



Standard for Evaluating Handwriting Using the Scientific Method

1. Scope

- 1.1 This standard establishes criteria for evaluating handwriting data and other relevant considerations, which constitute a basis for reaching scientific or technical opinions.
- 1.2 The recommendations in this standard are based on generally acceptable professional practice. Not all aspects covered under this standard may be applicable to every circumstance. Unusual situations may require additional consideration.
- 1.3 This standard is not intended to replace the handwriting analyst's education and experience, and should always be used along with the analyst's professional judgment.

2. Referenced Documents

- 2.1 *AHAF Standards:*
 - Standard for Reporting Results
 - Standard for Scope of Work

3. Significance and Use

- 3.1 Handwriting analysts are responsible for analyzing and synthesizing data found in handwriting and for reporting their conclusions. Any conclusions or opinions reported should be supported by the handwriting samples and presented in a form that is understandable to a layman (i.e., without the use of technical jargon).
- 3.2 This standard is intended to serve as a guide for the handwriting analyst in conducting an analysis based on the scientific method, which includes analyzing and evaluating the information found in the handwriting.

4. Evaluation Procedure

- 4.1 This section outlines basic principles of evaluation that are in agreement with accepted scientific practices.
 - 4.1.1 *Define the problem or questions under consideration*—The definition should include 1) the purpose of the analysis, 2) the issues being addressed.
 - 4.1.2 *Identification and Validity of Hypotheses:*
 - 4.1.2.1 State the criteria used in the evaluation.
 - 4.1.3 *Evaluation Techniques:*
 - 4.1.3.1 Prepare and maintain a record of analysis and deductions that can be quantified to a reasonable extent.

5. Data for Evaluation

- 5.1 The evaluation process is based on the information available.
- 5.2 List the available handwriting samples and their source.

6. Opinions

- 6.1 Conclusions should be drawn only after all available handwriting samples have been analyzed and evaluated. Any conclusions drawn should be consistent with

accepted scientific and logical principles and can be defended in a court of law if necessary.

7. Report

- 7.1 Report any opinions and conclusions in accordance with the Standard for Reporting Results of Handwriting Analysis.