Mentor Guidance Document

These mentoring guidelines are recommendations from the Mentoring Program Committee as suggestions for beginning, structuring and documenting Mentor participation in the mentoring partnership. These guidelines cover the application process and the six-month formal Mentoring Program period. After the six-month period is over, we anticipate (and hope) that communication and friendship between partners will continue on an informal basis, but the partnership is no longer supported by the formal SQA-sponsored Mentoring Program or its procedural documents.

Apply to the Mentoring Program by submitting the Mentor Application

- Prior to submitting your application form, update documentation of your work experience (e.g., CV, resume).
- Determine why you are interested in being a Mentor. This will assist the Mentoring Program Committee in ensuring that you have a good partnership experience.
- Complete and submit an application on the SQA website. Your application will be anonymized and displayed to potential Mentees so that they may identify the best Mentor to suit their needs, so ensure that this form is as complete and accurate as possible.
- Wait for contact from SQA Headquarters. Your waiting time will vary, depending on when a Mentee requests to be partnered with you. We cannot guarantee a time frame within which a Mentee will request you as a partner, but SQA Headquarters will contact you when a request has been made to confirm that you are still available for and interested in serving as a Mentor.

First Contact

- The first contact is typically initiated by the Mentee. If you do not hear from the Mentee within two weeks from your introductory email, please feel free to contact your Mentee.
- Prior to the first meeting:
  - Review Mentee application material received from Committee; prepare any questions you may have for the Mentee, particularly regarding their goals during the mentoring partnership.
  - Consider available resources (i.e., websites, documents, etc.) that may be helpful to your Mentee based on their application.
  - Prepare a list of your regularly available days and times as well as acceptable communication methods to help you set regularly scheduled contact with your Mentee.
• An open discussion will provide an opportunity for the Mentor and Mentee to raise questions, explore options, and determine if a mutually beneficial partnership can be achieved.

• Points to consider in determining whether a partnership is suitable:
  - Conflict of interest
  - Mentee availability
  - Language barriers
  - Time zone compatibility
  - Communication style and preferences
  - Level of Mentor expertise in relation to Mentee’s needs
  - Frequency and duration of communication
  - Employer support and personal time commitment
  - Extent of challenge desired by Mentor

• In collaboration with Mentee, prepare the mentoring Partnership Plan Form (available on the SQA Mentoring Program Committee web page and on the Mentoring Program Group Page on the SQA website [instructions for access to the Group Page are below in the Resources section]). Once final, submit a copy to the Mentoring Program Committee (mentor@sqa.org) and to the Mentee. This information will be held strictly confidential by the Committee and will not even be reviewed by the Committee unless an issue arises in your partnership requiring a review of the Partnership Plan.

• If you and the Mentee decide not to establish a partnership, notify the Mentoring Program Committee (mentor@sqa.org) and, if possible, share the reason for discontinuing the partnership.

• The Mentor and Mentee are encouraged to create and maintain their own Mentoring Partnership files to aid in discussions of partnership activities.

• Use of a Contact Log is recommended by the Mentoring Program Committee. A Contact Log template is available on the Mentoring Program Committee web page and on the Mentoring Program Group Page on the SQA website (instructions for access to the Group Page are below in the Resources section). Please feel free to modify this form to meet the needs of your mentoring partnership.

Prior to Next Contact

• The Mentor and Mentee will fulfill required action items identified during the previous contact and create discussion/talking points based on the previous contact.

Next Contact

• Mentor and Mentee will provide an update on the action items from the previous contact.
• Initiate open discussion of Mentor and Mentee’s questions.
• Schedule next contact as appropriate.
• Update contact documentation (Contact Log or other record of contact).

Evaluation of Partnership and Program

• At the end of the partnership, the Mentor and Mentee will complete the appropriate Mentoring Program Evaluation, which will be submitted to the Mentoring Program Committee (forms will be provided by the Committee via e-mail at the appropriate time).

Changes to the Mentoring Relationship

• If the Mentor and Mentee determine at any point during the six-month partnership to change the parameters of the partnership significantly such that the Committee should be made aware of the change (e.g., changing the partnership type from a Mentor-Mentee relationship to a Peer Partner relationship), one partner should notify the Committee by contacting mentor@sqa.org.

Discontinuation of the Mentoring Relationship

• If the Mentor or Mentee is not satisfied with the mentoring partnership, the partnership may be ended prior to the end of the scheduled six months by notifying the Mentoring Program Committee (mentor@sqa.org).

Resources for Mentoring:

• The Mentoring Program Committee encourages the Mentor to utilize the reference materials available through the SQA website (such as the Regulatory Q&A database, Links section, publications, etc.) in order to familiarize Mentees who are new to the field and/or are new to SQA with the reference documents that are available through the Society.

• The Committee especially encourages you to review the Mentee Guidance Document in order to be aware of the commitment that SQA is asking of your Mentee.

• SQA has made a Mentoring Program Group Page available for all participants in the Mentoring Program. The Group Page features information about an all-Mentoring-Program-participants listserv where participants can ask one another questions and share resources and experiences as well as documents that may be helpful to participants during their mentoring experience. To access the Mentoring Program Group Page, follow these directions:
  o Login to the SQA website at www.sqa.org.
  o Use the main menu to visit Education & Career > Mentoring Program.
  o Click the button on the right side for Mentoring Program Resources.
  o There you’ll find links to documents, a listserv email address, and the listserv archive for your use.
General Considerations

- Be sensitive to employer confidentiality issues when sharing information.
- It should be understood that a mentoring partnership is NOT a substitute for work-related consultancy—it is a targeted, time-bound learning opportunity with defined goals and expected outcomes. As a Mentor, we encourage you to assist your Mentee in finding appropriate resources and education and to provide guidance and advice as needed. It is up to the Mentee to explore his/her professional needs and goals.
- Remember that the statements made by both Mentors and Mentees are their own opinions and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the organization the mentor/mentee represents, the Society of Quality Assurance or any government or other agency or agency requirements.