OSAC 2021-N-0039 Standard for a Mentorship Program in Bloodstain Pattern Analysis

Bloodstain Pattern Analysis
Physics/Pattern Interpretation Scientific Area Committee (SAC)
Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science

Draft OSAC Proposed Standard

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Standard for a Mentorship Program in Bloodstain Pattern Analysis

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Standard for a Mentorship Program in Bloodstain Pattern Analysis

Foreword

A bloodstain pattern analyst training program is necessary to ensure the competency and quality of the work product. Mentorship is an essential element of a bloodstain pattern analyst training program. This standard was drafted to provide guidance to forensic science service providers for the establishment and maintenance of a bloodstain pattern analysis (BPA) mentorship program.

The draft of this standard was developed by the Bloodstain Pattern Analysis Subcommittee of the Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) for Forensic Science.

Keywords: *Bloodstain pattern analysis, mentorship*

1 Scope

This document outlines the components of a mentorship program. Mentorship is an integral component of a bloodstain pattern analyst training program. The mentorship program seeks to ensure the competency of the analyst and evaluate the analyst's ability to produce a quality work product.

2 Normative References

Standard for a Bloodstain Pattern Analyst's Training Program, ANSI/ASB Standard 032, 1st Ed. 2020

Standard for Report Writing in Bloodstain Pattern Analysis, ANSI/ASB Standard 031, 1st Ed. 2020

3 Terms and Definitions

3.1 **Terms**

The following terms are meant to convey the meanings specified.

3.1.1

Shall - Used to indicate that a provision is mandatory (unless otherwise documented for non-compliance).

29 3.1.2

30 **Should -** Used to indicate that a provision is not mandatory, but recommended as good practice.

31 3.2 **Definitions**

32 For purposes of this document, the following definitions apply.

33 **3.2.1**

34 **active practitioner** - An analyst actively involved in providing bloodstain pattern training and/or
35 BPA casework and/or performing technical reviews of BPA casework.

36 **3.2.2**

37 **bloodstain pattern analysis trainee** - an individual who is actively working toward meeting the
38 requirements as described in this document

39 **3.2.3**

40 **competency** – the demonstration of technical skills and knowledge necessary to preform forensic
41 analysis successfully.

42 **3.2.4**

43 **mentor** - an analyst active in the field of BPA (as indicated through ongoing training, casework,
44 and/or technical reviews) and who has a minimum of three years of casework experience as a
45 bloodstain pattern analyst.

46 **4 Mentorship Components**

47 The forensic science service provider shall identify and assign an individual to serve as a mentor.
48 This assignment may occur at any time during the training program. The length of the
49 mentorship program may vary based upon the skills and abilities of the bloodstain pattern
50 analysis trainee.

51 4.1 A forensic science service provider shall establish a documented mentorship program that
52 includes:

53   A. Evaluation with respect to required objectives
54   B. Study and evaluation of completed casework
55   C. Mock casework
56   D. Mentored BPA casework
57   E. Courtroom practices
58   F. Criteria for acceptable performance

59 **5 Evaluation with Respect to Required Objectives**

60 5.1 Prior to the trainee entering into a specific portion of the mentorship program, the mentor
61 shall evaluate relevant training records to ensure the successful completion of the applicable
62 minimum training requirements as outlined in section 4.2 of the *Standards for a Bloodstain*
63 *Pattern Analyst's Training Program.*

64 5.2 If deficiencies are identified, the mentor shall document and communicate a recommended
65 remediation plan to the forensic science service provider.

66 **6 Review and Examination of Completed Casework**

67 6.1 The mentor shall identify completed cases for the trainee to <u>review</u> and <u>examine.</u>

68 6.1.1 The cases should include a representative sampling of typical BPA casework (e.g.,
69 homicide, suicide, blunt force trauma, etc.) the trainee is likely to encounter.

70 6.1.2 In aggregate, the case files to be reviewed should include the following components:

71   A. Photographs
72   B. Notes, sketches, diagrams etc.
73   C. Pattern characteristics and classification
74   D. Supporting reports (e.g., autopsy, DNA)
75   E. Additional documentation (e.g., interviews, 911 call, etc.)
76   F. Opinions/interpretations

77 6.2 The trainee shall <u>review</u> the completed cases with their mentor or active practitioner in order
78 to gain an understanding of the methodology and workflow process of a BPA investigation.

79 6.3 The <u>examination</u> of completed cases shall involve the trainee independently examining and
80 documenting part or all of a completed case, and preparing a written report of observations and
81 case conclusions.

82 6.3.1 The mentor shall evaluate and compare the trainee's work product to the previously
83 completed cases.

84 **7 Mock Casework**

85 Mock casework assesses the trainee's ability to appropriately document and classify the patterns
86 within a mock case, which was prepared using known mechanisms. Mock casework can be done
87 in-person or through remote means.

88 7.1 The trainee shall document, classify, and provide a written report of the reconstructed events
89 using BPA

90 7.2 The mentor shall evaluate and compare the trainee's work product to the known mechanisms
91 used in the creation of the mock case for appropriate documentation and rendering of case
92 conclusions.

8 Mentored Casework

94 Mentored casework assesses the trainee's ability to evaluate cases that have not been previously
95 analyzed. Mentored casework can be done in person or through remote means. This is a critical
96 component of the mentorship and the main factor in determining the length of the program.

97 8.1 In this component, the mentor shall conduct the analysis while the trainee observes the case
98 approach and evaluation. The trainee may take on defined responsibilities (e.g., documenting
99 specific pattern types, articulating certain tasks to be performed).

100 8.2 In subsequent cases, the trainee may conduct the analysis with supervised assistance from the
101 mentor. The trainee shall not be the author of the report.

9 Courtroom Practices

103 9.1 The trainee shall review BPA expert witness courtroom practices (e.g. the review of BPA
104 expert testimony transcripts, direct observation of BPA expert testimony).

105 9.2 The mentor or an active practitioner shall create a mock courtroom scenario where the trainee
106 demonstrates the ability to appropriately communicate their observations and case conclusions,
107 while testifying competently in a mock court setting.

10 Criteria for Acceptable Performance

109 10.1 Criteria for successful completion of each component of the mentorship shall be established
110 by the mentor and forensic science service provider.

111 10.1.1 The criteria shall be documented and cover the spectrum of anticipated tasks related to
112 BPA analysis.

113 10.2 A trainee shall be evaluated on all components of BPA methodology, report writing and
114 courtroom testimony.