



An evaluation of the CoachSussex Bursary scheme – one year on.

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Executive Summary

All of the coaches within this study reported personal benefits from successfully accessing the coach bursary award. These personal benefits related to how they perceived the way that they thought their own coaching development and practice directly benefited from undertaking their coaching qualifications paid for, or in part, by the bursary. Interestingly however, and outside of what might be considered the direct benefits to their own coaching practice, oftentimes what came to be considered as accrued personal benefits also meant that personal satisfaction and fulfilment were increased. Indeed, the data generated from the coach interviews highlighted these as being very important factors to take into consideration when assessing any wider positive results of coaching. But perhaps the most significant findings of the study were in regard to how the links between increased participation and coaching were made. More specifically, and without too much surprise, these links between participation and coaching were made evident through the additional coaching hours that were made available as a direct consequence of coaches having accessed the coach bursary scheme. This was, in part, due to the fact that they were more qualified, but also because of their increased motivation to coach after gaining the qualifications. But perhaps the most interesting of the findings relating to the way in which participation and coaching were found to be linked demonstrated the wide range in which increases in participation could be found. These findings illustrated the way in which increased participation came about in terms of keeping participants engaged (through better coaching practice), offering more sessions, and facilitating club development (i.e. through meeting clubmark criteria and helping access additional funding through proving the robustness of the club structure).

In truth, what emerged from the findings was a set of results that told the stories of the coaches – and the stories indicated that there were wider than might be expected consequences of developing someone's coaching expertise and asking them, as per the bursary guidelines, to evidence their work through a six to eight week coaching programme. So within this document the evaluation covers what were found to be a range of 'impacts'. More particularly, the impacts that the completion of the bursary had on coach development, coaching practice, player development, sporting participation, club development, as well as the impacts on a personal and wider level. The final sections of this report are comprised of a number of ideas for improvement that the participants offered (more networking and a potential coach mentoring scheme to be run by CoachSussex) and a series of what have been termed concluding comments, in this case seen through the terms 'impetus and momentum' – which, whilst often offered as explanatory comments regarding the effectiveness of the bursaries by those coaches interviewed, also exemplify the overall nature and impact of the bursary scheme.