RECOGNITION OF PUBLISHED INDUSTRY STANDARDS IN NORTH AMERICA

The American Society of Questioned Document Examiners (ASQDE) recognizes published industry standards for North America that are currently published by the Academy Standards Board (ASB) and those that were historically published by the Scientific Working Group for Forensic Document Examination (SWGDOC) and ASTM/ASTM International/ASTMI.

FAQ about published industry standards

What is a published industry standard?
A published industry standard is the product of a broad collective consensus of practitioners as to the most effective and appropriate methodologies and procedures from which to conduct various examinations. The goal of these standards is to maximize the quality and reliability of both the examinations themselves and the resulting conclusions.

Who creates published industry standards for forensic document examination?
The profession as a whole works together to develop standards. Standards are not the product or creation of any one group or technical organization. There is only a single set of recognized standards for examiners in government agencies, private practice, and professional organizations. For example, ASQDE does not have their own set of standards. There is one *industry* standard and it is relevant to the entire industry, not just a subset.

How are published industry standards currently created?
There are many ways in which the creation of a published industry standard can begin. It may originate from an individual, a group of practitioners, or an organization. Regardless of its source, a proposed standard undergoes an extensive development process that typically includes the following:

1. Initial development by an individual or group.
2. Initial review by a small sub-committee from an accredited Standards Development Organization (SDO) of practitioners, academics, users, etc. for forensic document examination. This sub-committee may also be the source of the original development.
3. Review by the full body of SDO for forensic document examination.
4. A period of public comment in which anyone can provide change or edit comments, each of which must be addressed.
5. Consensus action on each edit recommendation under the public comment period by the original SDO sub-committee, then by the full SDO.

6. Review and approval by an independent accreditation body. The accrediting body for published industry standards in North America is The American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Only after successfully completing each stage of the above process can a standard become an accredited published industry standard. Currently, the Academy Standards Board is the only recognized Standards Development Organization that publishes forensic document examination accredited standards specific to the forensic document examination discipline.