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

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



OSAC Proposed Standard

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

Prepared by
Bloodstain Pattern Analysis Subcommittee
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2.0	April 5, 2022	--	Added to the OSAC Registry and publicly announced.
2.1	December 28, 2023	All	Format and font updates only. No content changes made.

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*

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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

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

3 Terms and Definitions

3.1 Terms

3.1.1
shall
Used to indicate that a provision is mandatory (unless otherwise documented for non-compliance).

3.1.2
should
Used to indicate that a provision is not mandatory but recommended as good practice.

3.2 Definitions

For purposes of this document, the following definitions apply.

3.2.1
active practitioner
An analyst actively involved in providing bloodstain pattern training and/or BPA casework and/or performing technical reviews of BPA casework.

3.2.2
bloodstain pattern analysis trainee
An individual who is actively working toward meeting the requirements as described in ANSI/ASB Standard 032, *Standards for a Bloodstain Pattern Analyst's Training Program*. 2020. 1st. Ed.

3.2.3
competency

The demonstration of technical skills and knowledge necessary to perform forensic analysis successfully.

3.2.4
mentee
A bloodstain pattern analysis trainee participating in a mentorship program.

3.2.5
mentor
An active practitioner who has a minimum of three years of casework experience as a bloodstain pattern analyst.

4 Mentorship Components

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

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

a) Evaluation with respect to required objectives

b) Study and evaluation of completed casework

c) Mock casework

d) Mentored BPA casework

e) Courtroom practices

f) Criteria for acceptable performance

5 Evaluation with Respect to Required Objectives

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

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

5.3 The mentor may designate an active practitioner who meets the standards prescribed in ANSI/ASB Standard 032, *Standards for a Bloodstain Pattern Analyst's Training Program*. 2020. 1st. Ed., to assist with the mentorship program. Active practitioners may complete tasks such as observing, documenting performance and providing guidance to the mentee.

6 Review and Examination of Completed Casework

6.1 The mentor shall identify completed cases for the mentee to review and examine.

6.1.1 The cases should include a varied sampling representative of the range of difficulty of BPA casework the mentee is likely to encounter and exposes the mentee to the limitations of bloodstain pattern analysis.

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

a) Photographs

b) Notes, sketches, diagrams, etc.

c) Pattern characteristics and classification

d) Supporting reports (e.g., autopsy, DNA)

e) Additional documentation (e.g. interviews, 911 call, etc.)

f) Opinions/interpretations

6.2 The mentee shall review the completed cases with their mentor or active practitioner in order to gain an understanding of the methodology and workflow process of a BPA investigation.

6.3 The examination of completed cases shall involve the mentee independently examining and documenting part or all of a completed case, and preparing a written report of observations and case conclusions.

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

7 Mock Casework

Mock casework assesses the mentee's ability to appropriately document and classify the patterns within a mock case, which was prepared using known mechanisms. Mock casework should be representative of the range of BPA patterns the mentee is likely to encounter. Mock casework can be done in-person or through remote means.

7.1 The mentee shall document, classify, and provide a written report of the reconstructed events using BPA.

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

8 Mentored Casework

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

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

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

8.3 Mentored cases should reflect the range of BPA casework the mentee is likely to encounter.

9 Courtroom Practices

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

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

10 Criteria for Acceptable Performance

10.1 The mentor and forensic service provider shall establish standard criteria for the successful completion of each component of the mentorship program. The forensic service provider should establish procedures to address mentee errors and/or deficiencies.

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

10.1.2 The criteria should include the establishment of the length of the program based in part on the number and range of cases/samples the mentee is likely to encounter.

10.1.3 A mentee shall be evaluated on all components of BPA methodology, report writing and courtroom testimony.