

AUKSPT Developmental Membership Criteria

1. Background

Some discussion took place at the 2009 AGM re the future recruiting and development opportunities for the Association and its viability, should the source of regular recruits from the UKSPT Ltd. no longer be available.

Since the foundation of the AUKSPT in spring of 2005, 'full' membership of the Association has been effectively 'automatic' following successful completion of the UKSPT Ltd course, completion of application form, signing of Code of Ethics and payment of relevant fee(s). The only checks carried out normally relate to checking existing individual websites for accuracy and professionalism. As it stands there are no 'quality checks' or any requirement for further assessment for any member. Development, if sought, is normally sourced through application to another toastmasters 'organisation'. Some members have joined or are in process of joining other organisations to improve development and business opportunities (in particular the NAT), where these opportunities are not formally available within the AUKSPT. At least two founding members of the AUKSPT have joined other associations then resigned from the AUKSPT.

The Executive Committee (31 Mar 09) agreed::

- 1) Not to consider applications for membership of the AUKSPT from anyone who has not graduated from the UKSPT Ltd course, however this to remain under constant review.
- 2) Performance & Quality reviews to be reconsidered if / once Associate Membership process is accepted and successfully implemented.
- 3) Country membership to be reviewed when circumstance arises.
- 4) Membership Process – requested a further discussion paper to consider options.

A meeting was held on 3rd Dec 09 of the Working party – Peter Thompson and Glenn Mayes. Extensive discussions were held including full consideration of consultation feedback from members. The consensus was as follows:

- 1) **Terminology.** There is some confusion over the term of 'mentor' or 'coach' and the actual roles and how this over-lapped into 'assessors' role. This was an emotive issue in some quarters. The following explanation of terms may be useful as a guide.

Mentoring: Off – line support and encouragement for people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be. (Parsloe 1999)

Coaching: A process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be successful a Coach requires a knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which coaching takes place' (Parsloe 1999)

Shadowing: The process of accompanying and observing someone at work in order to train or obtain insight.

'Mentoring' tends to be a longer term commitment; 'coaching' generally short term, 'shadowing' can of course be effectively a one off event!

- 2) **Need.** Feedback from ‘new’ members (and some more experienced graduates) was that there is a need for support in the short term in making the transition from theory to practical experience. Support should be in relation to developing professional skills rather than in ‘business management and development’.
- 3) **Training:** The quality of initial training via the UKSPT Ltd is **not in doubt** and successful completion of the course remains the fixed criterion for membership of the Association. It was however clear from members’ feedback that additional development opportunities in the field were required in some cases. These development opportunities should lie very firmly within the remit of the Association itself.
- 4) **Qualifications:** There is currently no standard national qualification for toastmasters and consequently there is no relevant toastmasters assessor qualification for the profession. There is no standard protocol laid down by the TGC or any agreed protocol or method of operating laid down by any of the TGC affiliated members. This makes ‘assessment’ difficult, has potential for subjective bias, and raises questions of legal culpability over one toastmaster dictating what is good / bad practice and the implications thereof.
- 5) **Logistics:** It was agreed that the Association with its genuinely national/international jurisdiction, may not be in a position to provide mentors / coaches / assessors for everyone who may request one. Consequently there is no point at this stage of imposing compulsory assessment when the Association would be open to serious criticism when unable to deliver that level of support. We only have currently one ‘volunteer’ outside the Executive Committee. It was agreed that full-time professional toastmasters are unlikely to forgo normal bookings and commitments in favour of acting as an assessor for ‘new’ toastmasters in the field.
- 6) **Managing Expectation:** It was agreed that both the ‘mentor’ and ‘mentee’ needed clear guidelines regarding expectations of the opportunities given, particularly around business confidentiality, code of ethics etc. A simple ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ would be valid. (See Appendix 1).

Decision(s) sought: To discuss and agree the AUKSPT ‘membership’ process.

2. The Way Forward

To Implement a Developmental Membership Scheme

It is proposed that:

- 1) Successful graduates of the UKSPT Ltd are appointed to ‘Associate’ status of the AUKSPT – e.g. ‘Assoc. AUKSPT’ - on initial application. Applicants shall submit photographs (front/back/side) in full toastmaster livery. ‘Associate’ membership certificate shall be issued.
- 2) ‘Associate members’ will continue to wear the UKSPT Ltd collar (white with two red stripes) but with the AUKSPT pendant. They will pay the standard joining and membership fees pro-rata depending on their course date (as now); insurance premium if required, plus the current fee for AUKSPT pendant/jewel..
- 3) Associate members will be encouraged to shadow ‘experienced’ member(s) of the AUKSPT for (one/two/three) events. The ‘mentors’ or ‘coaches’ will be provided, whenever possible, by volunteers from within the AUKSPT. Details will be maintained and provided by the Secretary.
- 4) After a minimum of 12 months practical experience, Associate members may submit a formal application for full membership. The application should include copies of any testimonials, appropriate photographs and any other supporting information, together with the appropriate administration fee (e.g. £25) to cover the issue of a full membership certificate and ‘members’ collar (red with two white stripes). The administration fee for upgrading is separate from the original ‘collaret fee’.

- 5) Candidates for full membership will then complete a two part selection procedure at an appropriate Executive Committee meeting..
 - a) A standard written examination on ‘practical’ (not theoretical) aspects of the toastmastering profession (eg dealing with venues, clients, trouble shooting and related matters based on hands on experience) followed by
 - b) A verbal practical examination and interview in full livery, before a panel of three members consisting of the President (Chair), with Past Presidents or Vice Presidents of the Association as appropriate..

Note: If agreed in principle, the nature of written and oral examinations will be the subject of a further EC working Party and subject to further consultation with members

- 6) Full membership Certificates / ribbons to be formally presented at the EC meeting or the AGM as appropriate.

Benefits: A clear development path for newly trained / qualified toastmasters and support for them in the transition from theory into practice. It is anticipated that the process will encourage the development of a stronger networking approach within the Association. It will encourage new members to take ‘ownership’ of their own development with support of experienced members.

4. Recommendations

- i) The AUKSPT implements a developmental approach to membership with introduction of ‘Associate Membership’ (Assoc.AUKSPT) status.
- ii) We establish a network of ‘volunteer’ mentors /coaches across the country.
- iii) Due to lack of standardised working practices, the lack of nationally agreed standards or qualifications at this time. It is **not** recommended that further work to establish ‘assessor’ / ‘assessment’ criteria and subsequently consider appointing ‘assessors’ for each region of the AUKSPT is considered at this stage. It is recommended that the situation continues to be monitored.
- iv) If implemented, the revised membership criteria should take affect from the **April 2010** course. (**Note: Existing members would retain their full membership as at present**).
- v) The constitution is amended as appropriate to reflect decisions made if approved at the next AGM.

5. Conclusion

It is important that having established the AUKSPT as a creditable organisation and now the largest TGC affiliate, that we continue to lead the way in ‘professionalising’ our proud profession. We need to have the courage to take forward these changes to ensure we maintain the competitive edge, especially in the current economic down turn.

We commend this paper to you.

Glenn Mayes MAUKSPT
Past President – AUKSPT

Peter Thompson MAUKSPT
Executive Committee Member – AUKSPT

APPENDIX I – Memorandum of Understanding



Association of the UK School of Professional Toastmasters

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

Toastmaster Mentor (name if required)

and

Toastmaster Mentee (name if required)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishes a 'voluntary' developmental partnership between the guide or mentor and mentee.

I. MISSION

Together, the Parties enter into this Memorandum of Understanding to mutually promote *experiential personal development opportunities for newly trained toastmasters or toastmasters inexperienced in certain types of functions or events by offering the opportunity to observe toastmasters at work at a variety of functions*. The Assoc. will do everything that it can to facilitate a development system but cannot guarantee national availability.

The parties operating under this MOU agree as follows:

II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. An experienced toastmaster will make him/herself available to be observed at a function(s) to enable an inexperienced toastmaster (or toastmaster not experienced in that event) to consolidate their training, hopefully gain confidence in their own ability and assist in developing their own techniques.
2. Each party of this MOU is responsible for their own expenses related to this MOU. There will not be an exchange of funds between the parties for tasks associated with this MOU.
3. The term 'mentor' is used in its widest sense – 'an experienced member of an organisation or institution entrusted with advising junior or less experienced members'. It is not intended as a formal training or assessment function.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

Mentor

1. The mentor will provide one or more suitable opportunities for the mentee to observe them at work and ideally provide a debrief opportunity without detriment to their own professional conduct.

2. The mentor will where possible consider involving the mentee in pre-planning of any event and perhaps pre-meeting with clients, if appropriate with due account to commercial confidentiality.
3. The mentor will consider involving the mentee in operational opportunities (eg receiving line) where appropriate.

Mentee

1. The mentee must accept responsibility for managing their own development in order to maximise their potential, develop their skills and to improve their performance and thereby their professional standing.
2. The mentee will expect no payment for such an event and privilege.
3. The mentee should expect to travel outside their own area and is encouraged to shadow two or three different toastmasters at, ideally, different events.
4. The mentee would normally (where appropriate) wear civilian dress unless requested and agreed by the mentor as appropriate.
5. The mentee is not to expect preferential treatment or the promise of work from these opportunities and should not see such opportunities.
6. The mentee is to respect any commercial sensitivities or relationships with venues and event promoters as confidential and will not seek to interfere with any arrangements already enjoyed by the mentor.

NOTE: All parties are required to comply the letter and the spirit of the Code of Ethics of the Association of the UK School of Professional Toastmasters.

IV. TERMS OF UNDERSTANDING

The term of this MOU is for a period as mutually agreed between the mentor and mentee. It may cover one, two or more different events as agreed or a series of events with one or more toastmasters depending on individual needs. Either party may terminate this MOU with immediate effect.

Authorisation

The signing of this MOU is not a formal undertaking. It implies that the signatories will strive to attain, to the best of their ability, the objectives stated in the MOU.

On behalf of the organization I represent, I wish to sign this MOU and contribute to its further development.

(Optional)

Name
 Title Mentor
 MAUKSPT

Date

Name:
 Title: Mentee
 MAUKSPT / Assoc.MAUKSPT

Date: