



## APPROVED DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES (ADS) GUIDEBOOK

An Approved Development Scheme (ADS) is an agreement between a company and the ICES that defines the training, development and experience that will be made available to a new entrant or established civil engineering surveyor who wishes to gain a professional qualification. Schemes provide a framework in which the trainee records his or her development and receives guidance and assessment at regular intervals. The aim of the scheme is to provide all trainees with a coherent and well-structured programme of development, which makes maximum use of the resources available, and will provide the skills and knowledge necessary to prepare for the member review interview.

### **Benefits to the company**

- The structured schemes play an important role in the attraction, motivation and retention of high calibre employees.
- The schemes require a significant investment in those individuals undertaking them, and may be considered to be part of the overall reward package being offered by the employer.
- The schemes ensure that employers' development into their roles is achieved quickly and efficiently. The company will be able to ensure that all of its surveying staff are professionally qualified by the most efficient route available.

### **Assisted development**

- Employees are assured that they are to receive the best opportunities available to them in terms of training and development.
- Applicants for posts and new staff can see a definitive scheme that will rapidly advance their development and give them an opportunity to become professionally qualified.
- They will be able to see in writing exactly what is on offer from the outset.

### **The ICES competencies**

The ICES has produced a complete set of competencies to describe the knowledge, understanding and skills of applicants for Technical Membership and Membership. These provide the framework for the schemes. The aim is to ensure, by means of training, management mentoring and experience, the trainees reach the desired level of competence during the period of the scheme. Companies can apply to run a scheme on one or more of the specialist routes

### **Specialist routes**

- Quantity Surveying
- Cost Engineering
- Estimating
- Planning
- Procurement Engineering
- Project Management
- Construction Law

- Land Surveying
- Engineering Surveying
- Hydrographic Surveying
- Photogrammetry
- GIS
- Buried Services

## **Applying to establish an Approved Development Scheme**

### **Summary**

The first thing to do is to speak with the ICES Professional Development and Membership Manager or the Professional Development Co-ordinator. Initial queries can be dealt with over the phone, but a visit to discuss the scheme will usually be organised before an application is made. The following documentation will need to be submitted before final approval can be given:

- A covering letter summarising the main elements of the proposed scheme.
- General description of the work of the company and department.
- Details of Supervisor and Mentor responsible for the scheme (there may be delegated supervisors and mentors who do not need to be listed).
- Details of the Scheme Administrator.
- A statement of which competency stream(s) are to be adopted and requests for any company specific additional competencies (including whether Technical Member or Member or both)
- A description of the review system to be adopted e.g. quarterly reviews, reports to be submitted.
- Examples of training / CPD records for current staff.
- Blank examples of company appraisal documentation currently in use.
- Health and safety policy (synopsis).
- Equal opportunities / diversity and grievance policies in place at the company (synopsis).

### **The Covering Letter**

This is a statement of intention to apply for scheme approval. The letter must state which group of trainees the scheme is intended for, which part of the company it is based in and the geographical extent of the scheme (e.g. whole of UK, SW England, Republic of Ireland etc). The letter must make it clear that full authority and backing for the running of such a scheme has been gained in advance.

### **General description of the work of the company and department**

This can either be a document specially prepared as a summary of the work of the company and department, or consist of previously produced documents and leaflets, or a combination of the two.

### **Details of Supervisor, Administrator and Mentor:**

- **Supervisor**

The ADS Supervisor has overall responsibility for the scheme and is responsible for the assessment of trainees against the competencies. The ADS Supervisor can appoint a number of delegated supervisors who may or may not be the trainee's line manager. The named supervisor therefore takes overall responsibility for the supervision of trainees and will need to work closely with delegated supervisors.

Further details in ANNEX 1

- **Mentor**

The mentor is there to help and guide the trainees. In practice there may be a number of delegated mentors.

The mentor should be available in person and by telephone, to encourage and advise the trainees and resolve any issues that arise. These issues might include training and development needs, technical questions, or just someone to talk things through with.

The mentor should encourage openness and trust from the trainees, and in turn provide a degree of confidentiality when appropriate.

Further details in ANNEX 2

- **Administrator**

The administrator is the initial point of contact between the company and ICES head office. The administrator will ensure that all that all records connected with the running of the scheme are kept up to date and that copies of documents for all trainees are kept in one place. The administrator is usually based in the Training or HR departments, but there is some flexibility with this. This role may be combined with that of the supervisor if the number of trainees is small, but not with that of the mentor.

Further details in ANNEX 3

**A statement of which competency stream (s) are to be adopted** and requests for additions to the ICES competencies or activities.

The scheme must include the ICES general competencies and at least one of the specialisms. (e.g. Quantity Surveying or Land Surveying) including the specialism core competencies.

The ICES competencies may be acceptable as they are, or additions can be made. In practice, most applications include additional 'activities' that are company specific, and in some cases additional competencies.

**A description of the review system to be adopted:**  
**e.g. quarterly reports to be submitted**

It is possible to opt for either a quarterly or a half-yearly review with each trainee. These reviews are held in order to discuss progress made in terms of meeting with the competency requirements, and to discuss learning and development needs. It is recommended that each trainee is asked to do some preparation for each review, either in terms of writing up a report on a regular basis, or by being set a task in one review meeting for discussion at the next. All documentation produced for each review and the write-up of the review meetings should be kept on file and made available to the trainee, supervisor and ICES Head Office. Each year, one of the review meetings takes an overview of the progress made during the year, and the supervisor (or delegated supervisor) should sign off the competency sheets. This annual review may or may not be made during the annual appraisal cycle. If the annual review is not done at the same meeting as the annual appraisal then thought will need to be given to how the information gained from the annual review is fed into the appraisal system.

**Examples of training records for current staff**

A current example of a live training record (the person's name may be erased if so desired).

## **Blank examples of appraisal documentation currently in use**

### **Health and safety policy**

A synopsis of health and safety policy is all that is necessary.

### **Equal opportunities / diversity and grievance policies in place at the company**

If this documentation is lengthy, a synopsis is acceptable.

ICES is bound by all UK equal opportunities legislation in the following fields – age, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation and race. ICES supports anti-bullying initiatives.

**The application can be made in draft form so that discussion can take place to ensure that the documentation is acceptable before making a formal submission.**

### **Launching the scheme**

When a new scheme has been agreed it is usual to gather the supervisors, mentors and trainees together for a launch and briefing session. This usually consists of a short presentation about the scheme, individual sessions with trainees to discuss their eligibility and iron out any difficulties. This might be linked with presentations on other subjects and a buffet etc. ICES can provide someone to take part in the launch meeting.

As each trainee is signed up to the scheme he/she should complete a training agreement form and send a copy in to ICES HQ, with the other copy held on the trainee's file.

Trainees normally apply for either ICES Affiliate or Graduate Membership according to eligibility. Each trainee should be given a copy of a scheme handbook containing procedures for the scheme and the competencies (taken from the original submission for approval of the scheme).

### **Agreeing progress towards achieving the competencies**

It is important that the supervisor and trainee attempt to come to an agreement on the competency optimum standards achieved at any one time, but the supervisor will make the final decision.

If a trainee is signed up, having had some previous experience in a similar environment, the supervisor may be able to take this into account, and to sign the trainee off as competent before the full three years of the training scheme has expired. For mature individuals the signing off of the competencies may take just a few months. The supervisor must satisfy himself that there is adequate evidence to support the trainee's assertions.

### **ICES Membership**

When all of the competencies have been signed for a trainee, the supervisor will need to discuss upgrading to Technical Member or Member as appropriate.

- The supervisor may make a recommendation as to whether the trainee should apply immediately for Technical Member or Member, or whether it would be wise to gain some more experience (e.g. 6-12 months) and to do some general reading during that period.

- The administrator may make arrangements for a practice ICES member review interview. Advice on making an application for ICES Membership may be based on the outcome of such a practice review and take the form of an action plan. Managers involved with the company approved development scheme may request to observe a member review Interview being held elsewhere.

### **Making changes to the scheme**

Approved Development Schemes are approved for a period of 5 years subject to ICES being informed of any changes that are being made to any aspect of the scheme during that period. Normally this simply means sending in any changes (e.g. change of administrator, supervisor or mentor) but more substantial changes may need discussion.

### **Re-approval of the scheme**

Companies who wish to renew scheme approval should contact ICES HQ approximately 6 months before the current approval expires in order to discuss re-approval. Re-approval is an opportunity to discuss how the scheme has been working, and to update and refresh all of the documentation. If the scheme has been working well, and the paperwork is updated, there is no reason to expect re-approval to be refused. Difficulties are more likely to arise if the scheme has been dormant for a significant period of time, in which a case will need to be made for re-launching it.

### **Approved Development Scheme Forum**

ICES holds an annual Approved Development Forum with representatives from each scheme attending.

The ADS Forum is an important opportunity for ICES staff to meet with representatives of the scheme and for discussion about the schemes and any new policies affecting them. Most importantly the Forum allows these representatives to share best practice and resolve any practical difficulties with each other.

### **Contact with ICES**

Professional Development and Membership Manager  
0161 972 3114  
[education@cices.org](mailto:education@cices.org)

Professional Development Co-ordinator  
0161 972 3103  
[development@cices.org](mailto:development@cices.org)

## ANNEX 1

### SUPERVISOR

A Supervisor is the person who signs off the competencies for a Technical Member or Member. The Supervisor needs to have or to gain during the process a detailed understanding of the knowledge and skills of the applicant. The Supervisor is usually (but not always) the direct line manager of the applicant and there are no specific requirements as to membership of Chartered ICES or other professional bodies.

An application for Technical Member or Member grade is being assessed against the signed off competencies. The supporting documentation (Detailed C.V., Experience Report / or competency supporting statements and CPD records) are designed to help the examiners assess whether the claimed competencies could reasonably have been achieved by the applicant.

The role of the Supervisor is therefore critical to a successful application.

### Duties of the Supervisor

- To understand fully the requirements of the competencies and the optimum standards expected for grade of membership being applied for.
- To hold detailed discussions with the applicant on each competency and activity and to ascertain the applicant's view on the optimum standard achieved.
- The Supervisor should not sign off any activity unless it is absolutely clear that the standard has been achieved.
- Taking a decision on whether an applicant has achieved a standard may be done in a number (or combination) of ways:
  - For an Approved Development Scheme trainee by a series of quarterly reviews over an extended period (usually 3 years) during which a series of exercises and observations will have been made and CPD / training activities undertaken.
  - On the basis of a detailed and longstanding knowledge of the work of the applicant.
  - On the basis of very detailed discussions with the applicant in which a combination of evidence, prior knowledge and answers to a wide range of questions will have been provided by the applicant.
  - Partly on the basis of partially signed off competencies from a prior employer.
  - In consultation with other managers and colleagues in the organisation who have a detailed understanding of the applicant's work and abilities.
- Taking a detailed and firm line on the signing of the competency to ensure that any areas needing attention (in terms of either knowledge or experience) are addressed thoroughly before being signed off.
- The Supervisor should give feedback on decisions not to sign off a specific activity and to discuss ways in which the shortfall could be addressed.
- The Supervisor needs to bear in mind that signing off the activities when there is any doubt as to whether the optimum standard has been achieved could result in the applicant getting in to difficulty at the member review interview.
- Although the Supervisor is part of the assessment of an applicant it is important to be as supportive and helpful as possible and to make it clear to the applicant that the whole process is for their benefit and to help achieve the grade of membership that they aspire to as smoothly as possible.

## ANNEX 2

### MENTORS

The Mentor is an important part of the support given within a Chartered ICES Approved Development Scheme.

#### The main duties of a Mentor

- To encourage potential members (at any grade) to make applications at the appropriate level.
- To offer advise on eligibility and on the process of becoming a Technical Member or Member.
- To agree to take the Mentor role for specific trainees who have signed up for the scheme.
- To contact each trainee or applicant informally but on a regular basis during the whole period of the scheme.
- To offer advice in terms of gaining knowledge or suitable experience to the individual trainee or applicant to help them to meet the requirements being set by the supervisor and the competencies.
- To encourage trainees and applicants to persist with their applications and to help them overcome any perceived obstacles in the way of completing the application.

In order to play the part of a trusted helping hand there needs to be some separation in the roles of Supervisor and Mentor. If the Mentor is to discuss the applicant with the Supervisor, this should be done with the permission of the trainee or applicant. The trusted helping hand of the Mentor will not continue to be trusted if everything that is discussed is reported back to the Supervisor who is most likely the line manager of the person in question.

On occasion, trainees on Approved Development Schemes find that they cannot gain experience in specific areas because the economic imperative of their job requires them to stay on a project in a particular role for a long period of time. In this case, the Mentor may be able to speak to the Supervisor / line manager to see if anything can be done to help in this situation. It might be possible to allow short periods of shadowing of colleagues in other parts of the business (on some occasions in other businesses) or seeking possibilities around short or longer term re-assignment to other projects. The trainee's manager will need to weigh up the alternatives of keeping staff in specific roles and the advantages of doing so, against the alternative of ensuring that staff are able to become professionally qualified as quickly as possible and the benefits this will bring to the company.

## **ANNEX 3**

### **ADMINISTRATOR**

#### **Administrator - Chartered ICES Approved Development Scheme (ADS)**

The Administrator is the initial point of contact between the company and ICES head office. The Administrator ensures that all the records connected with the running of the scheme are kept up to date and that copies of documents for all trainees are kept in one place. The Administrator is usually based in the Training or HR departments, but there is some flexibility with this. The role may be combined with that of the Supervisor in small organisations but not with the Mentor.

#### **Main duties of the Administrator**

- To act as the first point of contact between the company and ICES.
- To provide ICES with a full list of all those who are registered on the scheme, and updates each time someone joins or leaves the scheme (e.g. moves to a different function or company). To complete the annual ADS update form and return it to the ICES Professional Development Co-ordinator (ICES PDC).
- Retains a copy of the company application for the scheme and a copy of the acceptance letter and certificates supplied.
- Ensures that the ICES Approved Development Scheme certificates are displayed alongside any other quality or training awards.
- Keeps track of all trainees on the scheme and keeps a diary of quarterly (or six monthly) review appointments, ensuring that they take place as planned.
- Keeping a record (centrally / individual personnel files) of all meetings including a synopsis of each discussion, any further competency activities signed off and any goals or pieces of work set for discussion at future meetings.
- Ensuring that information regarding ICES and the scheme is circulated to all trainees as well as to Supervisors (and delegated Supervisors) and Mentors (and delegated Mentors).
- Plays a part in the organisation and delivery of internal events for trainees. These would typically include a range of inputs both technical training and information about the scheme and the support that is available.
- Liaise with the ICES PDC regarding the payment of annual subscription fees.
- Attendance if possible at the annual ICES ADS Forum.

## ANNEX 4

### SURCO Training

The Chartered Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors (ICES) has a reputation for being close to marketplace developments and focuses its requirements for membership to take a much greater account of workplace competency.

During the competency development phase, it became clear that employers were finding it difficult to find high quality trainers for their staff development programmes. Responding to pressure from the industry, and its desire for training to be carried out by experienced practitioners, the Institution set up a specialist training division.

SURCO Training was established in 2006 and workshops provide an excellent opportunity to expand the knowledge and understanding of the essential workplace skills of a civil engineering surveyor and to support individuals in attaining the competency requirements necessary for full corporate membership of the Institution.

SURCO Training specialises in advising employers on the provision of early and mid-career commercial competencies. Typically this training is structured over 3 to 5 years and can comprise a combination of 10 to 20 workshops delivered over that period. At mid-career stage, training will be focused on a smaller group of specialist skills and at a much more advanced level.

SURCO Training is not limited to working in the UK and its registered tutors regularly deliver workshops for companies based in Europe, South America and South Africa. In addition SURCO Training has formed a joint venture company with Battersby Kingsfield in Hong Kong called BK SURCO which delivers commercial training using tailored modules in China, the Pacific Basin, India and the UAE.

SURCO Training is also able to offer a range of geospatial engineering training courses run by three third party approved training companies. All the courses currently offered are focused on improving site setting out skills, providing support training in the difficult field of locating and mapping underground services and teaching the application of AutoCAD and related computer software. The ability to set out civil engineering work quickly and accurately is an essential skill for young civil engineers.

SURCO is the information business of ICES and is responsible for its commercial activities. Any surplus income generated from SURCO Training's activities is returned to the Institution for the benefit of its members, the profession and investment in the future of the industry.

For further information contact Niccola Dodd  
0161 972 3112  
[ndodd@cices.org](mailto:ndodd@cices.org)