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# Guide for Mentorship of Facial Comparison Trainees in Role Based Facial Comparison

## 1. Preface

1.1 There are many topics (FISWG Guidelines and Recommendations in Facial Comparison for training to competency) to include in facial comparison training and mentorship. Means to provide such may include internal and external training and/or distance learning. The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines and recommendations to assist with establishing a mentorship process as part of an on-going formal agency training program. It is recognized that some agencies may require additional resources, technology and/or personnel to fully implement a mentorship process that meets the recommendations in this document. Agencies should document the training and feedback process throughout the implementation and continuously demonstrate reviewer and examiner competency.

## 2. Scope

2.1 This guideline provides recommended procedures that should be used for the fundamental mentoring of facial comparison trainees as part of a training program.

2.2 The intended audience of the document is all personnel involved in facial comparison (i.e., reviewers, examiners, managers, supervisors, etc.). This document will focus on skills development, continuous feedback during the training period and continuing professional development for facial reviewers and examiners.

**Note:** Facial assessors operate in a high throughput environment for which they should have the ability to refer questioned faces to a higher level for resolution, and therefore will not be addressed further in this document.

### 3. Referenced Documents

- 3.1 Other Standards:  
FISWG Guidelines and Recommendations in Facial Comparison for training to competency

### 4. Terminology

- 4.1 Definitions: see FISWG Recommendations for Training Program in Facial Comparison
- 4.2 Mentorship is a program administered under the direction of a competent facial reviewer or examiner during the course of a trainee's professional development. Mentorship should include, but is not limited to, the evaluation of skills and competencies, the review and supervision of facial comparison casework, and where applicable, the observation of expert testimony.
- 4.3 *Mentor* is an individual who has competency, proficiency and experience in the relevant role.
- 4.4 Feedback is information provided to trainees to minimize the gap between their current and optimal performance.

### 5. Summary of Guide

- 5.1 Research has shown that coursework alone is insufficient to establish expertise for facial comparison. In addition to coursework, on-the-job training with a mentor and on-going professional development are necessary to achieve and maintain expertise. Improvements to performance are made through feedback both during courses and continuing through mock/real casework under the guidance of senior reviewers and examiners.

### 6. Significance and Use

- 6.1 The procedures outlined here are grounded in the generally accepted body of knowledge and experience in the field of facial comparison and are necessary for a trainee to acquire the scientific, technical, and other specialized skills required to reliably perform the work of a facial reviewer or examiner.

## 7. Recommendations for the Mentorship Program

- 7.1 For facial review trainees, the mentoring duration shall be at least the equivalent of 6-months full-time on-the-job training under the supervision of the mentor.
- 7.2 For facial examination trainees, the mentoring duration shall be at least the equivalent of 24 months full-time on-the-job training under the supervision of the mentor.
- 7.3 The mentor and trainee should be willing and prepared to cultivate an environment that promotes a mutual open and honest, feedback and questioning cycle.
- 7.4 The program ensures that the trainee acquires and maintains currency in the scientific, technical, and other specialized knowledge, skill, and experience required to reliably perform the relevant work by:
  - 7.4.1 Providing instruction in each topic area of the [FISWG Guidelines and Recommendations in Facial Comparison for training to competency];
  - 7.4.2 Providing relevant literature to study;
  - 7.4.3 Administering assessment(s) (e.g., written test, oral test, practical exercise) to measure the trainee's knowledge;
  - 7.4.4 Undertaking operational casework under supervision;
  - 7.4.5 Participating in external training, technical visits, courses, conferences, or workshops;
  - 7.4.6 Conducting research, as applicable;
  - 7.4.7 Providing access to a mentor(s) after the trainee has successfully completed the training program, for continuing professional development.
- 7.5 A training record shall be maintained which documents the above training activities including statistics (e.g., number, type, items, reports, outcome).

## 8. Recommendations for the Mentor(s)

- 8.1 The mentor may be internal or external to the organization and the role performed in person or remotely.

- 8.2 The mentor for a facial review trainee shall be a competent facial reviewer or examiner.
- 8.3 The mentor for a facial examination trainee shall be a competent facial examiner.
- 8.4 A facial review mentor should have successfully completed at least the equivalent of 6 months full-time supervised on-the-job training and 6 months of full-time post-training experience as a competent facial reviewer or examiner.
- 8.5 A facial examination mentor should have successfully completed at least the equivalent of 24 months full-time supervised on-the-job training and 24 months of full-time post-training experience as a competent facial examiner.
- 8.6 FISWG encourages the mentor to have successfully completed a course or seminar in instructor training and development.

## **9. Keywords**

- 9.1 Training, mentor, facial reviewer, facial examiner, facial comparison, facial identification, professional development