

Supervised Practical Coaching Assessment





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Contents

Introduction	2
Aim and Objective.....	2
Assessment Roles	4
Coaching Session Structure.....	4
Assessment Criteria.....	5
Post Role Play Debrief	6
Logistics and Communication.....	6
Student's Responsibilities.....	7
Conclusion.....	7

Introduction

The Coaching and Mentoring Assessment is a structured practical evaluation designed to assess HRM students' interpersonal skills within a realistic coaching scenario. The assessment accounts for 60% of the overall module grade and requires each student to take part in a supervised role-play exercise.

Students will assume the role of an HR Business Partner (Coach) and engage in a 15–20 minute session with another student acting as an Employee experiencing a dip in performance. The purpose is to establish rapport, explore challenges, and co-create an improvement plan. An Assessor will observe, evaluate performance, and provide feedback.

To support preparation, four role-play scenarios will be made available on the Resource Centre two weeks before the assessment. Each student will rotate between the roles of Coach and Employee, ensuring contextual learning and peer-to-peer engagement. A debrief will follow each role-play to reinforce learning and provide formative feedback.

Aim and Objective

Aim

The Coaching and Mentoring Assessment is designed to immerse HRM students in a structured, practice-based evaluation that mirrors real organisational coaching contexts. The aim is to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate and refine critical interpersonal skills that underpin effective HR practice, including the ability to build trust, manage sensitive conversations, and guide individuals towards performance improvement. Through this role-play assessment, students experience the professional demands of acting as an HR Business Partner, balancing organisational expectations with individual support.

Objective:

The objective of the assessment is to evaluate the student's proficiency in applying a range of interpersonal and coaching techniques in a supervised context. Specifically, the assessment focuses on the student's ability to:

- Establish rapport and create a psychologically safe environment for dialogue.
- Demonstrate active listening and empathetic responses that validate the employee's perspective.
- Communicate in a clear, concise, and professional manner, avoiding jargon and ambiguity.
- Provide constructive and ethical feedback, framed around behaviours and their impacts.
- Facilitate self-reflection and ownership, enabling the employee to generate their own solutions rather than relying on directive guidance.
- Develop an actionable improvement plan collaboratively with the employee, ensuring commitment and feasibility.

In meeting these objectives, students not only demonstrate technical competence in coaching but also cultivate self-awareness and reflective practice, both of which are essential for professional growth in HRM roles.

Assessment Roles

HRM Student (Coach): Assessed on their coaching ability. The aim is to support the Employee in identifying solutions and committing to an improvement plan.

Employee (Role-Player): A student portraying an employee with generally good performance but currently experiencing a decline.

Assessor (Observer): Observes the role-play, assesses performance using set criteria, and provides structured feedback.

Background information will be provided for both Coach and Employee to guide role preparation.

Coaching Session Structure

1. Opening & Establishing Rapport

- Building trust, setting a positive tone, clarifying purpose.

2. Exploring the Situation

- Encouraging the Employee to share perspectives, identifying challenges, showing empathy.

3. Identifying Solutions & Action Planning

- Co-creating achievable actions, promoting self-reflection and ownership, ensuring clarity in agreed outcomes.

Assessment Criteria

The Assessor will evaluate the HRM Student (Coach) against six core interpersonal techniques:

1. Establishing Rapport & Trust

- Creating a safe environment, showing warmth and professionalism, building confidence in the HR role.

2. Active Listening

- Using verbal and non-verbal listening cues, paraphrasing for understanding, avoiding interruptions.

3. Empathy & Understanding

- Acknowledging feelings, validating experiences, demonstrating genuine concern.

4. Clear & Concise Communication

- Asking open and clear questions, avoiding jargon, maintaining professional language.

5. Constructive Feedback (Guided Approach)

- Addressing performance issues ethically and non-blamingly, focusing on behaviours and impacts, guiding the employee to identify improvements.

6. Encouraging Self-Reflection & Ownership

- Empowering the employee to propose solutions, supporting independent thinking, co-developing an actionable plan.



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