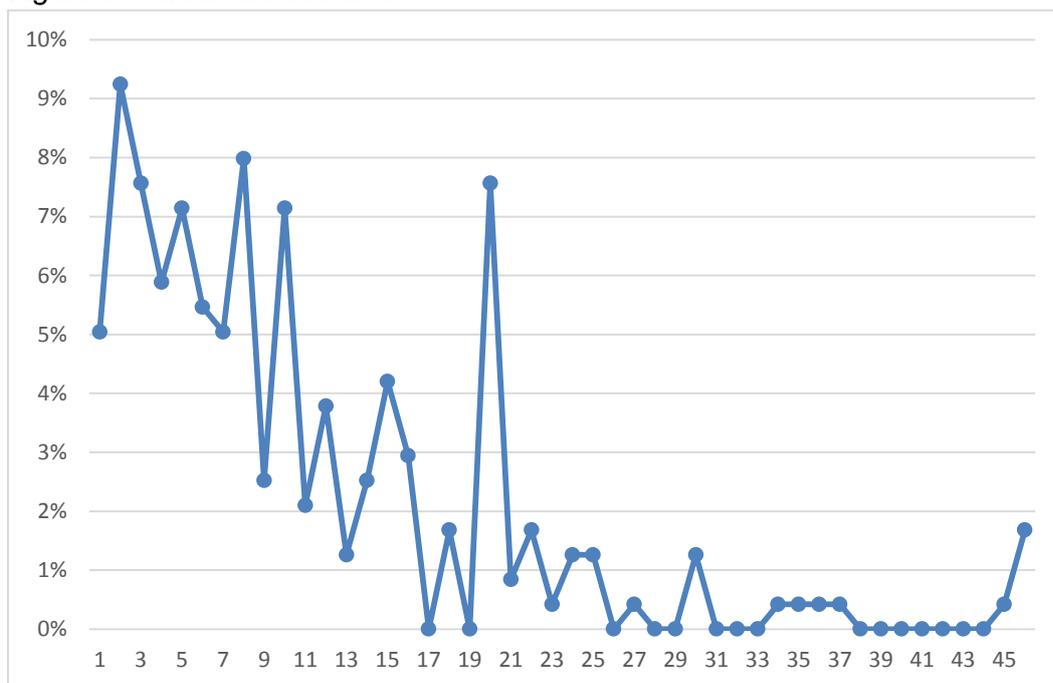
Figure 5: Hours coaches by volunteers



1.3.2 Paid hours coaching

When coaches were asked how many hours coaching they got paid for each week the figures showed that just under two-thirds of paid coaches are coaching for 10 hours or less. A second peak in the graph below occurs at 20 hours however only 5% are coaching for more than 30 hours. So when we think of paid coaches we must consider that there is a significant amount of part-time coaching happening. These figures are similar to the UK average.

Figure 6: Paid hours coached



The most common employment status of paid coaches was 'employee of an organisation' which account for just under half of paid coaches regardless of hours worked. A higher proportion of paid coaches working over 10 hours were self-employed (36% compared to 29% of coaches working less than 10 hours) while contracted coaches were more likely to be coaching under 10 hours than over (19% to 15%).

2 Coaching sessions

This year coaches were asked to talk about the different groups and sports they coached, along with where they coached and their coaching role. The results suggest coaches will tend to stay in one sport and work with a couple of groups each week at different age levels. While coaching predominantly happens in sports clubs the coaching workforce is evenly split between those who coach in only one location and those who coach in multiple locations.

It appears that coaches tend to specialise in some areas (sport and location) but are more generalist in others (coaching several different age groups).

Table 2 shows a summary of the main data around groups coached. The average can be skewed by for example, a small number of coaches who work with a large number of groups. So the mode (most often occurring) is also included.

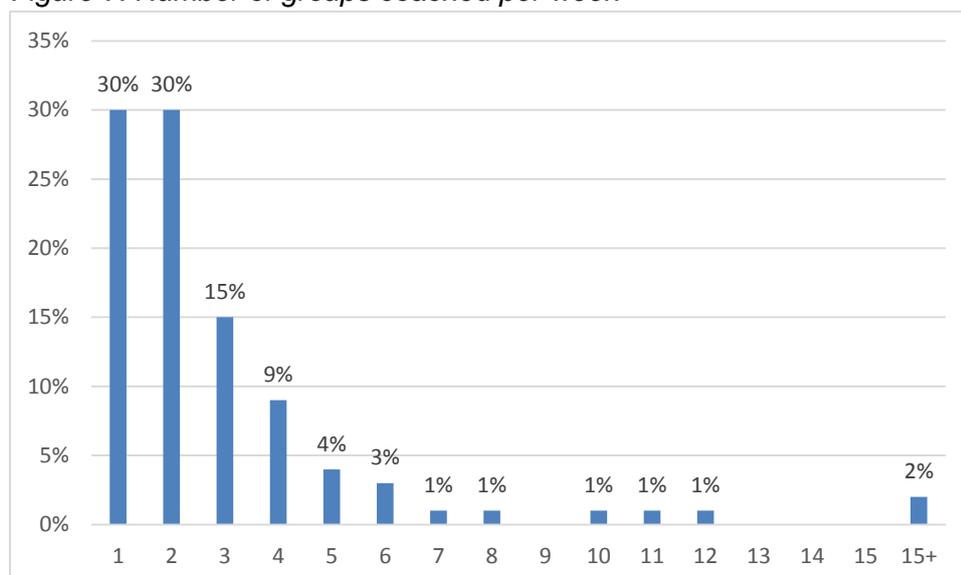
Table 2: Summary of results on coaching sessions

	Mode	Average
Groups coached	2	3
Roles held	1	1.6
Sports coached	1	1.4
Location coached	1	1.8
Age groups coached	2	2.3

2.1 Groups coached

60% of coaches worked with either one or two groups each week². 30% coached one group and 30% coached two groups.

Figure 7: Number of groups coached per week



² If coaches worked with the same group more than once in a week they were asked to record this as one group.

2.2 Coaching role

The most common roles held were coach (50%) and Head Coach (43%). 50% of coaches held multiple roles and it appears there is no set criteria for defining different roles within the coaching workforce (e.g. qualifications or experience).

Table 3: Coaching roles held

Role	%
Coach	50%
Head coach	43%
Assistant coach	24%
Sports Leader/Leader	13%
Teacher	8%
Helper	6%
Fitness instructor/personal trainer	4%
Trainee coach	4%
Activator	3%
School teacher	3%
Other (please specify)	3%

Note: coaches could select more than one role

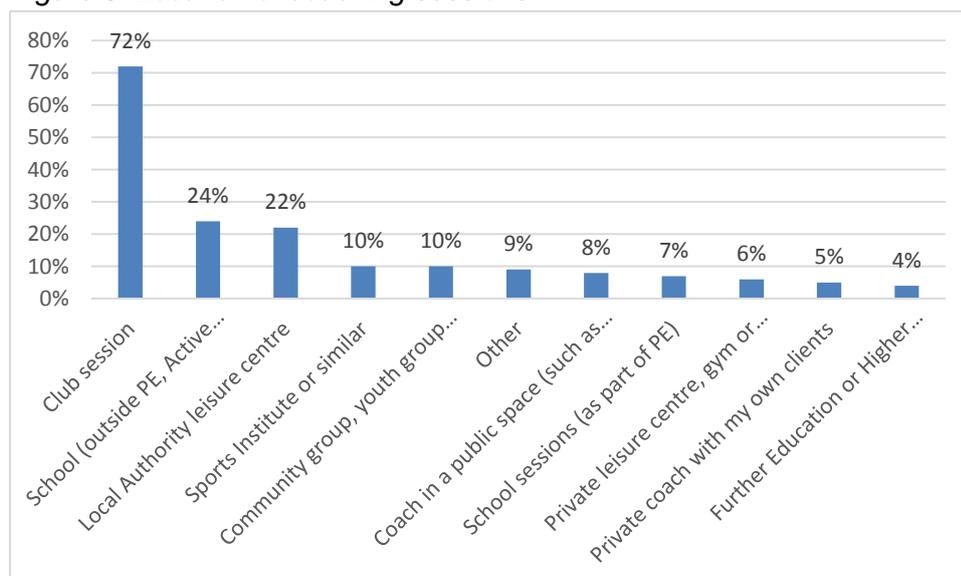
2.3 Sports coached

The most common sports coached by respondents were swimming, gymnastics, football, curling and rugby union. These accounted for 37% of sports coached. Generally coaches tended to stick to one sport and only 17% coached more than one sport.

2.4 Location of coaching

Coaches were evenly split between those who only coached in one location and those who coached in multiple locations (51% and 49% respectively). Regardless of the number of locations, the most common location for coaching was a sport club (72%) followed by “school sessions outside PE/Active Schools” (24%) and a Local authority leisure centre (22%).

Figure 8: Location of coaching sessions



2.5 Age groups coached

Over 70% of coaches worked with the 5 to 13 age group and 14 to 24 age group. 43% of coaches worked with adults up to 55 years while only a quarter were coaching participants over 55. These figures probably reflect trends in sport participation and the take-up of coaching.

Table 4: Age groups coached

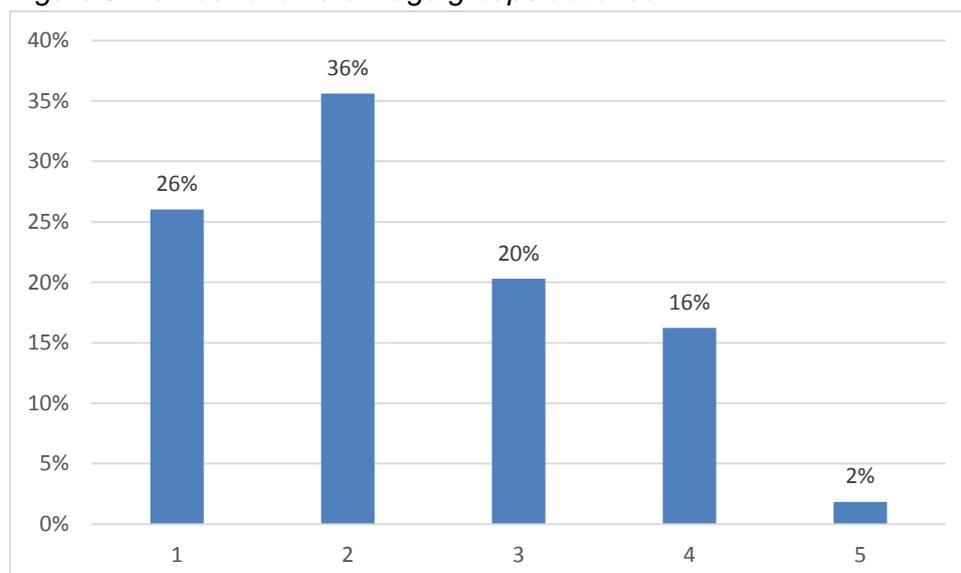
Age Group	%
Under 5 years old	14%
5 to 13 years old	78%
14 to 24 years old	72%
25 to 54 years old	43%
55 years old and over	25%

Note: coaches could select more than one group

The most common number of groups to coach was two (35% of coaches). Compared to other categories such as location and sports coached, there was a more even distribution across the number of age groups coached.

There is a risk that these findings are the result of survey options overlapping typical age bands for sport (for example an under 16 group could contain both 5 to 13 and 14 to 24 year olds). However additional analysis showed that coaches are working with different age groups. For example, 38% of coaches who coached the 5 to 13 age group also coached participants over 25.

Figure 9: number of different age groups coached



2.6 Inclusive sessions

40% of coaches stated that some participants in their sessions needed additional help or support. When asked about the nature of the impairments they were helping with the three most common answers were: Autistic Spectrum Disorder; learning/intellectual/memory; and mobility. Table 6 presents this information as a percentage of coaches currently providing help to participants and all coaches in the survey.

Table 6: Types of impairments coaches are providing help and assistance with

Impairment	% of coaches providing help	% of all coaches
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	60%	25%
Learning/Intellectual/Memory	47%	20%
Mobility	44%	18%
Long-term health condition	24%	10%
Hearing	23%	10%
Visual	19%	8%
Mental health	18%	7%
Dexterity	16%	7%
Long-term pain	12%	5%
Breathing	11%	5%
Speech	9%	4%
Other	8%	3%
Don't know	1%	1%

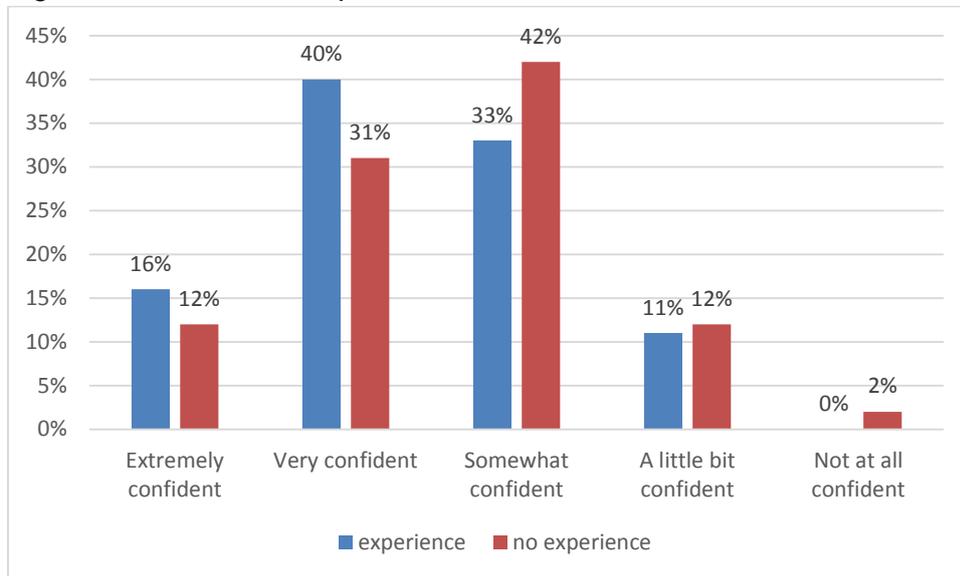
Note: coaches could select more than one option

Generally coaches are confident that they can deliver inclusive sessions, or could deliver if required, with less 2% stating they were not confident. However levels of confidence varied between those with experience and those with no experience. Those with experience were

more likely to rate themselves as 'very' or 'extremely confident' (56% compared to 43% of those with no experience).

The most common answer for those with experience was 'very confident' while those with no experience were more likely to describe themselves as 'somewhat confident'.

Figure 10: *Confidence to provide inclusive sessions*



3. Technology

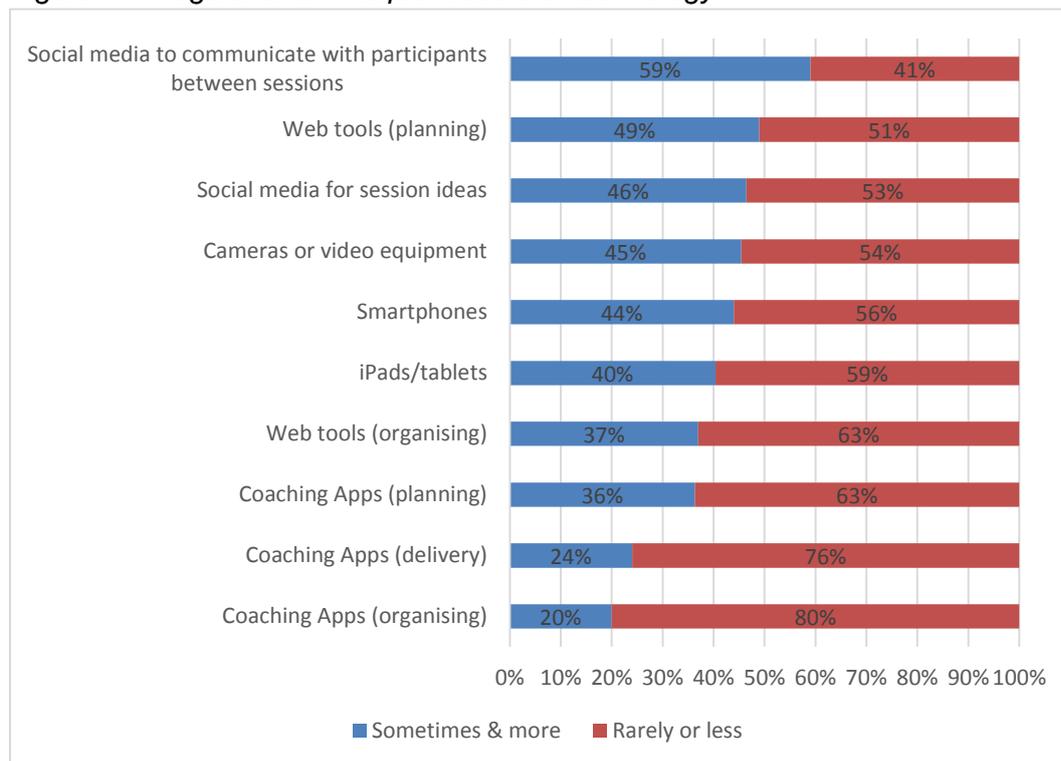
Coaches were asked how often they used different types of technologies for planning, organising and delivering coaching. Figure 11 breaks this down by regular users (those who used the technology sometimes and more) and infrequent users (those who used it rarely or less). Coaches are marginally more likely to be infrequent users of technology, using it rarely or never. Table 11 provides a more detailed breakdown of the frequency of use.

The most common use of technology among coaches in Scotland is social media to communicate with participants between sessions. This was the only use of technology being used regularly by more than half of coaches in the survey – although 49% are also using web tools for planning.

Coaching Apps are least likely to be used by coaches. The reasons for this are not clear, but it is interesting that this lack of use covers all aspects of planning, organising and delivery.

Hardware, such as Smartphones, Tablets and cameras were regularly used by between 40% and 45% of coaches.

Figure 11: Regular and infrequent users of technology



Generally less than one in ten coaches use any technology ‘all the time.’ The one exception was social media for communication with participants that was used ‘all the time’ by more than 30% of coaches. However, at the same time 27% had never used it.

Coaching Apps were more likely to ‘never be used’ than used ‘all the time’ or ‘sometimes’.

Table 7: Frequency of use of different technologies

		All the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	I tried it but didn't use it again
Planning	Coaching Apps	7%	29%	20%	40%	3%
	Web tools	9%	40%	21%	29%	1%
	Social media for session ideas	9%	37%	24%	29%	0%
Organising	Coaching Apps	6%	14%	19%	59%	2%
	Web tools	11%	26%	18%	44%	1%
	Social media to communicate with participants between sessions	31%	28%	13%	27%	1%
Delivery	Coaching Apps	2%	22%	19%	56%	1%
	Cameras or video equipment	5%	40%	20%	33%	1%
	iPads/tablets	6%	34%	17%	42%	0%
	Smartphones	7%	37%	17%	39%	0%

Any coach who stated they used Smartphones or Tablets in their coaching delivery were asked an additional question about how they used it. Coaches are mainly using these devices as cameras (78% of coaches use it to video participants so they can observe or correct technique and replay it back to participants). Rather than to access online services (40% used the technology to access the internet).

Table 8: How coaches are using Tablets and Smartphones in coaching

Usage	%
To video and replay participants to show them and help improve technique	78%
To video and replay participants so I can observe and correct their technique	62%
To show examples from the internet	40%
To capture photographs of participants	33%
To access my session plans	31%
To set goals and/or monitor progress with participants	23%
To video and replay myself so I can observe and correct my coaching practice	20%
Administration of sessions (for example recording attendance)	18%
To run the Apps	6%
Other	2%

Note: coaches could select more than one option

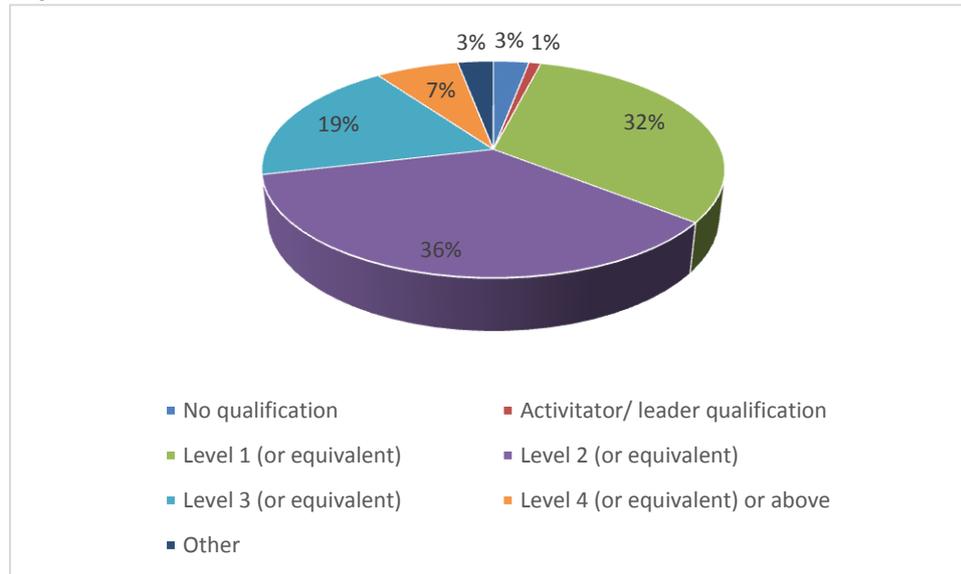
36% of coaches said that their participants used wearable technology. However three-quarters of these coaches did not have access to the data and only 8% used the data. Previous Sports Coach UK research has suggested there is potential for coaches to help participants understand and utilise this data which at present this does not appear to be happening³.

³ Coach Plus: combining coaching and technology to get more people active
<http://www.sportscoachuk.org/sites/default/files/CP1%20Coach%20Plus%20Aug16.pdf>

4 Developing as a coach

The most common coaching qualification held by respondents was level 2, which is a common result for coaching surveys. Compared to the UK average the sample of coaches from Scotland had a better distribution of qualification levels (32% at Level 1 compared to 25% in the UK) although typically these surveys will over sample higher level coaches.

Figure 12: Qualification levels of coaches



4.1 Sources of learning

The most popular sources of learning in Scotland are typical of all coaches and involve interacting with other coaches. After these the Internet is now firmly established as the next most commonly used source of learning (searching the internet or watching videos online).

Other sources used by more than half of coaches include feedback from participants and more formal sources such as workshops and qualifications.

Table 9: Sources of learning used by coaches

Source of learning	% used
Talking to other coaches	84%
Observing/working with other coaches	74%
Searching/using the Internet	64%
Watching videos on the Internet (YouTube or others)	64%
Feedback form participants	64%
Coaching workshop	61%
Coaching qualifications	53%
Reading books	47%
Social Media (Twitter, Facebook linkedin)	39%
Mentoring	36%
Coaching conferences	31%
Online learning courses	26%
Tools to reflect on coaching sessions	15%

FE/HE Qualifications (related to coaching or sport)	6%
Formal distance learning	3%
Other	1%
None of the above	1%

Note: coaches could select more than one option

4.2 The impact of learning

After selecting the sources of information they used the coaches were asked to state what value they got from the source of information. This ranged from 'answering a quick question' through to 'changing their coaching philosophy'. This style of questioning acknowledges that different sources of information provide different uses depending on what the coach is trying to achieve. It seeks to identify which sources of information are most valuable for different learning outcomes rather than regarding all sources as the same.

The table below shows the percentage of coaches who stated that a learning source had impacted them in some way. The red and orange shading shows areas of higher concentration.

The results show that there is not one source of information that fulfils all roles. Instead, some sources were strong at answering quick questions (the internet and social media) or gaining knowledge (conferences, workshops, books and online learning). While others were valuable for establishing a coaching philosophy (qualifications). Improving practice and impact on participants was best achieved through feedback from participants, mentoring, reflection and qualifications.

Table 10: The benefits of using a learning source

Respondents	It answered a quick question	I gained knowledge to use later	It changed my coaching	I saw improvement in my participants	It changed my coaching philosophy
Talking to other coaches	31%	67%	35%	26%	14%
Observing/working with other coaches	18%	65%	38%	31%	17%
Searching/using the Internet	43%	70%	15%	18%	5%
Watching videos on the Internet (YouTube or others)	33%	74%	19%	21%	6%
Feedback form participants	18%	48%	47%	45%	19%
Coaching workshop	8%	80%	23%	22%	16%
Coaching qualifications	8%	69%	44%	36%	33%
Reading books	17%	78%	23%	18%	19%
Social Media (Twitter, Facebook linkedin etc)	44%	65%	11%	14%	4%
Mentoring	19%	53%	42%	37%	22%
Coaching conferences	6%	81%	20%	17%	22%
Online learning courses	14%	82%	21%	19%	12%
Tools to reflect on coaching sessions	13%	57%	42%	37%	21%
FE/HE Qualifications (related to coaching or sport)	3%	48%	32%	19%	42%
Formal distance learning	6%	65%	47%	41%	12%
Other methods or experiences	0%	67%	17%	17%	50%

4.3 Providing Continuing Personal Development (CPD)

Coaches were asked if they had accessed a range of training and support options offered by **sportscotland**. UKCC Education Subsidy and Positive Coaching Scotland were the most common options accessed (47% and 35% respectively). The remainder of options were accessed by less than a fifth of coaches.

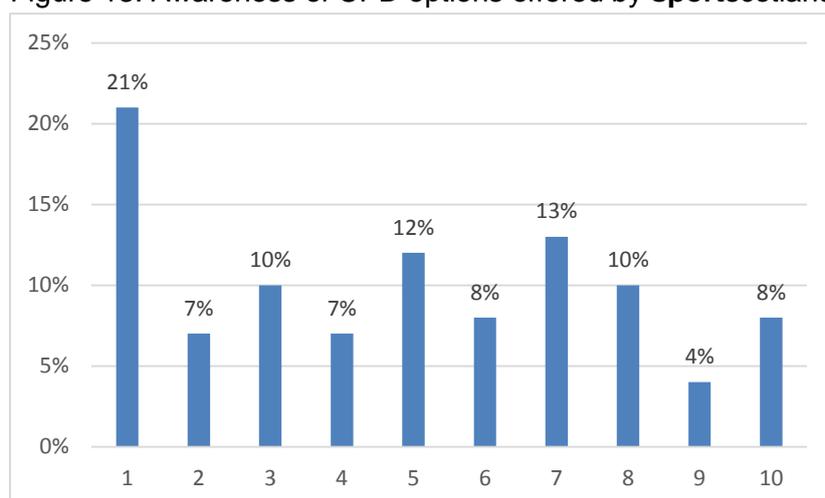
Between 5% and 9% of coaches stated they were not sure if they had accessed the CPD option.

Table 11: Coaches accessing CPD offered by **sportscotland**

	Yes	No	Not sure
UKCC L1- L4 Education Subsidy (funding for coaches)	47%	47%	5%
Positive Coaching Scotland	35%	58%	7%
Coach Connect Programme	20%	71%	9%
Understanding Talent	18%	76%	6%
Coaching and Volunteering Awards (recognition for coaches)	18%	76%	6%
sportscotland Coach App (this is where all coaches can access tools and resources)	14%	80%	7%
Coaching Talent Programme	13%	78%	8%
Multiskills SQA Award	4%	89%	6%
Multiskills Introduction	3%	90%	7%

The limited number of coaches accessing CPD options may in part be due to a lack of knowledge that they exist. When asked to rate awareness of the options 21% rated it as 1 out of 10 while 57% of coaches rated their awareness as 5 or below out of 10.

Figure 13: Awareness of CPD options offered by **sportscotland**



Those coaches who had accessed a learning option were then asked to rate the training and support they received. Table 12 lists these options in order of the percentage of coaches who rated them 'above average' or 'excellent'.

Positively the most commonly accessed option (UKCC Education Subsidy) was also rated the best with 81% of coaches who accessed it saying it was ‘above average’ or ‘excellent’. Six of the nine options were scored highly by more than two-third of coaches who used them.

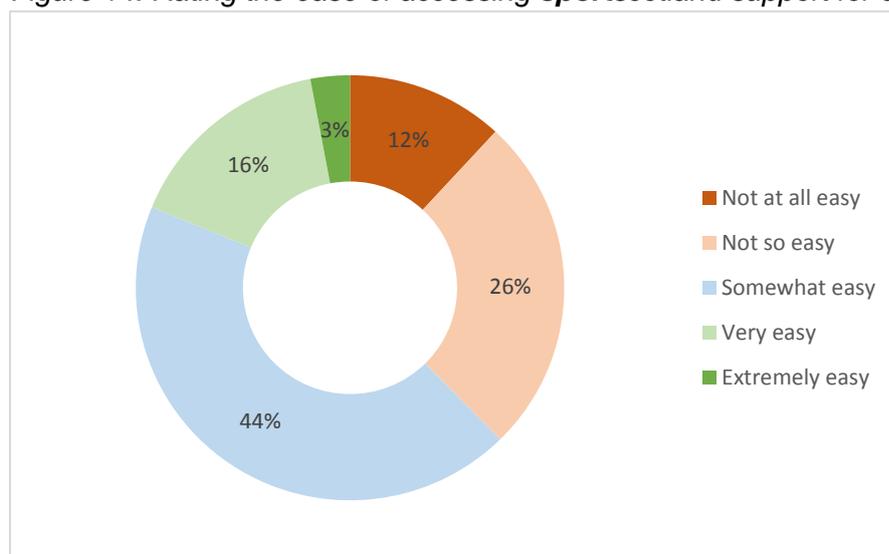
The **sportscotland** App scored lowest with only 54% of coaches rating it as ‘above average’ or ‘excellent’. This continues a trend in this survey of limited interest in coaching apps.

Table 12: Rating the CPD accessed

	Very poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Excellent
UKCC L1- L4 Education Subsidy (funding for coaches)	0%	4%	15%	34%	47%
Understanding Talent	-	3%	20%	58%	19%
Multiskills SQA Award	-	-	29%	24%	47%
Coaching Talent Programme	-	3%	28%	52%	16%
Positive Coaching Scotland	2%	3%	28%	44%	23%
Multiskills Introduction	-	8%	25%	50%	17%
Coach Connect Programme	-	1%	33%	46%	19%
Coaching and Volunteering Awards (recognition for coaches)	2%	2%	33%	36%	26%
sportscotland Coach App (this is where all coaches can access tools and resources)	5%	7%	34%	44%	10%

Overall 19% of coaches felt that it was ‘very easy’ or ‘extremely easy’ to find out what support **sportscotland** provides for coaches. At the same time 38% felt it was ‘not so easy’ or ‘not easy at all’.

Figure 14: Rating the ease of accessing **sportscotland** support for coaches



5 Supporting coaches

Coaches were asked to select which organisations they thought should provide support to coaches. 87% thought National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) should provide support and 71% thought clubs. A higher proportion of coaches in Scotland thought that Home Country Sports Councils should provide support (67% compared to 62%).

Coaches were most satisfied with the support they receive from clubs and employers (73% and 70% respectively). 63% felt supported by NGBs and training providers will 51% felt supported by **sportscotland**. It seems that levels of satisfaction are better for organisations closer to the coach on a regular basis (clubs and employers).

Table 13: Satisfaction with support received

	Extremely satisfied	satisfied	Neither dissatisfied or satisfied	Dissatisfied	Extremely dissatisfied
National Governing Body of Sport	18%	45%	23%	11%	3%
Clubs	23%	51%	19%	5%	2%
Home Country Sports Council	9%	42%	40%	6%	2%
Sports Coach UK	4%	39%	48%	7%	2%
UK Sport	3%	30%	57%	8%	2%
Employers	24%	46%	21%	7%	3%
Training providers	16%	47%	28%	8%	1%
County Sport Partnership	4%	20%	52%	22%	2%
Other	25%	13%	38%	25%	0%

Note: these results are only for coaches who said they needed/wanted support and believed the organisation should support coaches.

5.1 Benefits of being a coach

Coaches in Scotland were almost unanimous that being a coach makes them feel proud to help others and make a positive contribution to their community. There were similar positive responses to comments around feeling positive, developing lasting friendships and keeping active.

Although 78% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that being a coach helped them develop skills outside sport, they did not feel it helped their career outside sport (only 48% agreed).

Respondents were less likely to agree with comments related to mental health issues such as worrying less and stress. This was the first year that this question has been asked so there is nothing to benchmark it against but it may be an area for future research.

Table 14: Benefits of being a coach

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree
Coaching makes me proud to help others	55%	39%	5%	-	0%
I feel I make a positive contribute to my community by coaching	49%	45%	6%	0%	-
Coaching makes me feel positive	34%	52%	12%	1%	1%
I have developed lasting friendships through coaching	36%	46%	15%	2%	1%
Coaching keeps me active and healthy	35%	46%	16%	3%	0%
Through coaching I have developed skills that help outside sport	35%	43%	18%	3%	1%
Coaching has increased my confidence	37%	36%	25%	2%	1%
Coaching has opened up new opportunities in life	31%	36%	25%	7%	2%
Coaching has increased my self-esteem	31%	32%	33%	3%	0%
Coaching has helped in my career outside sport	23%	25%	36%	12%	4%
Coaching provides a release from the stresses of life	15%	31%	33%	17%	4%
I worry less as a result of coaching	8%	17%	52%	20%	3%