R221 – Specific Requirements: Forensic Examination Accreditation Program - Testing

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Introduction

1.0 Scope

This document describes the requirements for forensic testing organizations seeking A2LA accreditation. For the purposes of this document forensic testing refers to testing performed on submitted or collected items where the result of that testing will be used in criminal or civil litigation.

All organizations seeking accreditation for forensic testing must meet the general requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2005.

When testing is performed outside the organization’s permanent facility, R104 – General Requirements – Accreditation of Field Testing and Field Calibration Laboratories applies.

Organizations seeking accreditation for forensic testing must also meet A2LA policy and requirements documents:

P101 – Rules for Making Reference to A2LA Accredited Status
P102 – A2LA Policy on Measurement Traceability
P102a - Policy on Reference Material Traceability for Life Sciences Testing Laboratories (where applicable)
R101 – General Requirements – Accreditation of ISO/IEC 17025 laboratories
R102 – Conditions of Accreditation
R103 – General Requirements – Proficiency Testing for ISO/IEC 17025 Laboratories
R103a - Annex- Proficiency Testing for ISO-IEC 17025 Laboratories

A testing laboratory which is engaged in forensic inspection work may apply for accreditation for its inspection work concurrently with its application for accreditation for testing.

2.0 References

P101 – Rules for Making Reference to A2LA Accredited Status.


P102a - Policy on Reference Material Traceability for Life Sciences Testing Laboratories
3.0 Definitions

3.1 For the purposes of these requirements, the relevant terms and definitions given in ISO/IEC 17000, the VIM, and ISO/IEC Guide 2 apply. As used herein the following terms shall have the meanings specified:

3.2 Case Record – A coordinated record relating to each case under investigation.

3.3 Case Review – Administrative and technical review of all data to ensure quality and reliability of the work conducted.

3.3.1 Administrative Review – A review of the report and all supporting documentation for consistency with organization policies and for editorial correctness.

3.3.2 Technical Review – An evaluation of reports, notes, data, and other documents to ensure an appropriate and sufficient basis for the scientific conclusions.

3.4 Court Statement – A written report of the results and interpretations of forensic tests/examinations submitted to court. Such reports may be in a format prescribed in legislation.

3.5 Examiner/Analyst – An individual who conducts and/or directs the analysis of forensic casework samples, interprets data, reaches conclusions and testifies in court.
3.6 Forensic Science – The examination of scenes of crime, recovery of evidence, examination of evidence, interpretation of findings and presentation of the conclusions reached for intelligence purposes or for use in court.

3.7 Known Samples – Those samples whose identity or type is established.

3.7.1 Examplar\(^1\) – A specimen of physical evidence collected from a known origin.

3.7.2 Control\(^1\) – A material of established origin that is used to evaluate the origin of a test or comparison.

3.8 Objective Test – A test which having been demonstrated and validated is under control so it can be demonstrated that all appropriately trained staff will obtain the same results within defined limits. These defined limits relate to expressions of degrees of probability as well as numerical values.

3.9 Physical Evidence – Items collected or submitted for examination in relation to a crime or criminal act.

3.10 Reference Collection – A collection of stable materials, substances, objects or artifacts of known properties or origin that may be used in the determination of the properties or origins of unknown items.

4.0 Specific Requirements

Along with ISO/IEC 17025, the specific requirements for this Forensic Examination program are found in C223 - Specific Checklist - Forensic Examination Accreditation Program-Testing. Applicant laboratories must at a minimum, meet the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025, C223 and all applicable A2LA policy and requirement documents as specified in Section 1.0 of this document.

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\(^1\) 1. ASTM Standards, ASTM E 1732, Standard Terminology Related to Forensic Science
## REVISION HISTORY

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