

## Programme Specification for Postgraduate Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching

**This document applies to students who commence the programme in or after September 2017**

1.	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Worcester
2.	<b>Teaching institution</b>	Iron Mill College
3.	<b>Programme accredited by</b>	N/A
4.	<b>Final award</b>	Postgraduate Certificate
5.	<b>Programme title</b>	Postgraduate Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching
6.	<b>Pathways available</b>	N/A
7.	<b>Mode and/or site of delivery</b>	Taught programme, weekend delivery, at Iron Mill College Exeter
8.	<b>Mode of attendance</b>	Part time, 8 X 2 day weekends across the year of study
9.	<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
10.	<b>Subject Benchmark statement and/or professional body statement</b>	<u>European Mentoring and Coaching Council</u> <u>European Quality Award Practitioner Competency Framework</u>
11.	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation/ revision</b>	Course Approval meeting 05.05.17 September 2017 - AQU amendments

### 12. Educational aims of the programme

The Postgraduate Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching is a part-time programme of eight 2-day weekends suitable for those practicing coaching professionals wishing to promote human flourishing and optimal functioning through offering coaching to individuals and groups in both personal and professional contexts.

The programme aims to:

1. resource practitioners in gaining the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to skillfully build coaching relationships that bring about insight and learning
2. offer opportunities to critically evaluate contemporary perspectives on coaching from a positive psychology perspective
3. demonstrate how to utilize cutting edge evidence-based research to support individuals and groups to make desired changes
4. facilitate the development of a range of advanced coaching skills that allow competent integration of contemporary perspectives on positive psychology

Since the start of the millennium, when Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi boldly invited the field of psychology to join forces in building a shared future filled with

flourishing human beings, the field of positive psychology has entered into an accelerated phase of work.

A growing number of training providers have responded by putting together the theory of human flourishing alongside the practical skills of coaching, which is becoming a mechanism of choice for applying what has been discovered by the positive psychology community. Drawing on our own rich history of training people in the related fields of counselling and psychotherapy, and in response to this trend, we intend to create our own unique synthesis of these two elements.

In recognition that an integration between coaching and positive psychology provides a framework for client's to realise a more open-minded approach to mental health this course will deliver a strong foundation in cutting-edge theory and research relating to human flourishing and optimal functioning as well as feature advanced training in working with clients and groups in professional capacities.

From a professional point of view, and as organizations look to develop talent through coaching, there is a rapidly expanding market for the range of skills that we intend to teach. We will also be the first college in the southwest to offer this explicitly integrated course, which is aimed at those wishing to promote human flourishing and optimal functioning in organizations, education establishments and businesses.

In a broad and flexible course that has been put together in response to a growing demand within the coaching and positive psychology field, it combines the study of cutting-edge empirical research and theory on human flourishing and optimal functioning with the practical skills and competencies you need to apply this expertise in the real world. The result is a course designed to empower students to truly make a positive difference in the world.

Furthermore, what makes this programme distinctive is its accreditation with European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) competency indicators and European Quality Award (EQA) quality standards. We anticipate that this will offer graduates an excellent platform for seeking employment opportunities as well as a career path towards senior practitioner level coaching and executive level coaching. Moreover, as organizations seek to recruit accredited coaches we are likely to see the requirement for coaches to have EMCC accredited training that meets the requirements of international professional bodies.

The programme will also provide a setting for like-minded professionals to share and compare good practice, understand and explore a wide variety of theory within positive psychology and coaching; consider how to apply that exploration and understanding to their own practice contexts.

### 13. Intended learning outcomes and learning, teaching and assessment methods

The Learning Outcomes for the PG Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching are:

<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>			
<b>LO no.</b>		<b>Module Code/s</b>	<b>Award</b>
1.	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of knowledge and critical awareness of new insights at the forefront of the positive psychology field applied to coaching practice	IMPP4001	PG Cert

2.	Demonstrate advanced theoretical understanding and reflective practice relating to difference, diversity and the balance of power within the coaching relationship	IMPP4001	PG Cert
<b>Cognitive and Intellectual skills</b>			
3	Critically evaluate the models, tools, techniques and ideas of positive psychology coaching, and produce a well-informed rationale for the application of these contemporary methods in supporting a client to make desired changes	IMPP4001	PG Cert
4	Demonstrate a critical awareness of how their own values, beliefs and behaviours affect the co-created coaching process and take committed action to advance knowledge, continually develop skills and improve standards of coaching practice	IMPP4002	PG Cert
<b>Skills and capabilities related to employability</b>			
5	Evaluate the role of coach within individual, group, educational, health and organizational contexts, and critically assess how these settings can impact upon practice	IMPP4001	PG Cert
6	Professionally and competently adopt the role of a coach within a workplace of choice, applying an advanced awareness of organizational and ethical requirements	IMPP4002	PG Cert
7	Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing changes to coaching practice	IMPP4002	PG Cert
<b>Transferable/key skills</b>			
8	Critically evaluate key concepts of human flourishing and optimal functioning and demonstrate originality in their utilization to bring about insight and learning in the coaching relationship	IMPP4001	PG Cert
9	Demonstrate comprehensive advanced application of learning with regard to establishing, developing and managing a coaching relationship, and the management of associated complexities and challenges	IMPP4002	PG Cert
10	Demonstrate capacity to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, making sound judgements through a reflective approach, engaging with personal development planning and demonstrating an advanced critical evaluation of their own practice and personal competency	IMPP4002	PG Cert

**Examples of learning, teaching and assessment methods used:**

- Placement/Work Based Learning provision:**

There is a requirement for 36 hours of coaching practice within placement or workplace as part of the programme. This ensures that theoretical learning is applied to current professional practice, that EMCC Practitioner criteria is met within the programme, and that students develop a professional resource network.

**Technology:**

The [University of Worcester Information and Learning services](#) ('The Hive') include an array of online information available to students. Resources Online provides access to numerous online databases as well as numerous full text journals. The Summon facility allows searches across all university library resources. Students will make use of the VLE (Blackboard) to:

- Access course activities, materials, information and module guides
- Access materials relevant to the programme of formative assignments that take place between each attended weekend
- Submit formative and summative assessments
- Share learning, collaborate and gain peer feedback for learning activities taking place outside of the taught days
- Communicate with your tutor and other college staff
- Access videos relating to course content
- Learn from other students through sharing information
- Undertaking self and peer assessments as part of your formative learning

**Learning and Teaching Methods:**

Teaching sessions accompanied by hand-outs and experiential exercises, discussions, modelling, audio-visual input, professional skills triad work, case study analysis, group work, reflective practice opportunities, guided independent learning, recording of practice.

**Formative and Summative Assessment Methods:**

The formative assessment methods are scheduled throughout the year of study and aim to support students in building the necessary skills and knowledge required for the module assessments, as well as expanding subject knowledge and developing skills. Students will gain peer and tutor feedback that will focus on their skills practice and assignment preparation work.

Examples of formative assessment include:

- Select, read and critically review a recent research paper, article or chapter pertaining to coaching practice.
- Prepare a 5-minute presentation describing own coaching contract and identify its strengths and limitations. Upload both the contract and the evaluation to Blackboard.
- Discuss a possible case study with peers, including shared thoughts on how well the material might address the Learning Outcomes. Write brief preliminary notes on discussion in preparation for the next teaching weekend.

The summative assessment methods aim to evaluate student learning at relevant points in each module and are set against EMCC EQA requirements. Examples of the summative assessment include:

- A 4000 word coaching case study illustrating development in relation to the Learning Outcomes, demonstrating (a) philosophy of coaching and (b) integration of learning through use of coaching practice and personal development planning.

- Coaching practice of a minimum of 36 hours, with accompanying evidence via a monthly supervision/mentor log of hours attended, signed by the supervisor, and a supporting supervisor/mentor report.

One of the following practical assessments:

- A. Analysis of Personal Coaching Practice through a 45 minute presentation, comprising a short recording of a coaching session and a related 15-20 minute presentation of analysis, reflection and critical evaluation of theory and practice, plus responding to questions from colleagues and examiners.
- B. Coaching Business Plan through a 45 minute presentation, comprising a 15-20 minute presentation of professional business plan that covers market research, contemporary coaching practice literature, and current professional trends, plus evidenced evaluation of personal capabilities and potential; followed by questions from colleagues and examiners.

#### 14. **Assessment Strategy**

The assessment strategy is designed to enhance student's knowledge and skills of coaching practice. Assessments provide opportunities to critically analyse and evaluate evidence and current practice from a positive psychology perspective on coaching and apply this knowledge within each student's own developing practice.

Students' will be provided opportunities to demonstrate skills of self-reflection, evaluation of existing evidence and critical application of that learning to new practice situations. Students will be assessed in both theoretical and practical components of the course.

Each assessment has specific marking criteria contained in the relevant module guide, which is provided to students via Blackboard at the beginning of the module. A grid showing **assessment methods and weightings** mapped to modules at each level is included in the assessment section of the programme handbook.

##### **Formative Assessment Methods**

Student and Tutor feedback will be provided relating to: formative online tasks between attended sessions; reflective practice opportunities and journal writing; written and verbal peer and tutor feedback on development of practical skills. Formative assignments help to gradually build your knowledge, experience and confidence in working towards your formal (summative) assignments.

##### **Assessment strategy relating to Practice hours**

Students must gain a total of 60 hours experience within coaching practice, of which:

- 24 hours will be obtained on the course by participation in skills practice
- 36 hours will be obtained in the workplace or placement

The number of hours required relates to the EMCC EQA requirements for benchmarking practice at the Practitioner Level.

<b>How is my practice work assessed?</b>			
<b>Practice Required: 60 hours in total, comprising:</b>	<b>Type of Assessment</b>	<b>Nature of Learning</b>	<b>Evidence</b>

<b>On-course coaching work:</b>  <b>24 hours skills practice attended</b>	Formative: IMPP4002  (delivered across 2 semesters)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participating in 3-way coaching sets as coach, observer and client</li> <li>2. Reflective practice on each coaching set</li> <li>3. Observations guided by EMCC Practitioner criteria</li> </ol>	Evidence is met via a register of attendance maintained by the course tutors, reflective practice forms relating to practice, and self-assessments using EMCC criteria. All elements are discussed and monitored through 1:1 tutorials. <i>. the opportunity to engage in a minimum of 24 hours of practice on the course is contained within the programme schedule, and will automatically be met by all students providing attendance does not fall below 90%. If attendance drops below this level, the student will need to discuss their progress with the Course Lead.</i>
<b>External workplace coaching hours:</b>  <b>36 hours of coaching + 5 hours of Supervision</b>	Summative IMPP4002  (delivered across 2 semesters)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Positive Psychology coaching with clients in the approved workplace</li> <li>2. Participation in a minimum of 5 hours of Supervision/mentoring</li> </ol>	Evidenced through the supervisor's reports and associated logs (detailed in the Practice Hours Handbook), which provide evidence required for the Course Tutor to assess IMPP4002 LO2. This is a Pass/Fail assessment component.

Students are expected to locate their own workplace provider for their 36 practice hours. On accepting a place on the course, a DBS check and an Occupational Health form are required. All proposed placement arrangements are fully assessed and approved in relation to the University Policy on the Management of Placement and Work-based Learning prior to a student starting placement. The Iron Mill College, in association with the University, is responsible for ensuring that Quality Assurance standards and requirements are met, and that placements are properly assessed.

## 15. Programme structures and requirements

The PG Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching is a part-time professional programme at Level 7 comprising two 30-credit modules.

		<b>Status</b>	
		Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)	
<b>Module Code</b>	<b>Module Title</b>	<b>Credits (Number)</b>	<b>PG Cert</b>
IMPP4001	Perspectives on Positive Psychology Coaching	30	M
IMPP4002	Positive Psychology Coaching in Practice	30	M
<b>Total Credits</b>		60	

## 16. QAA and Professional Academic Standards and Quality

This award is located at level 7 of the FHEQ (Framework for Higher Education Qualifications). The programme is designed in compliance with the University of Worcester Postgraduate Regulatory Framework and is informed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Master's degree characteristics (2010).

The course design has been informed by the [EMCC and EQA Competence Framework and Assessment Indicators](#) (2015), which offers descriptions of the skills and knowledge required at practitioner level coaching. The EMCC exists to develop, promote and set the expectation of best practice in mentoring and coaching across Europe and beyond.

## 17. Support for students

The Iron Mill College offers a pleasant and comfortable learning environment within the city centre. Students have access to:

- The Resource Room, which contains reference books, library and a selection of journals
- The IMC placement database, allowing students to find approved placement providers and supervisors/mentors in the geographical area of their choice (these are mostly related to counselling and psychotherapy, but also include other providers within family centres, educational establishments and health settings)
- Kitchens for storing and preparing their own food, and a range of tea, coffee and hot drinks are available free of charge
- Iron Mill offer a low-cost counselling service that is available to students five days per week throughout the year
- Study Skills Groups facilitated by experienced academic staff throughout the year on evenings and weekends, covering topics such as Harvard Referencing, Essay Writing, Preparing for Placement, and Presentation Skills.

Students are supported throughout the year and over the summer by:

- The [Personal Academic Tutor](#) who will offer support throughout their studies at the Iron Mill College
- The Course Leader and Module Leaders are directly involved in the programme and available to offer support and guidance as required
- The Learning Support Coordinator
- The Placement Coordinator
- The Iron Mill College HE Admissions Officer
- A Library Assistant within the Administrative Team, able to help with library requests and enquiries

Students enrolled on the PG Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching have the opportunity to access the services offered by UW Student Services. [Student Services](#) is the central department that provides non-academic support of students. The department includes Careers, Counselling and Mental Health Support, [Disability and Dyslexia Service](#), Student Wellbeing Centre, and Welfare and Financial Advice. Further details are listed in the Programme Handbook.

## 18. Admissions Policy

The Postgraduate Certificate in Positive Psychology Coaching is suitable for those offering coaching to individuals and groups in both personal and professional contexts. In line with EQA practitioner standards, the programme level is aimed at those:

- who will either be working as an internal coach / mentor, use coaching / mentoring as part of their main job or starting up as an external coach / mentor

- who are likely to be working with a small range of clients/contexts and within own area of experience to improve performance, build confidence and stretch capability
- who will typically be able to apply a limited range of models, tools and processes

Candidates in a related helping field such as psychotherapy, counselling, occupational /health therapy, counselling psychology, human resources, organizational development, or learning and development roles will also be assessed on an individual basis providing evidence of coaching can be shown.

#### **Entry Requirements:**

- A minimum of a lower second class (2:2) Honours degree, or an equivalent professional qualification (see [Admissions Policy](#) for other acceptable qualifications).
- Evidence of practice within a relevant professional role. The course will consider applicants either with direct coaching experience or with evidence of relevant and transferable skills gained from related work experience. In all cases, previous experience will be assessed, using a short questionnaire and at interview, against the EMCC Competency Criteria (2015).

In addition, applicants must provide evidence of:

- Professional accountability to a relevant published code of conduct and ethical framework, checked at interview (applicants who are not yet members of a suitable professional body will be required to gain membership of the EMCC or the year of study: see Section 15, 'Additional Expenses', above)
- a reference and proof of identification

#### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Students with relevant previous study at postgraduate level or with extensive experience may be considered eligible for recognition of prior learning regarding their entry criteria. Please contact the Registry Admissions Office for further information or guidance on 01905 855111.

Further information on Recognition of Prior Learning can be found at <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/registryservices/941.htm>

#### **Admissions procedures**

Applicants will apply for a place on this programme through the link provided on the Iron Mill website, and will be required to fill in a short questionnaire and attend an interview as formal parts of the admissions process.

All applicants who are successful at interview and accept an offer will be required to complete the University Occupational Health assessment form and apply for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate (both arranged via the University of Worcester).

#### **Admissions/selection criteria**

Students will be offered a place on the programme if they meet the entry criteria and can demonstrate experience in relation to the EMCC Competency Criteria. This is assessed at interview and via the questionnaire:

- evidence of coaching or mentoring experience, or similar
- the professionalism and experience required for the role of coach
- a well-established career within related roles
- the ability to access coaching clients through employment or self-employment
- a relational, non-judgmental and empathic approach to others
- familiarity with, and adherence to, a relevant published code of conduct, ethical framework or code of practice

## **19. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of**

## teaching and learning

Course evaluation is an ongoing process involving staff, students, the external examiner and the Course Management Committee. We invite feedback using the following methods:

- Student module evaluation forms for each taught module
- Reports provided by supervisor/mentor
- External examiner and moderator reports and visits
- Discussion arising spontaneously during check in/out
- Time allocated as necessary for staff and students to meet as a learning community, with regular feedback from the whole group
- Suggestions for programme changes
- Staff meetings
- Two student course representatives involved in ongoing discussions within the Staff/student Liaison and Programme Management Committees
- End of course evaluation that involves discussion between the external examiner with staff and feedback from the Programme Management Committee
- Annual course evaluation process
- The Strategic Partnership Planning Group (SPPG) provides an annual monitoring of the University of Worcester programmes offered at the Iron Mill College

## 20. Regulation of assessment

The course operates under the University's [Taught Course Regulatory Framework](#).

### Requirements to pass modules

- Modules are assessed using a variety of assessment activities which are detailed in the module specifications.
- The minimum pass mark is D- for each module.
- Students are required to submit all items of assessment in order to pass a module, and in some modules, a pass mark in each item of assessment may be required.
- Full details of the assessment requirements for a module, including the assessment criteria, are published in the module outline.

### Submission of assessment items

- Students who submit course work late but within 5 days of the due date will have work marked, but the grade will be capped at D- unless an application for mitigating circumstances is accepted.
- Students who submit work later than 5 days but within 14 days of the due date will not have work marked unless they have submitted a valid claim of mitigating circumstances.
- For full details of submission regulations please see the Taught Courses Regulatory Framework.

### Retrieval of failure

- Students are entitled to resit failed assessment items for any module that is awarded a fail grade.
- Reassessment items that are passed are capped at D-.
- If a student is unsuccessful in the reassessment, they have the right to retake the module (or, in some circumstances, take an alternative module); the module grade for a re-taken module is capped at D-.
- A student who fails 60 credits or more after exhausting all reassessment opportunities may be required to withdraw from the University.

### Requirements for Awards

Award	Requirement
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PG Cert	Passed a minimum of 60 credits at level 7, as specified on the award map
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Postgraduate Certificate awards are unclassified

## 21. Indicators of quality and standards

As a vocational college established over 35 year ago, the Iron Mill College is a leading provider of training related to mental health and wellbeing in the South-West of England. Iron Mill College has an established relationship with the University of Worcester, offering an increasing range of validated programmes from Levels 4-7. All academic staff at the college are professionally registered and experienced practitioners, and remain in practice within their chosen fields. The college has long-term relationships with placement providers and supervisors throughout the region, and regularly holds collaborative Supervisor meetings and Placement Fayres. Several staff members are engaged with HE providers as External Advisors and External Examiners, and serving on committees within university settings. The College is proud of its expertise in teaching and learning for diverse groups of mature students, and our above-average student retention: most of our core HE Registered staff members have engaged in research through HE Teaching and Learning training, and we have an increasing number who are Fellows of the HEA.

The Partnership Review with the University of Worcester was completed in 2014 and confirmed that the Iron Mill College continues to provide effective management of university programmes, and has effective processes for quality enhancement as well as appropriate staffing and learning resources. The College's increased provision of HE programmes additionally requires an annual Strategic Partnership and Quality Review, the first of which took place in 2015-16. Each programme provides an Annual Evaluation Report that assesses the health of each programme and details planned updates and improvements in response to both student and External Examiner feedback provided throughout the year.

## 22. Graduate destinations, employability and links with employers

This contemporary approach to training is likely to boost the employability prospects and possibilities for graduates, and provides opportunity for advancement in a variety of careers within both organizational settings and within the helping professions. Applicants with degrees and postgraduate levels of achievement are increasingly being sought, and our aim is to resource graduates with the advanced theoretical and applied knowledge to make an impact on individuals, groups and organizations.

We anticipate that by accrediting the programme with EMCC competency indicators and EQA quality standards, this programme will additionally offer an excellent platform for graduates seeking employment opportunities as well as a career path towards senior practitioner level coaching and executive level coaching. Moreover, as organizations seek to recruit accredited coaches we are likely to see the requirement for coaches to have EMCC accredited training that meets the requirements of international professional bodies.

This programme is distinctive in that it offers a contemporary positive psychology perspective on the coaching relationship, and offers participants the opportunity to integrate evidence based methods in their approach. The programme will also provide a setting for like-minded professionals to share and compare good practice, understand and explore a wide variety of theory within positive psychology and coaching; consider how to apply that exploration and understanding to their own practice contexts.

Possible career opportunities for coaches in organizations and within the helping profession are varied and numerous, and are growing as organizations seek to introduce internal coaching programmes to develop talent. Opportunities may therefore include:

- Coaching within Professional Services and Consulting organizations

- Coaching as a Human Resources and Learning & Development professional
- Coaching as an Organizational Development specialist
- Coaching in Private Practice
- Coaching within Educational institutions: schools, colleges and Universities
- Coaching within Local Authority employee services programmes
- Coaching within Charitable agencies
- Coaching within Health and Social Care settings
- Coaching within Probation and Social Work

### **Student employability**

The programme is designed to contribute towards career progression within organizations and within the helping professions through the development of coaching skills and attributes, and the requirement for work-related learning that facilitates the integration of theory and practice. In addition the Iron Mill College provides study skills groups assisting with interview skills and CV preparation.

### **Links with employers**

The PG Certificate programme design has aligned itself with a well-established professional body, the European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC). This organization has produced [guidelines for standards](#) in practitioner level coaching and beyond, which helped to inform the development of this programme. In addition, External Advisors with extensive subject specific experience were involved throughout the course development and validation process.

The Iron Mill College has a history of building and maintaining good relationships with placement and work-based learning providers, and hosts regular networking and development meetings for its substantial list of approved placement providers.

**Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in the module outlines and the course handbook provided to all students at the start of the course. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.