



the british
psychological society
special group in
coaching psychology

Rationale for Resolutions as set out in Agenda Item 8 relating to Coaching Psychology

Coaching is a growing, though currently unregulated profession. The BPS Special Group in Coaching Psychology was founded in 2004 in response to concerns about untrained or poorly trained coaches, and the need to promote improved standards of practice for the benefit of the profession of coaching, coaches, and their clients at large. Since then, the evidence base that underpins coaching psychology has grown significantly and continues to do so. In April 2012, the BPS Register of Coaching Psychology became live which allowed Chartered Psychologists to gain entry to the Register. To join the Register, applicants must be Chartered Psychologists, confirm that they have met coaching psychology standards set out in the [Coaching Psychology Knowledge and Experience Framework](#) and provide referees who can attest to this.

Our strategic plan (2015–2020) established a vision to ‘promote and advance coaching psychology, to make coaching psychology more widely available, determine and ensure the highest standards of practice and be the authoritative and public voice of coaching psychology’. One of our strategic goals within this vision was to ‘develop coaching psychology as a profession through establishing training routes for coaching psychologists’. Through the development of accreditation standards for Level 7 coaching psychology programmes and level 8 personal accreditation standards this is now a reality and represents a significant opportunity for the society.

With the continued growth of the SGCP these members now represent a significant population within our membership. The proposal to establish the domain firmly within the auspices of the society structures by re-designation from a special group to a division is a strategically important change. This will give coaching parity with other domains, acknowledging its importance within the discipline of psychology and providing the relevant platforms through which to shape and influence the profession. Elevating the profile of the group within the society provides a better framework and platform through which to address the lack of clear regulation and also helps the society to promote and uphold high standards of education and training through the definition of core content and coverage via the accreditation process.

The BPS through its divisional representation should be the leading, authoritative voice in the education, training, practice and development of the coaching profession in the UK. This is increasingly important as providers start to consider other routes into the profession, such as apprenticeships. Most recently a trailblazer was established and developed a coaching professional apprenticeship standard which is proving popular for employers. Divisional status for coaching psychology will provide the BPS with a solid platform through which to influence and guide such professional developments in the UK and will also provide us with credibility in the wider global context. The development is complementary to the direction of travel for the discipline in promoting how coaching and positive psychology can have benefits for individuals and society. Moving to divisional status signals the society’s intent to protect the public and the perception of coaching by providing parity with the other domains within the discipline. Whilst we are currently unable to protect the title through statutory frameworks, through accreditation, registration and divisional status we are able to provide the closest next best alternative.

RATIONALE