Chapter 12. Mentoring

12.1 Introduction
This Chapter prescribes the ATDP policy on the prerequisites, training and accreditation of Mentors.

12.2 Background
On ATDP’s inception in FY2017-18, TIP-trained Compensation and Welfare Officers and Advocates attended a non-accredited short mentoring program in conjunction with RPL/RCC. From May 2021 the accredited course Mentoring in the ATDP Course TAEDEL404 (Contextualized) was introduced.

12.3 Rationale
The critical importance of skills development mandated development of an accredited mentoring course. The evidence gained from candidates’ attendance of Consolidation and Assessment reinforced this need.

12.4 Training Details
ATDP delivers the TAEDEL404 (Contextualised) accredited unit of competency by:

- two-day, attendance mode; or
- distance learning mode.

ATDP will continue to offer the non-accredited mentoring module in conjunction with other ATDP programs.

12.5 Scope of Policy
This policy applies to the following three levels of ATDP mentoring:

1. Workplace Mentor
2. Senior Workplace Mentor
3. Regional Mentor

12.6 Requirements
To be an approved ATDP Mentor, an Advocate must satisfy the following requirements.

12.6.1 Workplace Mentor
A volunteer Advocate will have:

- at least 1 year of practical experience after gaining a Level 2 qualification via the learning pathway; or
- gained a Level 2 qualification in either the RPL or training pathway and be able to produce additional evidence to that required by the Unit of Competency which is no older than one year.
A remunerated Advocate will have:

- completed at least 16 primary claims with at least 3 claims under each Act in the case of a Compensation Advocate or 16 client cases for a Wellbeing Advocate; and
- as a minimum, undertaken the ATDP non-accredited unit in Mentoring in the ATDP; or
- on a case-by-case basis and where supported by appropriate need and evidence, an ESO/VSC establishes the need for special consideration.

12.6.2  **Senior Workplace Mentor**

The advocate must have:

- mentored a candidate through at least one Unit of Competency in the training pathway; and
- successfully completed the TAEDEL404 accredited unit of competency,
  1. delivered by ATDP in either an attendance or distance mode; or
  2. delivered by an RTO and undertaken the ATDP distance training bridging module; and
  3. have the endorsement of their sponsoring ESO and evidence of need.

12.6.3  **ATDP Regional Mentor**

The advocate must have:

- been appointed by a Regional Manager to undertake the role; and
- demonstrated a sound knowledge of the:
  1. ATDP training and assessment paradigm: and
  2. content of all relevant ATDP formal learning units: and
- successfully completed the TAEDEL404 (Contextualised) accredited Unit of Competency:
  1. delivered by ATDP
  2. in the attendance mode

12.7  **Number of Active Mentees**

To ensure high quality mentoring, as a general rule, a Mentor should not be supporting more than the following number of Mentees at one time:

1. **Workplace Mentors:**
   - 5 active mentees in the training pathway.

2. **Senior Workplace Mentors:**
   - 3 active mentees of their own,
   - plus oversight of an additional 3 workplace mentees.
3. Regional Mentors:
   • 3 active mentees,
   • plus oversight of other workplace mentors in their region.

12.8 Implementation Priorities
Implementation priorities follow:

1. Regional Mentors and all Trainer-Assessors are to undertake the two-day attendance mode as soon as practicable.

2. ESOs and VSCs will be invited to submit an expression of interest for Senior Workplace Mentors to undertake a two-day attendance mode.

3. Existing Workplace Mentors are to complete the 5 CPD modules no later than 30th June 2022 to ensure retention of their mentor status.

4. Advocates that have accredited in TAEDEL404 through an external RTO are to complete the contextualisation bridging-modules before mentoring ATDP mentees.

12.9 Cost
ATDP delivers its training at no cost. ESO/VSCs will be responsible for the Advocate’s travel and accommodation costs.

The ESO/VSC is responsible for all costs incurred where their Workplace Mentors or Senior Workplace Mentors undertake the accredited unit through an external RTO.

12.10 Currency Requirement
ATDP reserves the right to reduce or cancel the Mentor status of any Advocate found to have failed to maintain their CPD status ‘CURRENT’ or to have wilfully breached ATDP protocols.
Responsibilities of Regional, Senior and Workplace Mentors

Don’t tell me what to do. You’ll only get my back up. Just help me understand why and how I might learn to do it.
Anon.

1 Introduction
These procedures build on the Mentor Guidelines posted in Library No 1, Part A, Vol 4 and the roles of Mentors at Library 3, Chapter 3, Annex A.

2 Your Task
Your mentoring task is to facilitate your mentees’ continual learning and development. You will guide them through a continuous cycle of formal, informal, experiential, analytical and reflective learning experiences.

3 Specific Areas of Learning
Mentors’ experience and evidence from candidates at Consolidation and Assessment has shown that the following areas of learning need specific attention:

a. Mentors’ misunderstanding of the commitment mentoring requires – noting that ASQA requires candidates to spend 60 hours of training and skills development at MILADC/W 001 and 002 (noting, as specified in the WEL, the three activities are spread across the training period) the division of time for each follows:
   i. On-Line Learning: 10% = 6 hours over the training period
   ii. Mentoring: 20% = 12 hours over the training period
   iii. On-the-Job Learning: 70% = 42 hours over the training period
b. Mentors’ understanding of the different roles of mentor, tutor, coach and supervisor that may be engaged by an ATDP Mentor.
c. Candidate and Mentor’s understanding of the essential details to be completed in the Workplace Experience Logs (WEL).
The TAEDEL404 modules specifically address these weaknesses.

4 Responsibility to Mentee, ATDP and Yourself
You should regularly re-read s2.5 of the Mentor Guidelines to refresh your memory of your responsibilities to your mentee, ATDP and yourself.

5 Caution
Remember:
   a. You are not an examiner.
   b. You are not administering tests.
c. Your role is to facilitate mentees’ learning and development at their aspired or accredited level of competency.

d. You are not trying to convey everything you know, just the essentials relevant to the mentees’ level of competency (the rest comes through their reflection on their experience).

e. Your success is marked by their complete and quick attainment of competency.

f. As no one mentor has all knowledge and skill, a team approach to mentoring will be far more effective – especially for younger veterans.

6 Mentee Support
To ensure coherent mentoring, the team will agree who will coordinate mentoring (Lead Mentor). This will involve developing a mentoring programme for the mentee so that the right knowledge, expertise and interpersonal considerations are brought to bear.

You will mentor in all three phases of advocacy training and development:

   a. Pre-nomination experience and suitability
   b. Learning pathway leading to competency assessment
   c. CPD support of practicing advocates

7 Mentor Agreement
As a guide, you as Lead Mentor, your mentoring team and the mentee will need to reach mutual agreement on at least the following:

   a. Mentors and mentee’s expectations, limitations on commitments, and goals.
   b. Preferred mentoring methods.
   c. Planned schedule of meetings.
   d. Standard agenda items.
   e. Mode(s) of communication, contact details and ‘quarantined’ time periods.
   f. Location(s) of face-to-face sessions.
   g. Communication between sessions.
   h. Costs.
   i. Feedback objectives and mechanisms.
   j. Key success measures.
   k. Dissolution trigger(s).

8 Suitability Phase Mentoring
NAT stipulates that a candidate must demonstrate the following before you can recommend that they are a suitable candidate for advocacy training:
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a. desire to provide advocacy service to any member of the serving/ex-serving community
b. commitment to continuous improvement in skills and knowledge as long as they practice as an advocate
c. prepared to work in accordance with their VC/ESO’s requirements including confidentiality and privacy
d. prepared to be mentored and (once accredited and trained) to mentor others
e. appropriate computer skills
f. excellent inter-personal skills
g. high-level oral and written communication skills

8.1 Suitability Report Your Suitability Report will:

a. identify the advocacy stream the candidate experienced
b. list separately the activities they observed and participated in
c. summarise your observations about their performance
d. make a recommendation about their suitability for training

9 Learning Pathway Phase Mentoring
As members of a team, you will mentor in three stages along the mentee’s learning pathway.

9.1 Orientation
You will focus on two areas during this stage:

a. Organisation. You will work with senior advocates in the candidate’s VC/ESO and UoC to ensure the candidate:
   i. is inducted into the workplace (introduced to key personnel and the organisation’s physical and virtual workplace),
   ii. complies with workplace health and safety practices, and
   iii. applies the organisation’s client-record-keeping system;

b. Role familiarisation. You will do the following:
   i. ascertain by discussion the candidate’s level of familiarity with their intended role
   ii. identify where further familiarisation is needed
   iii. design and enter into the candidate’s WEL a program of activities to fill any gaps
   iv. working with the organisation’s senior advocates, ensure that the candidate gains the required gap familiarisation
9.2 On-the-job learning
You will maximise the learning value of the mentee’s on-the-job experience by:

a. identifying whether the VC/ESO is able to provide the necessary on-the-job experiences.
b. if some job experience is not possible at the home ESO/VC, identifying another that is prepared to provide gap-filling on-the-job experience.
c. planning and entering into the mentee’s WEL a schedule of on-the-job activities that provides the necessary experiences.
d. working with the organisation’s senior advocates, ensure that the Mentee gains the required experiences.
e. at regular points during the on-the-job program, meeting your mentee and encouraging them to:
   i. revise and reinforce their formal learning,
   ii. prepare and implement post-interview action plans,
   iii. review the outcomes of activity plans,
   iv. research issues they are uncertain about,
   v. reflect on the sum of their on-the-job experiences,
      (a) integrate their experiences and their formal learning, and
      (b) (in preparation for CPD) enter their reflections in a journal.
   f. where you identify weaknesses in their integration of knowledge and practice, amending the content or sequence of their structured learning plan to remediate the gap, and amend their WEL.
      i. confirming that your mentee has entered in their WEL successful completion of workplace experience for each item.
      ii. checking that the relevant formal learning has also been completed (where appropriate), and:
          (a) signing off the mentee’s entries in their WEL, and
          (b) entering your sign-off in your on-line WEL for the mentee.

9.3 On-line learning
When your mentee is ready for enrolment in an e-Learning Unit and you have signed off their WEL, you will:

a. advise your Regional Mentor and facilitate your mentee’s registration on DVATrain
b. monitor your mentee’s progress throughout the Unit of e-Learning

c. progressively facilitate your mentee’s identification and understanding of resources relevant to their level of training

d. help your mentee integrate new knowledge with their on-the-job training and skills development

e. as your mentee completes each item of formal learning ensure they enters completion in their WEL

f. confirm the validity of each entry and, if the relevant workplace experience has also been completed:
   i. sign off the item in the mentee’s WEL
   ii. enter your sign-off in your on-line WEL for the Mentee

g. lodge reports on your mentee’s progress on the OMS

h. formally report your mentee’s progress to your Regional Mentor

i. regularly discuss your mentee’s challenges and progress with your Regional Mentor

9.4 WEL Completion

You and your mentee are jointly responsible for completing the WEL. You will:

a. supervise your mentee in undertaking and recording formal learning and workplace experience requirements for assessment purposes

b. ensure your mentee enters their activities and experiences in their WEL

c. add your feedback about the activity and initial the WEL to verify the entry

d. confirm that your mentee has completed all stages of the training, and record progress on the OMS

e. report your mentee’s readiness to attend a Consolidation Unit when they has completed all required e-Learning and workplace experience.

A guide to completion of the WEL is at Annex A.

9.5 Reflective Journaling

A guide to reflective journaling is at Library 3, Chapter 13.

10 CPD Support

Example of the support you will provide in the third phase of advocacy support include:

a. facilitating the creation and effective operation of CoP;

b. encouraging advocates’ self-directed learning and development;

c. helping practising advocates:
   i. design a structured program of CPD,
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ii. research a difficult case,

iii. connect with another advocate who has encountered a similar case,

iv. locate an SME;

d. ensuring practising advocates engage in a program of readings from the RMA, VRB, AAT and relevant FCA websites;

e. organising and conducting professional development activities, including:
   i. reflective journaling (Annex A to this Chapter) 'show and tells',
   ii. information sessions by SME,
   iii. seminars and workshops,
   iv. case study analyses;

f. encouraging practising advocates to:
   i. participate actively in nation-wide professional networks (see 2.4.6),
   ii. research professional articles and post on the OMS,
   iii. post their reflective journal on the OMS as a 'lessons-learned' resource;

g. monitoring the practice and professional ethos of your CoP/ESO/VC’s advocates, initiating remedial activities where:
   i. service delivery shortfalls are widespread, or
   ii. unprofessional attitudes are endemic;

h. reporting intractable problems areas to your Regional Mentor/Manager; and

i. researching and entering authoritative qualitative data into the QA system.

11 Change of Lead Mentor

From time-to-time, a change of lead mentor may become necessary. Given the critical importance of coherent mentoring in a candidate’s pathway to competency and an accredited advocate’s continuing professional development, a change of lead mentor requires careful consideration and attention to detail. The transfer should be no less thoroughly considered than was the original

Regional Mentors, ASOs and ESOs should collaboratively ensure the following steps are followed:

a. Confirm the appropriateness of the new lead mentors knowledge, skill, interpersonal qualities and ability to coordinate the mentoring team.

b. Verify that the incoming mentor understands and accepts the role.

c. Link the new mentor to the UoC.

d. Record in the ‘Notes’ section of the UoC the change of mentor and the date on which it occurred.

Should this procedure be found inadequate a formal audit trail may be developed.
12 Summary
To summarise, the following discussion expresses well the Mentor’s foundation skill – as well as the ethos of professionalism (Chapter 4 of this Library):

“What is the opposite of talking?

“Actually, it’s waiting... Waiting for your turn to talk,” replied [the Lead Mentor].

“For many of us, our propensity to talk, to convince others of the plausibility of our thoughts, the merit of our lives and experiences, or that what’s important to us must be important to them to, could be holding us back from genuine listening.

“Loy says we need to get past that, and not impose ourselves on others during a conversation. We need to be present, to be receptive to the person, not just to what they say on the surface.

“The opposite of listening is indifference and a painful lack of interest. It’s worse than anger. It’s a lack of regard for human beings. There’s real power in being listened to.

“Listening is as much about motivation, disposition, place and time as it is about skills.”

13 Additional Materials
ATDP provides five CPD modules on Mentoring in ATDP.

14 Quality Assurance
Please refer to Chapter 15 in this Library.

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1 Michelle Gierck, ‘Take your time to really hear others’, The Age, Saturday, January 6, 2018, Insight, p30.