



## **GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This guideline is intended for use by Mentors in the Engineering Discipline. Its purpose is two-fold:

- Firstly it gives the mentor guidance on how he should proceed when mentoring trainees / candidates.
- Secondly a copy should be given to the trainees / candidates as a reference document to support what he is told by his mentor.

For completeness much of the basic information given in the guideline for candidates is repeated in this guideline. Instruction to the mentor is given, by answering specific questions which are likely to arise.

### **WHEN IS A MENTOR REQUIRED?**

When a person has qualified from University, Technikon or Technical College or similar training, and has a degree or diploma (equating to a Stage 1 qualification) they need "on the job" experience and training (Stage 2 Qualification) before he is considered a fully competent professional.

This training period lasts for a number of years after graduation and during that time the services of a mentor are required to assist and monitor the graduate. (The actual number of years of practical training after qualification is specified by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) in its Policy Statement R1/1)

Mentors will need to have copies of these documents and will be able to explain their contents to the trainees / candidates.

### **WHO IS A TRAINEE / CANDIDATES?**

During this two or three-year period after graduation, the graduate is referred to as a "Trainee" in the Electrical Engineering discipline and this covers four different categories:

- "Engineer in Training"
- "Engineering Technologist in Training"
- "Certificated Engineer in Training"
- "Engineering Technician in Training"

These categories are very clearly and carefully defined by ECSA.

In this document we will simply refer to a "Candidate".

## **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MENTORSHIP?**

The benefits of mentorship are that at the conclusion of his training the candidate has a number of valuable attributes:

The trainee becomes:-

- An appropriately trained and developed competent professional who can take responsibility for a wide range of engineering activities
- A well integrated professional who can contribute meaningfully to the profession
- Appropriately trained and developed to ensure registration with ECSA within the minimum period
- A professional who can ensure economic benefit
- A professional who can contribute to the continuing mentorship of others
- A professional who renders a service to the community with integrity and who adheres to the professions code of conduct

## **COST OF MENTORSHIP**

Mentorship is provided at no charge for candidate as a service from the ICMEESA for its members. Mentors, who are members of the ICMEESA, are expected to provide the mentoring service at no charge as a service to the engineering community. Generally the activity of mentoring is found to be most rewarding for the mentor.

## **WHAT ARE THE DUTIES OF A MENTOR?**

1. Guidance on career planning and professional development
2. The mentor should discuss with the candidate what specific avenues are available for his future. For instance he should be advised to initially obtain experience in as wide a range of activities as possible e.g. design engineering, manufacturing engineering, quality engineering, industrial marketing, management finance, strategic planning and engineering management.
3. These activities would normally be included in the company's internal training program for trainees. Participation in these activities would assist the candidate to decide what direction his career should take.
4. Advice on Training opportunities
5. The candidate should be encouraged to keep up his academic education by attending specialist courses and possibly post graduate diploma courses and higher degrees.
6. Advice on specific Company training programs
7. When a company has a Commitment and Undertaking (CU) with ECSA it will have a specific program of work to prepare a trainee for registration. The mentor should be fully conversant with this program and should assist the candidate in deciding the structure of his own particular course, when various choices exist. The mentor should satisfy himself that the program is of a sufficiently high standard to be accepted by ECSA. If this is not the case he should discuss the

matter with company management and if necessary suggest that the program be augmented by work in other sections or even other companies.

8. Monitoring regular written reports on work done
  9. The mentor is not required to constantly supervise the candidate but must set up a schedule of regular milestones (monthly) when the candidates' work will be monitored and checked for standards of excellence. The mentor should then "sign off" the achieved progress and if necessary advise and help the trainee to maintain an acceptable standard of work. The mentor should always maintain contact with the candidate's immediate supervisor and may request to be released from his responsibility if the candidate persists in showing little or no interest.
  10. Guidance on networking within the profession
  11. The mentor will usually have had many years of experience. During this time they will have built up a valuable network of contacts that they should share with their candidate when necessary.
  12. The mentor should actively encourage the candidate to join the ICMEESA if he is not already a candidate member. He should emphasize the value of ICMEESA membership particularly in regard to networking.
  13. The "proposing" or "seconding" of a candidate seeking to gain membership of the ICMEESA are valuable services which a mentor can give. Their knowledge of this candidate makes them ideal for this function.
  14. Guidance on applying for registration with ECSA
  15. A candidate seeking registration with ECSA has to carry out a large amount of preparation to support their application. The mentor must assist and advise during the preparation of this application to ensure that it is accepted by ECSA.
  16. It is essential that the ECSA Policy Statement R1/1 is brought to the notice of the candidate as the information contained to this document is vital. The company specific program must also be given to the candidate at the commencement of their period of training.
  17. Advice in new challenges / new technologies
  18. There will always be technical points where the knowledge and experience of the mentor should be available to the candidate. It may be that the best the mentor can do is referring the candidate to a known expert or reference books on the subject.
  19. Support for achieving aspirations
  20. The mentor should develop a friendly, supportive relationship with the candidate to ensure that the candidate feels free to consult the mentor, as necessary.
  21. Advice on further study
- It is important for the candidate to continue studying throughout his career. Post-graduate courses are available for both Technical and Management study.

## CHECKLISTS OF MENTOR ACTIVITIES

1. Obtain copies of the documents listed in Appendix 1 attached.
2. Establish that candidate holds relevant qualifications refer doc. (ECSA R1/1)
3. Establish the training schedule in conjunction with doc. R1/1 and the company schedule. (The company should be persuaded to register a training commitment and undertaking (CU) with ECSA if this doesn't already exist.
4. Support and monitor the candidate throughout his training.
5. When training is complete to the satisfaction of the Mentor, ECSA applications form A1. 1/2 must be completed by the candidate. (Use Information sheets A2. 1/2 section A for instructions)
6. The candidate must complete the training report Form A4 (Use information sheets A2. 1/2 section B for instructions).
7. The candidate must complete the summary of training periods Form A3 (Use information sheet A2. 1/2 section A for instructions)
8. The completed documents must be forwarded to ECSA by the candidate.
9. The candidate must use Form A6 to request his "Referee" to provide an evaluation. The Referee is to use Form A5 1/2 for this purpose (Instructions are given at the end of the form) and must send the completed form direct to ECSA.

**NOTE:** The "Referee" is chosen in the following order of preference:  
(a) Mentor (b) Supervisor (c) Colleague at same or higher level etc.

## DOCUMENTS THAT MUST BE AVAILABLE

### APPENDIX 1

**DOCUMENTS THAT MUST BE AVAILABLE**

The following documents must be available to candidate and mentor for reference during training and for use when application for registration is made.

The documents are available in English or Afrikaans from:

Engineering Council of South Africa  
Private Bag X691  
BRUMA  
2026

1st Floor, Waterview Corner Building  
2 Ernest Oppenheimer Avenue  
Bruma Lake Office Park  
Bruma  
Johannesburg  
2198

Tel: (011) 607-9500 (General)  
Fax: (011) 622-9295 (General)  
Fax: (011) 616-1855 (Accounts)  
Fax: (011) 607-9556 (Accreditation)  
Fax: (011) 607-9547 (Legal)  
E-mail: [engineer@ecsa.co.za](mailto:engineer@ecsa.co.za)  
Website: [www.ecsa.co.za](http://www.ecsa.co.za)

**DOC. NO DESCRIPTION: RELEASE DATE** (Please use the Latest version if they have been updated)

1. ECSA Policies & Procedures: 23-05-96
2. Training requirements for Professional development of Engineers in Training
3. ECSA Branch Specific Guidelines: 30-10-96
4. ECSA Policy Statement R1/1 -
5. A1. 1/2 Application Form for Registration as 01-09-96
6. Professional Engineer, Professional Certificated Engineer or Professional Technician (To be filled in by applicant)
7. A2. 1/2 Information sheet for Applicants 01-09-96
8. A3. Summary of training periods 01-09-96
9. A4. Training Report 01-09-96
10. A5. 1/2 Referee's Report 01-09-96
11. A6. Applicant's request to Referee for evaluation 01-09-96
12. Addendum A List of recognized Institutes 01-09-96
13. M1 Application for a mentor July '97
- 14. M2 Application to become a mentor July '97**