In 2015, Translation Commons conducted an industry-wide survey on Mentoring for Translators and Interpreters. The objective of the survey was to gather real-life information on existing mentoring practices and to determine the optimal mentoring elements for Translators and Interpreters. The survey was designed to be taken by both mentors\(^1\) and mentees\(^2\) whether they already had experience or not. The results of the survey will help the Mentoring Think Tank team of Translation Commons to create a General Standard of Mentoring Practices to be used as a guideline and to facilitate freelancers in formulating agreements and managing expectations when providing or receiving mentoring. When the Standard is ready, it will be free to download and a link will be available from various industry sources.

\(^1\) Mentor: in the translation market, an entity (translation agency, company client, institution, NPO, etc.) or a professional person (translator, interpreter, etc.) coaching a future or current actor on the translation market.

\(^2\) Mentee: in the translation market, a future or current professional person being coached by an entity (translation agency, company client, institution, NPO, etc.) or one or several professional persons (translator, interpreter, etc.).
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PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

In the first part of the survey general information, such as the job of the participants, the time they have been in the translation business, the country they live in and their working language(s), was collected. Gathering this information was meant to get a general idea of the profile of the respondents.

There were 547 respondents to the survey, 443 to the English version and 104 to the German one. The German version was launched on request by a German translators and interpreters association, willing to spread the survey among its members, but requiring it to be first translated into German. For some of the questions, the variations in the answers between both versions are somewhat significant. Nevertheless, we decided to re-group all results for this question-by-question analysis. The detailed sheets, showing the original answers to all the questions for both languages, are available on request. If interested, please contact Nancy Matis.

The analysis below was done question by question. With most questions, a chart is displayed, showing the percentage of respondents per proposed answer. The number of persons associated with the various choices is most of the time indicated in italics within the text itself. Some questions left room for open comments – those have been grouped in a bulleted list with the number of participants sharing the same idea, which is also indicated in italics.

Also note that bar charts display questions allowing multiple choice. The number of respondents does therefore not correspond with the sum of various answers, since most people chose several options.
Question 1: To get started please tell us a few things about yourself

Most participants (287) are working as freelance translators or both as freelance translators and interpreters (85). Freelance interpreters (30) as well as in-house translators (44) and interpreters (3) also took part in the survey. Other professions were also represented, such as project managers (27) or company owners (25). We do not have any accurate information on the professional activities of the “Other” respondents (46).
Question 2: I have been working in the above capacity for (time options)

The answers to this question show a well-balanced panel of people, regarding their experience on the translation market. The largest group (203 equalling 37%) have worked for a maximum of 5 years, and the smallest group for 5 to 10 years (104). The 2 other groups with the most years in the industry count nearly the same number of persons – 10-20 years (116) and over 20 years (124 or 23% of the respondents).
Question 3: I live in: (enter your country name)

60 countries were represented in this survey. One answer was rejected as it stated the answer “Europe”. Some values were changed as they were too specific – like city names changed into country names. The value “mm” was interpreted as the ISO code for “Myanmar”. Answers like “England”, “Scotland”, “United Kingdom” and “Great Britain” were kept as such and not regrouped. 2 answers stated 2 countries – “France / UK” and “Hungary and England”: only the first country name was kept for the results-analysis.

131 people, living in Germany, answered this survey – 82 of them filled in the German version of the questionnaire and 49 the English one. 67 participants are from The United Kingdom, 39 from France, 29 from the USA, 24 from Belgium, 24 from Spain, 19 from Italy, 17 from Canada, 17 from Greece, 17 from Slovakia, 16 from Israel, 12 from Latvia, 9 from the Czech Republic, 8 from Switzerland, 7 from Japan, 6 from Brazil, 6 from Slovenia, 5 from Austria, 5 from Iran and 5 from Portugal. The 40 remaining countries were mentioned between 1 and 4 times. The chart below shows all the participating countries, displaying the bars in the same order as the countries listed in alphabetical order.
Question 4: I work with the language of the country I live in

The vast majority of participants (521 representing 95%) actually works with the language of the country they live in. Only 26 people answered “No” to this question.
PART II: MENTOR

The second part of the survey was meant to obtain more information on the mentor side. The first question directed the respondents to various subsequent questions, targeting on the one hand people, who have already acted as mentors in the translation industry (Question 8) and on the other hand people, who have not (Question 6). Regarding this second group, various questions were asked of those who expressed the will to become mentor one day (Question 15), and those who would rather not (Question 7). After having explained their dislike on the mentoring perspective, this last group was immediately directed to the third part of the survey for Mentees (Question 30).

**Question 5: Have you ever been a mentor?**

Most participants have never acted as a mentor (377). Only 31% answered this question positively (167).

Note that 544 persons answered this question and 3 skipped it.
Question 6: Would you like to become a mentor?

Of the 377 persons who had never been mentors, the answers indicate a sharp division between the participants interested in becoming a mentor (186) and those who do not consider this option (185).

6 persons skipped this question.
**Question 7: Why would you not like to be a mentor?**

(multiple choices)

3 participants skipped this question and 182 explained their reasons.

Most people (98 or 54%) do not consider acting as a mentor, because they do not feel capable of taking on such a responsibility. Many of them (54) said that they do not have enough time. A significant number (49) do not really know what to expect from this role and are not sure what the mentees might expect from them. A few participants (12) answered that they would accept, if they were paid. A minority (5) were worried to take the risks.

This question offered the opportunity to explain other reasons for not being willing to become a mentor. Participants, who chose this option (17), mentioned reasons like:

- Already being an academic (1)
- Not enjoying or not being interested in teaching (4)
- Not having the right personality for it (2)
- Not knowing how this works (1)
- Still having a lot to learn or being themselves interested in having a mentor (4)
- Not considering this as part of their professional expectations (2)
- Not wanting to create a competitor who will then take their work away (1)
- Considering that their company should be the one hiring the mentee and not them personally (1)
- Not having time at the moment, but possibly considering it at a later point in time (1)
Past Experience (Mentor)

After having answered positively to Question 5, 167 participants were directed to this section.

**Question 8: As a mentor, which subjects did you deal with?**

Out of the 167 participants who had acted as mentor in the past, 149 answered this question.

Most of them were mentors in translation skills (59) or in both the linguistic and business domains at the same time (54). Only 7% of them were mentors only in interpretation skills (10) and 9% purely in business matters (14).

There is no accurate information on the other sectors having been mentored (12).

Please note that out of those 149 respondents, none skipped any of the following questions in this section, regarding past experience.
**Question 9: Under which circumstances did you become a mentor?**

Most of the respondents (56) accepted to help another professional. An important part of the mentors also work as teachers (34 or 23%) and a few are freelancers affiliated with the academic sector (9). Some company owners also take on new freelancers (16), and only one person defined himself as a professional coach (1).

We do not have details on the other circumstances that prompted participants to become mentors, although the results indicate that many other reasons might motivate people to play this role (33), representing a significant 22%.

![Pie chart showing the distribution of circumstances in which mentors become mentors.](chart.png)

- 37%: I am a freelancer affiliated with a college/university and have taken interns
- 22%: I was asked to help a graduate/friend/newcomer
- 11%: I teach classes in translation/interpreting and I support my students
- 23%: I am a company owner and take on new freelancers as interns
- 1%: I am a professional coach
- 6%: Other
**Question 10: How many times have you been a mentor?**

Most of the mentors endorsed these responsibilities between two and five times (55). Many of them did so only once (39) or on the contrary, more than ten times (38). The rest of them supervised people between six and ten times (17).
Question 11: Are you able to supervise several mentees/interns at the same time?

Two thirds of the respondents feel able to supervise several people at the same time. Many of them had already managed to do so (58 equalling to 39%), while the others had had only one mentee at a time so far (40). Some of these mentors would be eager to try this mentoring method (19), but a significant number of them would rather not do it this way (32).
Question 12: What do you enjoy in mentoring?
(multiple choices)

80% of respondents enjoy supporting other freelancers in order to advance their careers (119). An equivalent number of respondents find that this activity also helps them to keep their skills up-to-date (66 or 44%) or even to create new opportunities for future partnerships (69 or 46%). Several participants (27) also selected the last option “Other”, but we only have a few reasons mentioned, such as:

- Sharing know-how and business knowledge
- Passing on working methods as well as tips and advice to avoid making mistakes as newcomers
- Jointly develop skills, experience and knowledge

[Bar chart showing percentages]

- 80% Helping another freelancer’s career
- 44% Keeping my skills updated
- 46% Creating opportunities for future partnerships
- 18% Other
Question 13: What do you dislike about mentoring?
      (multiple choices)

Nearly half of the mentors (69) do not like the idea of mentoring someone who does not share the same quality criteria as themselves. A quarter of them also thinks that this means extra work for them (34). Some do not feel at ease with the responsibility (17) or believe that mentees might have high expectations and demands (18). People are also concerned that their involvement is unpaid (19) and even that some mentees might end up stealing part of their business (18).

This question offered the opportunity to explain other reasons why one dislikes mentoring. People having chosen this option (31) mentioned reasons like:

- Mentees not making enough effort (5)
- Not being able to be a good mentor (3)
- Mentoring is exhausting and takes a lot of energy (3)
- Different expectations of mentee and mentor (1)
- Having met narrow-minded mentors, who abuse the mentoring program to push their outdated views on the mentees (1)
- Having heard negative comments about mentoring (1)
- The payment is never enough (2)
- After having run a mentoring scheme, it is clear that paying a nominal fee helped motivate the mentors (1)
- All reasons proposed in the options may happen (1)
- Finally, 14 of the respondents here used this text field to indicate that they do not dislike anything in mentoring or to emphasize the fact that mentoring is a win-win situation that might be potentially rewarding to them
Question 14: How much time a week do you dedicate to mentoring?

Here, most of the respondents answered between two and five hours a week (46) although these results are closely followed by a group spending less than one hour a week (42), and by those dedicating around one hour per week to this extra activity (38). Some people, however, are able to spend more than five hours per week on mentoring (20) and only 3 follow an interpreting assignment a month.
Future or Continuing Mentoring (Mentor)

This section targeted all those who had already acted as a mentor (continuing the survey after Question 14) or willing to do so in the future (having answered Question 6 positively). We counted 149 participants in the first group and 186 in the second one. However, the questions below were answered by fewer people. Indeed, only 273 persons answered Question 15 and the following questions up to Question 21, indicating that 62 relevant respondents skipped this section of the survey.

**Question 15:** In order for you to become (or continue being) a mentor, which of the following should apply? (multiple choices)

42% of the respondents to this question were willing to become (or continue being) a mentor, if asked to do so (114). 102 respondents (37%) would like to be supported by other mentors, closely followed by 100 respondents seeking recognition for their efforts. While 92 respondents (34%) stated that they would like to get paid or get some other kind of benefit, 91 wished for a program and standard to follow, in order to take on the role of (or continue being) a mentor, closely followed by 89 respondents, wishing to be part of a controlled mentoring program. A significantly lower number (54) wanted to have a legally binding confidentiality agreement with the mentee, while more than a fifth (62) of the respondents would like to mentor only on linguistic matters, only 14 respondents wish to do so exclusively on business matters.
Question 16: Regarding future mentees, which of the following are important prerequisites for you? (multiple choices)

Out of a total of 273 respondents to this question, 110 (40%) will only work with mentees in the same language combination, closely followed by a group of respondents (109) choosing to work only with mentees wanting to specialize in their areas of expertise. 92 respondents (34%) would opt for a mentee from a pool of candidates and a few less (86) expressed their wish to mentor someone they already know, or who has been referred to them by a person of confidence. Almost a third (80) wanted to be chosen by the mentee over other mentors. At the lower end of the spectrum, a still significant number (64) of people will work with mentees from existing, controlled programs or would wish for the mentee to already have been working as a freelancer for at least 1 year (61 equalling 22%).

![Regarding future mentees, which of the following are important prerequisites for you?](chart.png)
Question 17: Do you think that being paid an hourly rate as a trainer would help you give more mentoring hours to your mentees?

An overwhelming majority (188) of participants answered this question positively, whereas almost one third (85) did not share this view.

![Pie chart showing responses to question 17](chart.png)
Question 18: Regarding giving your mentoring services for free versus being paid as a trainer, which of the following statements represent your position?

Almost 40% (93) would happily take on the role of mentor if a sponsor, e.g. a translation agency, university or governmental institution paid them for their time and effort. Nearly a third (80) would be happy to help others for free, whereas almost a fifth (46) would like to mentor for free in exchange for some non-monetary tangible benefits, e.g. having the mentee do the first draft of their projects. Potential mentors, wanting to be paid by the mentee for their professional service, are in the minority (31 equalling 13%).
Question 19: Which methods of mentoring are you happy to be part of? (multiple choices)

An overwhelming majority of 76% (207 respondents) chose local, face-to-face meetings and speaking on the phone as their preferred mentoring methods. Nevertheless, a high number of respondents (188 equalling almost 69%) would also accept remote or Skype meetings and exchange by e-mail. A significantly lower percentage of 14% (37 respondents) voted for e-mails only. A still lower number (19) that chose shadowing on interpreting assignments only, is consistent with the overall low number of freelance and in-house interpreters participating in this survey. We do not have specific data about other mentoring methods that 22 respondents declared they wanted to be part of.
Question 20: What is the ideal length of a mentoring period?

The biggest group of respondents to this question (94 equalling 34%) would like to see the mentoring period as an on-going relationship that would finish as soon as both parties felt it’s time. A little more than a fifth (58) wanted its duration to depend on the mentee, 46 respondents (17%) thought it should at least last 6 months, closely followed by 43 persons who set the minimum at 2-3 months. At the very end of the list only 32 (12%) considered around one year as the ideal length of a mentoring period.
Question 21: Would you consider a probation period a helpful stage?

A whopping majority of 201 respondents believed a probation period to be helpful, whereas 72 (26%) did not share this view.
Question 22: How long should it be?

A clear majority of 117 respondents out of 200 think that the probation period should last 1-2 initial meetings, while 83 would rather make it at least 1-2 months.

1 person skipped this question after having answered the previous one positively.

Out of the 273 person who started to answer the questions in this section on future or continuing mentoring, 20 did not answer the 7 remaining questions in this section.
Question 23: If one day you accept to be a mentor, would you rather:

A slight majority of 132 respondents out of 253 would supervise either a student or colleague, whereas more than a quarter (65) would rather supervise a new graduate. At the lower end of the list of chosen answers, 29 respondents preferred to supervise a student, closely followed by the smallest group of 27 respondents (11%) who are inclined to rather supervise a colleague who wants to get new skills.
**Question 24: As a mentor would you rather deal with mentees:**

Here, a majority of 151 potential mentors prefer the mentee to have the same language combination as them, almost a third (76) would rather deal with mentees interested in specializing in the same area as them, whereas a minority of 26 (10%) prefer mentees specializing in different areas or languages than theirs.
Question 25. In which of the following areas would you be willing to be a mentor?
(multiple choices)

A vast majority of 60% (152 out of a total of 253 respondents) is willing to mentor on translation and interpreting specific questions only. The number of respondents choosing to mentor on proofreading and quality control (116 equalling 46%), and those willing to mentor on research techniques, references and resources (113), almost balance each other out. With 94 positive answers, mentoring on other translation-related tasks also ranks high on the list, closely followed by 90 respondents (36%) willing to support mentees in building their own business, invoicing, marketing, etc. Almost a third (81 respondents) wants to mentor on client and agency communication, followed by 73 respondents wanting to mentor on project and workflow management. 70 potential mentors stated their willingness to mentor on CAT tools, whereas significantly fewer respondents (39 equalling 15%) want to support mentees with translation portals, support groups and associations, followed by 36 answers for website and software localization. The low number of respondents (30) wanting to mentor exclusively on interpreting appears to be consistent with the relatively low number of interpreters participating in the survey. Almost 10% (25 respondents) expressed their willingness to mentor in all listed fields.
**Question 26: If you would like to be a mentor but don’t have enough time, which of the following may help while mentoring?**

(multiple choices)

116 respondents (46%) stated that getting paid in order to be able to decline work would help them be a mentor in spite of time restrictions, followed by the second biggest group of 101 respondents (40%) wishing for a second mentor as a back-up. Almost 30% (75 respondents) would have the mentee do some of their work, so they could mentor on the job. Again, potential mentors who chose mentoring on interpreting by shadowing interpreting assignments are in the minority (23).

This question offered the possibility to explain other ways to be helped while mentoring. People having chosen this option (19) mentioned reasons like:

- Get support through a mentoring program (1)
- Be able to implement a coaching method (1)
- Make sure that the mentor is not wasting his/her time (1)
- Mentor after working hours or during free time (week-end, evening, holidays, etc.) (2)
- Limit mentoring time (one contact per day or even once or twice per week) (2)
- Be sure that the mentee is flexible regarding coaching-time (2)
- 5 respondents also underlined that when mentoring, one should make time for it – those who do not have time should simply not mentor

- 5 answers were not exploitable.
Question 27: How much time could you dedicate per week as a mentor?

A majority of 141 respondents (56%) would dedicate between 2-5 hours per week to mentoring activities, followed by the second largest group of 83 respondents (33%), able to allocate 1 hour per week. Only 8% (22 respondents) could allocate more than 5 hours a week. In consistence with the low numbers of interpreters participating in the survey, only 7 respondents chose the answer “At least one interpreting assignment a month”.

![Pie chart showing distribution of time dedication]

- 56% dedicate between 2-5 hours per week
- 33% dedicate 1 hour per week
- 8% allocate more than 5 hours per week
- 3% choose the answer “At least one interpreting assignment a month”
Question 28: What do you find to be the most difficult aspect of being a mentor?

83 respondents think that finding the necessary time is the most difficult aspect of being a mentor. A little more than a fifth (55) think that it is difficult to evaluate the mentee’s needs, followed by 50 persons who do not think it is difficult to be a mentor. To 35 respondents, confidence in their own skills as mentors turns out to be the most challenging aspect of mentoring, while striking a good relationship with the mentee ranks at the very low-end of the list with 30 respondents equalling 12%.
**Question 29: What would you like to have as a mentor that has not been covered in this questionnaire?**

(open question)

50 participants answered this question, but 15 indicated that they could not think about anything else that had not been covered in Part II of the survey. We regrouped the others’ ideas in the following list, where they either explained what they would like to have or what should be taken into consideration when mentoring:

- More work (1)
- One mentee to one mentor (2)
- Being allowed to take part in mentoring (1)
- More time (1)
- The option to choose the mentee from a pool of mentees (2)
- The personal ability and skills to mentor well (2)
- A mentoring program with clear goals, expectations and commitments (2)
- The possibility to screen the mentee (1)
- A network to support mentors (institutional and professional associations, other mentors plus events, trainings, workshops, lectures, forums) (10)
- Trust (1)
- The possibility to mention the mentoring experience on their CV (1)
- An agreement with the mentee in order to narrow down what to improve on (2)
- Making sure the request for mentorship was realistic (1)
- The importance of the ethical aspects (1)
- Differentiating between mentoring officially employed colleagues and mentoring freelancers (1)
- Making sure that mentoring remained free (1)
- Mentoring via social media (1)
The third part of the survey was meant to get more information on the mentees. The first question directed the respondents to different sub-questions, targeting on the one hand those who have already acted as mentees in the translation industry (Question 33) and on the other hand, people who have not (Question 31). Regarding this second group, various questions were asked to those who expressed the will to become a mentee one day (Question 40) and those who would rather not (Question 32). After having explained their dislike on the aspect of mentoring, these last respondents were immediately directed to the end of the survey (Question 52).

**Question 30: Have you ever been a mentee?**

432 persons answered this question. A significant majority of 69% (299) had never been a mentee, whereas a third (134) had been.
Question 31: Would you like to become a mentee?

A majority of 168 persons (56%) would not like to become a mentee, whereas over 44% do (131).
Question 32: Why would you not like to be a mentee?  
(multiple choices)

The biggest group (47% or 77 respondents out of a total of 165 since 3 participants skipped this question) state that they are senior in this industry and would rather be a mentor. The second largest group (47 respondents equalling 28%) had never given it a thought until now. 21% (34) do not have time for mentoring, followed by 22 answerers who do not want to spend time on unpaid activities. 17 respondents (10%) would not like to become a mentee, due to potentially unclear expectations on the mentee’s or the mentor’s side. At the lower end of the list, 9 participants do not see what others could bring them, only outdone by the smallest group of only 2 respondents who do not feel capable as yet.

This question offered the opportunity to explain other reasons for not wanting to become a mentee. People who chose this option (19) mentioned reasons like:

- Being an academic (1)
- Needing training in some areas (DTP, CAT tools, etc.), but not needing a mentor (1)
- Mentors are not useful (1)
- Already sharing their experience, guidance and knowledge with other colleagues, which is good enough for them (3)
- Being used to learning on their own (1)
- Preferring to be “really” independent (1)
- Being already autonomous, even if they did not consider themselves to be senior (6)
- Some also regretted not having been able to take advantage of such programs when they started out (2)

- 4 answers were not relevant
Past Experience (Mentee)

After having answered Question 30 positively, 134 participants were directed to this section. Only 125 answered the following section from Question 33 to Question 39.

*Question 33: As a mentee, which subjects did you deal with?*

Nearly half of the mentees (48%) who answered this question have been mentored in linguistic translation (60), followed by the second largest group of 38 respondents who received mentoring both in the linguistic and business domains. 10 participants (8%) dealt exclusively with business matters, followed by a smaller group of 9 participants who dealt with interpreting. There is no detailed information on the 8 mentees having been mentored in other subjects.

![Pie chart showing the distribution of subjects mentees dealt with](chart.png)
Question 34: Under which circumstances did you become a mentee? (multiple choices)

The biggest group (34%) accepted the proposal of a close colleague helping them develop new skills (43), followed by 38 former mentees who did an internship during their translation/interpretation studies, and 35 (28%) who were coached by the trainer in the professional training program they followed. Significantly fewer participants (23 equalling 18%) approached a senior freelancer with the request to help them with their careers. At the bottom of the list, 15 respondents state that they found coaching programs on the Internet.
**Question 35. How many times have you been a mentee?**

An overwhelming majority of 68% (85) had been a mentee only once. A quarter of the respondents had been a mentee between 2 to 5 times. Only 9 respondents had been a mentee more than 5 times.
Question 36: Have you ever been supervised by several mentors at the same time?

51 respondents (41%) had never been supervised by more than one mentor at the same time, but state they could try that, followed by the second largest group of 32 respondents (26%) who do not think that it is a good idea. Over a fifth (28) had once been mentored by more than one person at the same time, whereas only 14 mentees state they have always been supervised by more than one mentor at the same time.
Question 37: What did you find useful as a mentee?
(multiple choices)

For a significant majority of 81% (101), improving their skills thanks to the mentor’s experience has been a useful aspect of their experience as a mentee. Significantly fewer respondents (62), still about 50%, found the possibility of creating opportunities for future partnerships quite useful, followed by 53 respondents (42%) who appreciate having been able to accelerate their careers. A still high number of respondents (44 equalling 35%) judged learning to work in teams, a useful aspect. 15 persons still had other reasons for finding this useful, but we do not have any details on those.
Out of 125 respondents to this question, 46 (37%) fear the risk of being mentored by someone who does not have up-to-date skills and 36 the risk of being mentored by someone who does not share their professional outlook (29%). Fear of possible condescension by some mentors ranks third with 33 respondents equalling 26%. At the lower end of the list, only 18 respondents dislike the fact that those coaching moments are not paid, followed by the smallest group of 14 participants who dislike the overload being a mentee generates.

This question offered the possibility to explain other reasons to dislike being a mentee. People having chosen this option (29) mentioned reasons like:

- Different opinions from different sources (1)
- Mentoring methods not adapted to the mentee’s habits (1)
- Being considered as future competitors (2)
- Getting highly specialised areas to translate (1)
- Too much focus on some aspects (rates, experience, volume) at the detriment of others (marketing) (1)
- Relationship issues between the mentee and the mentor (2)
- Different expectations from the mentee and the mentor (1)
- Boundaries of the mentor’s commitment loosely defined (1)
- Not real practice as the given translations were already completed (1)
- 16 persons used this field to emphasize the fact that they did not dislike anything

- 2 answers were irrelevant
**Question 39: How much time a week did you dedicate to being a mentee?**

The biggest subset (43 or 34%) to this question dedicated 1 hour per week to being a mentee, followed by the second largest subset of 33 respondents (27%) dedicking between 2-5 hours per week. Less than a fifth (23) dedicated more than 5 hours per week, closely followed by 22 respondents who were “full-time-mentees”. Again in consistency with the low numbers of interpreters participating in this survey, only 4 respondents were mentored at a minimum of one interpreting assignment a month.
Future or Continuing Mentoring (Mentee)

This section targeted all people having already been mentees (continuing the survey after Question 39) or willing to be in the future (having answered positively to Question 31). The first group counted 125 participants and the second 131. However, the questions below were answered by fewer people. Indeed, 238 participants answered Question 40 up to Question 47, indicating that 18 people skipped this section of the survey.

**Question 40: In order for you to become a mentee, which of the following should apply?**

(multiple choices)

A little over a half of the respondents to this question wanted to be part of a controlled mentoring program (121), closely followed by 116 respondents (49%) wishing for a program and standard to follow. Considerably less, yet almost a quarter of respondents (57), wish to have support from other mentees. An almost equal number of respondents wish to either receive mentoring only on linguistic matters (55 people representing 23%) or only on business matters (56 people representing 24%). At the very end of the list 38 respondents (16%) answered they want to be paid or get some other sort of benefit.
Question 41: If one day you decide to apply as a mentee, would you rather:

Contacting freelance colleagues the mentees would already know was amongst the most chosen answers to this question with 87 respondents (36%). 32 people (13%) would rather contact translation schools or universities. Only a minority would either look for a coach on the internet (18) or contact translation agencies (16). It is worth noting that a large number of respondents indicated that they would try all of the proposed options (85 representing 36%).

![Pie chart showing the percentage of respondents choosing each option. The chart shows the following:
- 36% chose freelance colleagues.
- 13% chose translation schools/universities.
- 8% chose translation agencies.
- 7% chose to look for a coach on the Internet.
- 36% chose to try all the options.](chart.png)
Question 42: What do you feel will be the most difficult as a mentee?

Of a total of 238 potential mentees, the largest group considers finding someone willing to supervise them the most difficult aspect (83 respondents or 35%), followed by the second largest group with 60 people (25%) who think it is knowing exactly which skills they need to develop. For 17%, finding the necessary time is an issue (39), quite closely followed by 34 respondents doubting their ability to evaluate the value of the mentor. Only 22 respondents (9%) do not think it is difficult to be a mentee.
Question 43: Regarding future mentors, which of the following are important prerequisites for you? (multiple choices)

137 potential mentees wanting to mentor under someone who specializes in their chosen areas (58%) and 135 potential mentees wanting to mentor under someone of the same language combinations (57%), almost balanced one another out. The third largest group with 99 respondents (42%) wants to mentor under someone they already know or has been referred to them by someone they know well. With a noticeable gap, the next groups with 64 respondents each (27%), either wished for the option to choose a mentor from a pool of candidates, or to work with mentors from existing controlled programs. Only 41 respondents (17%) will work with mentors who choose them over other mentees.
Question 44: Do you prefer to be mentored and work at the same time?

More than a quarter of the respondents (63) want to have their own work checked by the mentor, whereas only 28 of the potential mentees (12%) want to work for their mentors projects and get paid for it. A slight majority of more than 50% (120) chose both options mentioned before. At the end of the list, 27 potential mentees want to be mentored without having to work on real projects.
Question 45: Which methods of mentoring are you happy to be part of? (multiple choices)

An overwhelming majority of 76% (181) choose face-to-face meetings and speaking on the phone as their preferred mentoring methods. Nevertheless, a very high number of respondents (166 – almost 70 %) will also go with remote meetings, Skype and exchanging e-mails. A much lower number of respondents (34) voted for e-mails only. The still lower number of 20 respondents (8%) choosing shadowing on interpreting assignments only, is consistent with the overall low number of freelance and in-house interpreters participating in this survey. We do not have specific data about the other mentoring methods 14 of the respondents prefer.
Question 46: What is the ideal length of a mentoring period?

The biggest group of respondents (101), although not the majority (42%), think that the mentoring period being an on-going relationship should finish when both parties feel it’s time. Significantly fewer (54) respondents think it should last at least 6 months whereas 30 persons (13%) set the minimum at 2-3 months. 27 think it depends on the mentor, followed by 26 respondents (11%) who think it should last around a year.
Question 47: Would you consider a probation period a helpful stage?

A significant majority of 194 potential mentees (82%) consider a probation period to be helpful. Only 44 do not think so.
Question 48: How long should it be?

Of the 194 people having answered the previous question positively, 58% think the probation period should last 1-2 initial meetings (113), while 81 respondents (42%) would rather have it last at least 1-2 months.
Question 49: In which of the following areas would you like to be mentored? (multiple choices)

111 out of a total of 235 respondents to this question would like to be mentored on how to build a business, invoicing, marketing, etc. (47%). The next largest number of respondents chose proofreading and quality control (101 equalling 43%). Linguistic matters were only chosen 94 times, representing 40%. Research techniques, references and resources got 89 positive answers equalling 38%, followed by 85 persons being interested in being coached in CAT tools, 80 respondents wishing to be mentored on client and agency communication, and 71 (30%) who wish to be mentees in the field of project management and workflow management. Mentoring in website and software localization was chosen by 29% of the respondents (67) and support in other translation related tasks by 27% of them (63), while coaching in translation portals, support groups and associations totalled 54 respondents (23%). In the very last position was the number of 26 respondents (11%) choosing interpreting only is again consistent with the low number of interpreters participating in this survey. Finally, it is worth noting that more than one quarter of the respondents would like to be mentored in all of the subjects proposed in this list (60).

3 people skipped this question as well as the following one.
Question 50: What benefits are you looking to gain after the mentoring? (multiple choices)

An overwhelming majority of 70% (164) hope to establish a working relationship with the mentor as colleagues after the mentoring period, closely followed by 66% (156) who hope to continue being in touch with the mentor once the mentoring period is over. Well over half state that they hoped to connect with their mentors’ network of other linguists (133), followed by 49% (114) stating that they hoped to get referrals to agencies. 43% (100) answered they would like to get small jobs from their mentor. Only 88 people (but still 37%) are looking forward to helping their mentor on a regular and paid basis (especially for proofreading).
Question 51: What would you like to have as a mentee that has not been covered in this questionnaire?

(open question)

36 people answered this question, but 12 indicated that they could not think of anything else that had not been covered in Part III of the survey. We regrouped the other ideas in the following list, where they explained what they would like to have as a mentee:

- Some expenses covered (transport, lunch, etc.) (1)
- The possibility to shadow an experienced translator for a while (1)
- Support from an experienced translator (1)
- Overall assessment of one’s strengths and weaknesses (1)
- Evaluation of their needs (1)
- Mentoring programs by professional associations (1)
- Not being considered as a threat (1)
- Having a mentor sincerely interested in the mentee (1)
- Having a mentor asking questions the mentee could not think of (1)
- Flexibility in schedule (1)
- Sharing opinions with other mentees (1)
- Be encouraged and motivated (1)
- More time (1)
- Career development advice (3)
- Developing a specialisation in a specific subject (1)
- Get help in real translation situations (1)
- Peace and quietness (1)
- Friendship (1)
- Information on how to work with agencies (1)
- Information on how to get a mentor (1)
- Working with a mentor from a different industry to get new ideas and new experience (1)

1 person mentioned that the option of not having a mentor should have been part of the survey
PART IV: END OF THE SURVEY

This last part was accessible to all participants, even those having answered that they had never acted either as a mentor or as a mentee, and who were not interested in playing any of those roles in the future.

*Question 52: Do you have any other comment to help with the creation of a Mentoring Standard?*

60 persons answered this question in Part IV of the survey. 21 simply answered that they had no other comments. Many people wrote positive and encouraging comments, expressing their gratitude for this initiative. Since many ideas were expressed, sometimes with participants suggesting several ideas, we have simply listed all the useful comments here below, grouping them in sections.

**Goals for mentoring**

- How to find weaknesses that translators should strengthen
- Make sure translation skills are improved
- Help building connections for newcomers
- Help mentees build a sustainable career (work efficiently, good strategy, negotiation, business variations, etc.)
- Provide feedback on translation skills
- People should understand that it is important to do their job with excellence, on time and at a fair rate

**Ways of mentoring**

- A rigorous qualification and classification process for applicants or future mentees is needed to categorize them into groups of certain needs and certain capacity building requirements
- Mentors should encourage mentees to get a high-level translation qualification
- Mentors should have a proven track record, and be able to promote the career of their mentees, not just recycle blog post and generic advice
- Only members of recognized translators and interpreters associations should act as mentors
- Mentors and mentees should work in the same languages and specialisations
- Mentors in business matters should have enough experience
- Possibility to compare the newcomers’ translation with the one made by the mentor

**Ethics**

- Clear stand points needed on professional ethics
- Mentors should not exploit mentees (requiring fast deliveries, low rates, etc.)
- “Get out” clause for both parties
Compensation
- Mentoring should be financially compensated by the mentee or an association
- Create a performance-related payment scheme, when the mentee will share his/her earnings with the mentor

Expectations from the standard
- Give a realistic overview of the macroeconomic situation, globalisation and their effects on our profession
- Make the difference between mentoring during academic life and mentoring once being graduated
- Build the step between academic training and work as a successful freelance translator
- Build trust in the structures and the individuals involved
- Remove the grey, unknown areas of our profession, market
- Explain how the collaboration between the mentee and the mentor should work
- Should include usability/user experience knowledge
- Advice on training courses for mentees
- Implement mentors’ training and support (this could encourage people to mentor)
- Help build a community spirit
- Make the standard international

Various
- Take into consideration that the majority of translators and interpreters seem to be women
- Mentees should really be motivated and not participate in the program only to pass an exam or get some sort of points

Although the vast majority of the comments were positive and constructive, some negative comments were also made, such as:
- Do not encourage mentoring
- It’s stupid to teach competitors the ropes of the profession
- Please stop this initiative
- This concept is a total waste of time

Some people also left comments regarding the questionnaire itself – those will be taken into consideration for any future survey:
- For all the questions having “Other” as an option, it would be better to leave some space for comments
- The questionnaire didn’t take the fact into consideration that some participants are already part of a mentoring program
- No mention of “literary translation” in the questionnaire
- Some options were not available for some questions (Q10, Q11 for instance)
- Some options contain ambiguous terms (Q11, Q19, for instance)
- The option “N/A” (not applicable) should have been proposed in most questions
- The use of the e-mail in a mentoring program was not covered enough
- More questions should have allowed for multiple choices (Q22 for instance)
Question 53: If you would like to provide your email we will be able to notify you when the standard is ready

187 people provided us with their e-mail address. For confidentiality purposes, this data is not published with the current results.

Question 54: I am interested to be a…
(multiple choices)

Of the 229 participants having answered this question, 41% would like to be a mentor (95) and 43% would like to be a mentee (99). A large number of respondents would be interested in participating in the creation of a standard on mentoring (68), and a third of them are only interested in getting the final standard, once ready (77).