

Professional Mentoring Scheme





Many employers are keen to assist their staff to become Chartered or Technician Members of a recognised Professional Institution, but either lack the detailed knowledge base to do so, or find it difficult to commit staff to maintain the required level of support over an extended period. To assist these employers, Symmons Madge Associates (SMA) can provide both the expertise of a knowledgeable Mentor and the ability to provide high quality personal development for each aspiring Chartered, IEng or Technician Member – based on our experience gained in administering, organising and delivering the initiative to employers who have graduates seeking Membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers; we have successfully been offering this service to the ICE for many years.

Over the last few years, we have broadened this area of our work and now, in addition to the ICE, support candidates from a variety of engineering backgrounds to achieve Professional recognition from a wide range of Engineering Institutions. These include the CIHT, IMechE, CIWEM, CIOB, ICES, RICS and IStructE as well as more recently, The Institute of Highway Engineers (IHE), Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) and the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)

No matter which Institution is involved, we have found that staff, who receive ongoing strong professional mentoring and support, progress towards the achievement of the Institution's competencies and requirements, quickly and efficiently. The result is a cost-effective process culminating in the necessary knowledge, skills and experience.

Why should we invest in professionally qualified staff?

For organisations, a professionally qualified person is a valued asset. When a company employs a member of staff that achieves additional professional competency it is investing in someone who will:

- Work to a rigorous code of conduct and therefore can be relied on to perform to a high standard and transfer this high standard of service to clients
- Have the requisite skills, knowledge and competencies to become a valued member of staff
- Offer the potential to lead teams and become a member of management
- Have access, through the appropriate professional Institution, to the latest information on issues such as sustainability, health, safety and welfare and innovation, with an increasing understanding of commercial, legal and contract issues
- Be committed to their own continual professional development (CPD) and therefore stay abreast of key skills and issues and have access to the Institution's products, services and knowledge networks.

How does the Symmons Madge Mentoring Scheme work?

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and the Chartered Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors (CICES) have both approved Symmons Madge Associates' (SMA) "over arching" Training Scheme. Each time we work with a new client we modify that scheme to reflect the particular set-up, type of activities and additional requirements of the organisation we will be working with. After acceptance by the new organisation, we submit the scheme to the Institution for approval and registration. That registration stays in place as long as we are retained by that client. Once the "administration" is complete, we appoint a SMA Supervising Civil Engineer or Delegated Engineer (SCE/DE) to work with the specified candidates.

We offer:

- Individual guidance and support by an experienced Mentor who will be familiar with the requirements of becoming Chartered, IEng or a Technician Member.
- Provision of bespoke training to meet individual employee's needs – in the context of both General and Specific Competencies.

Options

Whilst we are able to provide the full "Training Agreement" service, we are happy to work in any capacity with clients to enhance the development of their staff.

Some of the options are outlined below:

- Take on the complete role of SCE/DE for the organisation. The list of activities we undertake is set out in Appendix No 1 and the scheduling of visits indicated in Appendix No.2 along with the fee / investment structure.
- Act as "mentors" to the candidates under the guidance of the client's existing SCE and Training Agreement. In this case the range of tasks and frequency of visits would be agreed with the organisation's SCE.

However, we can adapt and mould our scheme to your own specific requirements and would be glad to discuss the options and formulate the way forward, tailored to the individual needs of your company.

Benefits

Some of the benefits resulting from our bespoke role include:

- Substantial savings on your training expenditure. For smaller companies, the potential costs of developing and running such a scheme could be prohibitively expensive, as well as time consuming. Companies can use our service to free the time of senior engineers/managers to concentrate on their fee earning and management roles
- Structured and efficient completion of relevant Institution's development objectives – ensuring you see more rapid returns on your investment
- Demystification for you and your staff of what can often seem a confusing, daunting and regimented system
- More effective matching of the individual's strengths with the requirements of the competencies
- The staff feeling more valued, raising their motivation and commitment levels and enhancing your staff retention levels with the attendant savings
- Eliminating feelings of isolation and lack of direction for the candidate via regular meetings, e-mails and telephone conversations
- Continual updating of any new Institution requirements
- A well-thought-out development programme which should be cost effective, relevant and minimise abortive or non-productive management and staff time
- The co-ordination of the formal training into the overall development programme of staff can be organised more effectively
- Giving a clear signal to the staff that the employer is committed to their continuing development within the organisation.
- Regular reports, every two months, on the progress of each individual on the scheme.

What would it entail?

Obviously this will differ according to your own needs and requirements but irrespective of the specific Professional body's requirement, the basic framework remains the same.

We would:

Arrange an initial visit and speak to all interested parties. Prior to this visit we would send you our initial assessment forms for completion and return by each candidate complete with CV in order to ascertain their current position and identify the best way forward for each candidate. At the subsequent meeting, the mentor will meet with each individual separately for discussion (see Appendix for more details)

At the regular two monthly meetings the mentor would:

- Act as “mentor/source of intelligence” to the Senior Manager/SCE
- Give specific, individual and continuing guidance to candidates
- As a result of the discussions with the candidates – give feed-back and suggestions to the Senior Manager/SCE as appropriate

Programme Details:

Mentoring meetings, typically every two months, (with e-mail and telephone / VOIP contact in the intermediate months) accompanied by suggestion / proposals for attendance at relevant courses (or via other means), to meet the specific Competency requirements of each staff member.

Approaching the review time, staff will receive specific guidance on how to conduct themselves at the reviews (including a mock review and subsequent feedback)

Each member of staff, with support from the mentor, will develop an annual DAP (Development Action Plan) and, with the aid of advice from the Mentor, they will be able to identify and record relevant IPD / CPD (Continuing Professional Development) and will be encouraged to keep these records up to date. After each visit, a meeting report/progress update will be sent to the employer detailing the progress achieved by each employee on the programme.

At appropriate intervals, the candidate and the employer will be asked to assess and evaluate the one to one sessions.

As indicated above, access to the mentor between meetings is encouraged and probably essential. It is to be emphasised that there should always be help or guidance at the end of a telephone or email and on-line.





Why Choose Symmons Madge Associates?

Symmons Madge Associates have been helping companies such as yours since 2008 when we became the only external training provider to have a Company Approved Training Scheme (CATS) recognised by the ICE. The scheme compiles with the requirements of the Engineering Council and is recognised by other Institutions as the basis of their professional training.

Over the years we have grown and increased the range of professional bodies that we can support and have already helped over 115 candidates gain Professional Qualifications. We currently Mentor over 230 individuals from a broad range of companies and local authorities throughout the UK.

We have a growing pool of experienced and suitably qualified mentors spread throughout the country, all of whom are current or past examiners for the ICE and other Institutions. They are trained to conduct development reviews, promote motivation and give well informed and constructive guidance.

With the combination of a well-structured and tried and tested training scheme, combined with the knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm of our expert team of Mentors, Symmons Madge Associates can offer you a cost effective and efficient way to maximise the professional potential of your staff. This in turn can enhance the reputation, professionalism and productivity of your organisation, providing a firm foundation for future commercial growth and commercial success.

If you should have any questions or wish to discuss this proposal further, please do not hesitate to contact us on **01446 775959**.

Appendix

The Mentor will treat the task as a Project and use good project management techniques to ensure effective delivery of a successful outcome. The components of this role are set out below – not necessarily in priority or chronological order. It is important to appreciate that each Candidate/ Mentor relationship will generate variations and be unique.

Please note : Whilst the activities identified below are based on the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) model they can be modified to cover any other Professional body's requirements.

- Discuss with the candidate the philosophy behind Initial Professional Development to ensure acceptance.
- Examine in detail the Specification of a Chartered / Incorporated / Associate / Technician / Member as appropriate.
- Examine the Professional Objectives / Mandatory Core Competencies or Attributes
- Undertake where appropriate, a detailed assessment of the previous education, training and experience of the candidate .
- Identify the candidate's progress in relation to any prescribed minimum training days – paying particular attention to health, safety & welfare (H, S & W) issues.
- If a deficiency in the H, S & W training is identified – recommend that this be addressed as a matter of urgency.
- For those not under agreement – discuss with all the interested parties the benefits of being under agreement - if still suitable.
- Produce a development programme for each candidate, taking into account the various assessments carried out.
- Work with the candidate to produce a work breakdown structure (WBS) for the project.
- Agree a programme and timetable with the candidate and line manager.
- Meet each candidate every two months, or at agreed intervals and provide a short written progress report.
- Provide appropriate ongoing telephone, e-mail and/or VOIP contact with candidate.
- Undertake an Annual Review and report results as appropriate.
- Modify the previously agreed Programme, in line with review outcomes.
- Closely liaise with the candidate's line manager, training manager, Institution Membership Development Officer (MDO) and other interested parties, as appropriate.
- Prepare candidate for Initial Training Review or Appraisal.
- Give guidance on writing the reports, as appropriate. As candidates approach the Review, work closely to ensure the submission is of high quality and undertake a mock review.
- Prepare each candidate as the Review day approaches.
- Assess the result of Review and where necessary, identify appropriate action.

The nature of this particular Training Scheme makes the following elements essential:

The initial meeting between the SMA Mentor and the candidate will set the scene for the rest of the time the two work together. Each Mentor will call on their experience to make this initial meeting relaxed and informative so as to gain the co-operation of all interested parties.

The integration of SMA's Mentor into the employer's system is critical and direct contact with an appropriate senior member of the employer's staff is essential.



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