



ONTARIO POLICE COLLEGE

2010

FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION RE-CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION  
POLICIES, PROCEDURES & INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services

Ontario Police College

January 2010

This document was prepared by the Ontario Police College based on advice from the Forensic Identification Advisory Board and is similar in nature to the Policies and Procedures for OPC Promotional Examinations as developed by the Promotional Examination Advisory Committee.

Although every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the material, errors can occur. Should you find any errors, please notify:

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## **DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

The Ontario Police College (OPC) is pleased to announce the availability of the Forensic Identification Officer (FOI) Re-certification Examination.

OPC and the Forensic Identification Advisory Board (FIAB) have jointly developed the re-certification process. The FIAB represents police services in Ontario and has representatives from the Centre of Forensic Sciences and the Canadian Police College. The jointly developed process has two components.

**Part 1** consists of a written examination in basic knowledge and skills in a multiple choice format. The written examination will be available for candidates at the same times and locations as the Promotional Examinations and at other times during the year. This will allow candidates to choose a convenient time and place to write the examination, particularly if they are writing a Promotional Examination in the same year.

**Part 2** consists of the “skills” component of the recertification process. This will entail a demonstration of skills during recognized Forensic Identification Training Courses. This will permit FIOs to acquire new knowledge and skills and demonstrate the foundational competencies required for identification work. The foundational competencies will rely on collection, preservation, analysis and documentation of evidence. We anticipate that advanced courses in friction ridge analysis, footwear analysis, tire track and tread analysis, bloodstain pattern analysis, and so on will be “recognized” as meeting the requirement for demonstration of skills.

I would like to extend my appreciation to members of the FIAB and their respective organizations for their invaluable contributions to the ongoing development of this process and the quality of forensic identification training in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Rudy Gheysen

## BACKGROUND

Ontario Regulation 3/99 requires that members of police services who provide forensic identification or crime scene analysis must have completed Ministry accredited training or hold equivalent core competencies. Along with the other eight areas identified in the regulation, these MATSs and CCs came into effect January 1, 2000.

Forensic Identification Training can be acquired at OPC or at the Canadian Police College.

The Forensic Identification Advisory Board (FIAB) provides advice and input on training issues. The Board has representatives of each of the fourteen largest services, and many of the medium to smaller police services as well as the Centre of Forensic Sciences and the Canadian Police College. The Board has been core to the development of this system since 2000.

OPC and the FIAB have jointly developed a systematic approach to ensuring ongoing competence and enhancement of professional development of Forensic Identification Officers (FIOs). This further defines the requirement under the Regulation for a skills development and learning plan by ensuring FIOs engage in regular ongoing professional development and that recertification in basic skills occurs on a regular basis.

The changes to the requirements for Forensic Identification officers were set forth in a phased approach to provide police services with time to adjust to the new requirements. All Chiefs Memorandum 06-0098 outlined the changes to the training requirements to:

*“clarify the “ongoing professional development” requirements of Forensic Identification Officers (FIOs) and further define the requirement under the regulation for a skills development and learning plan by ensuring FIOs engage in regular ongoing professional development and that recertification in basic skills occurs on a regular basis.”*

*The new training requirements in the Ministry Accredited Training Standards for Forensic Identification Officers are as follows:*

- 1. Successful completion of Ontario Police College or Canadian Police College Forensic Identification Officer course.*
- 2. Successful completion of Ontario Police College Field Training Log with assistance from experienced Forensic Identification Officers.*
- 3. Successful completion of a re-certification examination of core competencies every three years commencing in 2008. The re-certification examination will be developed in consultation with police services in Ontario and the Forensic Identification Advisory Board. It will be administered by the Ontario Police College.*

*The new requirements came into effect January 1, 2008 for new FIOs. Those Forensic Identification Officers who complete their initial certification prior to 2008 would be required to comply with recertification requirements commencing January 1, 2011, and every three years thereafter.*

## **PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

This document is intended to provide information and guidance to candidates regarding exam administration, format, and study references. A PDF version is available on the OPC website at [www.opconline.ca](http://www.opconline.ca); (look under Resources/Forensics/Recertification).

Policies, procedures and protocols have been established in consultation with Forensic Identification Advisory Board members to ensure the principles of equity and fairness for all candidates. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with Ontario Police College management and the affected service(s).

## **STUDY GUIDE**

The study guide is intended to provide direction to exam candidates regarding exam preparation tips, problem-oriented coping strategies, and exam item construction and interpretation (including sample exam items). In keeping with a continuous improvement approach, the guide will be revised regularly and will take into account feedback from 2009 exam candidates.

## **PURPOSE OF EXAMINATIONS**

The primary purpose of the FIO Re-certification examination is to ensure ongoing quality and consistency in the practices of forensic identification provided by Ontario police services and to enhance the ongoing training and development of individual forensic identification officers.

The examinations are designed to ensure ongoing competence in foundational knowledge and skills of forensic identification officers. The eight required competency areas for FIOs are available at [www.opconline.ca](http://www.opconline.ca) look under Resources then Forensics. In addition, the Ministry Accredited Course Training Standards (MATS) for FIOs are also available on the site. A study guide based on the MATS is also available as an MSWord © document. The passing score (similar to most standards) will be 75%.

## **CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY**

Police services will determine candidate eligibility. Candidates must seek authorization from their respective police service to participate in an OPC Forensic Identification examination. A candidate may write only one OPC examination per six month period.

## REGISTRATION PROCESS

Candidates must register by contacting their respective police service's contact person (usually a member of Administration/Human Resources/Professional Development).

OPC will only accept registrations from designated police service contact persons, not individual exam candidates.

OPC must receive registration notice from your police service no later than **February 5, 2010**. No cancellations will be accepted after that date.

There is no cost to the service or candidate for the examination in 2010.

## EXAMINATION DATE/TIME

FIO Re-certification Examinations will be held:

Dates in 2010	Location
Wednesday Feb 10	Thunder Bay Police Service FIS
Thursday Feb 11	Thunder Bay Police Service FIS
Wednesday Mar 10	Toronto FIS Conference
Wednesday Mar 10	Windsor Police Service Training Centre (Tilston Armouries)
Sunday Mar 28	Province Wide - Promotional Exam Venues Specify:
Wednesday Apr 14	Ottawa, Professional Development Centre (Algonquin College) Orillia, Ontario Provincial Police Academy Belleville, Ontario Provincial Police FIS Toronto, Toronto Police Training Centre Ontario Police College, Aylmer
Wednesday Sep 22	Orillia, Canadian Identification Society Conference
Wednesday Nov 17	Peel Region, Peel Police Training Centre
Thursday Nov 18	Peel Region, Peel Police Training Centre

Exam sites will operate as follows:

- Registration will begin at 0900 hrs.
- Examinations will begin at 1000 hrs.

**Exception:** Exam sites located in the Central Time Zone (i.e. extreme north/western Ontario, e.g. Kenora, Dryden, etc.) will operate as follows:

- Registration will begin at 0800 hrs.
- Examinations will begin at 0900 hrs.

**Note:** late arrivals **will not** be accommodated.

### **MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS**

As the examination will be made available on numerous dates during the year, **NO specific make-up examinations will be held.**

## **EXAMINATION SITES**

Examinations sites for the **March 28** examination will be determined based on the geographical distribution of promotional and forensic identification candidates across the province. Locations will be confirmed in December 2009. This information will be communicated to all services (via designated contact persons), and in addition, will be posted on the OPC website.

Candidates may select the site at which they wish to write. For example, a candidate may reside closer to an exam site than his/her police service's designated site, or may be on assignment or vacationing at a location closer to another site. At the time of registering, members should inform their police service contact person if they would prefer to write at an alternate site.

Further details regarding exam facilities, directions, parking, etc., will be communicated to services for dissemination to members, no later than Monday, March 9, 2009. This information will also be available on the OPC website.

## **EXAMINATION FACILITIES**

Exam facilities must meet specified criteria with respect to lighting, seating, temperature, washroom access, parking, etc. Every effort will be made to ensure that facilities are both conducive to exam writing and help safeguard exam security.

## **PROCTORING EXAMINATIONS**

Our goal is to provide an atmosphere where candidates may perform to the best of their ability while assuring that rules are followed and honesty is maintained. The role of exam proctors is critical in ensuring the integrity of the examination and examination conditions, including consistency across all administration sites. As such, exam proctors are instructed to monitor candidates and report any suspicions of dishonesty or other (potential) concerns to the Chief or Senior Officer Designate on site.

Should you have any concerns with the exam conditions, please inform one of the proctors. Please note that proctors are otherwise NOT permitted to engage in conversation with exam candidates, or respond to questions or interpret exam items for candidates.

## ON SITE PROTOCOLS

Candidates should be aware of the following protocols that will be in effect across all exam sites:

- Casual attire or uniform
  - For personal comfort consider dressing in layers
- Ball caps will NOT be worn during examinations
- Beverages and snack food only (e.g. fruit, cereal bars, etc.)
  - Please avoid food that is potentially distracting (e.g. crunchy food items)
  - Peanut and other nut products will not be permitted in school locations
- Reference materials, blank paper, electronic transmission devices, or aids of any kind will NOT be permitted in the examination room; for clarification, the ONLY items you are permitted to have on your table/desk are the following:
  - Examination package
  - Pencils (no pens or other writing instruments permitted)
  - Beverage/food item (no lunch boxes, cooler bags, etc.)
- Candidates must present photographic identification in the form of a warrant card upon registration
- Candidates will be issued an exam package that is both sealed and numbered
- Candidates will be directed to be seated until examinations begin
- Assigned seating may be used at some sites
- The exam package must remain sealed and on the candidates desk top until instructed otherwise
- Candidates will NOT be permitted to leave the exam room, except with permission from a presiding proctor
- Examinations will begin at 1000 hrs. NOT earlier, even if all candidates are present
- The attending proctors are NOT responsible for the content of the examination and will NOT be permitted to provide assistance
  - Reading and comprehension are part of the examination process;
  - An appeal form will be available if you perceive something about the wording to be confusing or misleading
- All examinations must be completed in one sitting
- Washroom breaks will be permitted, one at a time (with proctor escort)
- After handing in examination materials, candidates will NOT be permitted to make any changes, additions or deletions to their answer form
- Candidates will NOT be allowed to re-enter after leaving the exam room

## FORMAT OF EXAMINATIONS

All examinations are closed book, multiple-choice format with 4 possible response options. Candidates are required to choose the correct response. The total number of exam items will not exceed 120. Candidates will be allowed three hours to complete the examination.

Candidates will be permitted to write (i.e. make notes, underline keywords, etc.) on their examination booklet. However, all responses must be recorded on the Scantron answer form provided, using an H or HB pencil. Note: pencils will NOT be provided.

Below are three sample exam items which demonstrate the format of exam items: question and answer; sentence completion; and fill in the blank.

### Sample item #1 (question and answer format)

What is second level detail?

- A. Class characteristics
- B. Major ridge path deviations
- C. Patterns
- D. Creases

### Sample item #2 (sentence completion format):

Harold Cummins demonstrated:

- A. skin growth patterns starts in embryos.
- B. volar pad growth starts at 2 weeks.
- C. volar pad growth starts at 20 weeks.
- D. volar pad growth starts at 30 weeks.

### Sample item #3 (fill in the blank format):

The epidermis is the \_\_\_\_\_ layer of the friction skin?

- A. inner
- B. outer
- C. generating
- D. primary

## **APPEAL PROCEDURE**

The key considerations surrounding appeals are fairness to candidates and examination security. Due to the considerable cost involved in writing exam items, together with the limited/relevant material to be covered in some content areas, examination reviews are NOT permitted.

Any candidate having concerns about either examination content or process may undertake to formally submit his/her concerns by completing a “Request for Appeal” form using one of the options detailed below.

### ***Option 1: On site***

- The examination package will include a “Request for Appeal” form
- Candidates may complete the appeal form by stating in writing, and in sufficient detail, any concerns about either examination content or process
- The appeal form is to be completed AFTER writing the examination
  - Candidates who require the full three hours to write the exam will be provided additional time to complete the appeal form
- Candidates may refer to their examination booklet while completing this form (e.g. to refer to specific exam item numbers)
- Under this option, the appeal form is to be completed and submitted prior to departure from the exam site
- For security reasons, all appeal forms (whether completed or not) must be handed in to the proctor prior to departing
- Candidates will submit appeals anonymously

### ***Option 2: Post examination***

Following examinations, candidates may access the “Request for Appeal” form at the OPC website at [www.opconline.ca](http://www.opconline.ca); (look under Resources/Forensics/ Exams). Completed forms must be completed and submitted as follows:

By e-mail directed to [ramona.morris@ontario.ca](mailto:ramona.morris@ontario.ca), or

By mail, under confidential cover, to

Ontario Police College,  
10716 Hacienda Road,  
Aylmer, Ontario N5H 2T2,  
Attention: OPC Forensic Identification Examination Coordinator

Appeals must be received by the OPC Forensic Identification Examination Coordinator within 7 calendar days after writing the examination. Confirmation of receipt will only be provided upon request AND where sufficient contact information is provided

- Candidate identity will remain confidential

### ***Appeal Review Process***

#### Step 1: Collating Supporting Documents

With respect to each item subject to appeal, the OPC Forensic Identification Examination Coordinator will collate the following documentation:

1. Request(s) for appeal
  - a. Where an item is appealed by more than one candidate or across multiple levels, copies of all relevant documentation will be reviewed
2. Exam item (draft form), including supporting rationale (e.g., how the item is job related; why each option is incorrect or correct)
3. Exam item (final draft)
4. Detailed item analyses (including statistical properties; see Item Analyses and Review, below)
  - a. For any item that appears on multiple exam levels, detailed item analyses will be provided for each level, whether or not the item is subject to appeal on the other level(s)

#### Step 2: Review by OPC Subject Matter Expert

The OPC Forensic Identification Examination Coordinator will forward all documentation listed in Step 1 to an OPC Subject Matter Expert (SME) for review. The OPC SME will indicate, in writing, his/her recommendations with respect to the appeal (appeal

awarded or denied), including a supporting rationale. Note: review by OPC SME may include consultation with additional SMEs.

### Step 3: Review by Forensic Identification Examination Appeal Committee

A Forensic Identification Examination Appeal Committee (FIEAC) will be appointed to review all requests for appeal.

#### ***Composition of FIEAC:***

- Two OPC Forensic Identification instructors
- The Identification Examination Coordinator
- At least one Forensic identification Advisory Committee member who did not write the exam under consideration or will not be writing the recertification examination. Several members of FIAB have been granted exemptions from the written component of the recertification requirements so they could be involved in the development of the examination.

The Forensic Identification Examination Appeal Committee (FIEAC) will meet to review all documentation from Steps 1 & 2. The FIEAC will indicate, in writing, their decision with respect to the appeal (appeal awarded or denied) including a supporting rationale. Review by FIEAC may include additional consultation or clarification with SMEs.

### Step 4: Report of the Forensic Identification Examination Appeal Committee

The FIEAC will prepare a report to include the following:

- The total number of exam items subject to appeal; and
- The outcome of the review

The report will NOT disclose:

- The particulars of any exam item(s)
- The identity of appellant candidate(s) nor member service(s)

The decision of the FIEAC is final. Where an appeal results in a score adjustment, the benefit will be extended to all candidates who responded to the question (and at all exam levels, where applicable).

The FIEAC final report will be forwarded to all participating services, to the attention of the Chief of Police, and will accompany the report of examination

scores (see Reporting of Examination Results). The final report will also be posted on the OPC website.

## **CANDIDATE FEEDBACK**

OPC welcomes feedback regarding all aspects of the examinations, including administration, format, content, and study references. All candidates will be invited to participate in a formal Candidate Reactions Survey. Further details will be provided at the exam sites.

## **ITEM ANALYSES AND REVIEW**

The single-date administration format affords the benefit of a (large) single sample analysis. Prior to reporting examination scores to police services, OPC staff will endeavour to locate and correct any potentially problematic exam items. This process includes and goes beyond the Appeal Process.

Part of this quality control process involves the consideration of statistical properties of item functioning. For example, item analysis statistics serve as clues as to potentially problematic items including measures of item difficulty (i.e., What percentage of candidates answered the question correctly?) and item discrimination (i.e., What percentage of the top 27% scorers responded correctly versus the lowest 27%? What was the correlation between getting the correct answer to a given item and the total score on the exam?). The statistical measures serve as preliminary clues, whereas the foremost quality-control consideration will be an extensive content review that includes consultation with relevant subject matter experts.

Problematic items, if any, will be identified and dealt with *before* scores are reported to police services.

## **SCORING OF EXAMINATIONS**

The exam-scoring process is an integral part of the quality control procedures. All exams are scored at OPC under the supervision of the Forensic Identification Examination Coordinator. The forms are scanned and scored electronically using appropriate hardware and Scantron's ParSCORE software. The software can be programmed to deal appropriately with problematic items (i.e., eliminate the item from the scoring process). During scanning, the program automatically identifies potential errors (e.g. blanks; erasures), which prompts an immediate, manual review by the operator. In addition to the electronic scoring, a random check is performed to ensure accuracy of scoring.

## REPORTING OF EXAMINATION RESULTS

Final results will be reported to police services in writing, under confidential cover, to the attention of the Chief of Police. OPC will endeavour to report scores to services within 6 weeks of the date the examination was written.

Results will include:

- Overall scores (range and mean (average) percentages)
- Mean (average) score for each subject grouping.
- Final Report of the Forensic Identification Examination Appeal Committee
- Results of Detailed Item Analysis (including any scoring adjustments)

Individual Candidates results. **The candidates result will be reported as “Met Standard” or “Did not Meet Standard”. The passing score will be 75%.**

## CANDIDATE RECORDS

The Ontario Police College will retain candidates' examination papers for three months following the reporting of examination results. The College will maintain a permanent record of all scores for 65 years. Whereas OPC reports candidate results to services following examinations, any subsequent requests for results require written authorization from the candidate.

## STUDY REFERENCES

Candidates are responsible for obtaining their own reference materials from which to study. The following list of resources will assist in preparation for the exams.

### CORE COMPETENCIES FOR FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION OFFICERS (2006)

The forensic identification specialist must be able to:

#### ATTEND CRIME SCENES

- a) Determine priority of call
- b) Determine resources required and available
- c) Schedule attendance of forensic identification specialist
- d) Arrive at scene promptly and adequately equipped to examine, collect, preserve and / or process physical evidence
- e) Become familiar with all available facts in the case to determine the sequence of events, victim impact, additional resources required and feasibility of recovering physical evidence
- f) Determine strategy and develop a plan of action to ensure safe and efficient forensic examination with minimal contamination of evidence
- g) Assess validity of information previously obtained
- h) Facilitate cooperation with investigators and other team members and assist primary investigator in conduct of forensic aspects of case
- i) Understand and comply with role and responsibility as required by Ontario Major Case Management principles as per Ontario Regulation 354/04.

#### RECORD CRIME SCENES

- a) Document the crime scene prior to forensic examination and / or disturbance, e.g., by photographs, videographs, tape recordings, written notes as appropriate
- b) Document individual items of evidence and their location, for investigational or court purposes
- c) Measure the overall scene and the relative location of recovered evidence to enable the preparation of accurate and detailed scale drawings for investigators and possible court presentation
- d) Document damage to private property incurred during the investigation

#### COLLECT, PRESERVE AND PROCESS EVIDENCE AT CRIME SCENES

- a) Minimize disturbance and contamination of the crime scene
- b) Locate, document, collect and preserve:
  - i friction ridge impression evidence
  - ii two and three dimensional impression evidence
  - iii evidence for further examination at the forensic identification unit
  - iv evidence for scientific analysis at a forensic laboratory
  - v other evidence as required for the investigation

#### DOCUMENT AND PRESERVE CONTINUITY

As per local service requirements:

- a) Document initial forensic examination and prepare report to assist in investigation
- b) Update the primary investigator on the status of the forensic evidence as laboratory examinations / processes are completed
- c) Maintain continuity of evidence and preserve it for further examination and / or presentation to court
- d) Arrange the timely and safe return of personal property

#### PROCESS AND ANALYZE EVIDENCE

- a) Assess the evidence for completeness to enable the reconstruction of the events of the crime
- b) Submit / share evidence with the appropriate agencies as required, e.g., forensic laboratory, central fingerprint repository and other police services
- c) Preserve and safeguard original photographic images and provide photographic prints as required for investigational and court purposes
- d) Preserve and safeguard original videotapes and provide a visual record of evidence for investigational and court purposes
- e) Analyze, compare, evaluate, individualize and preserve friction ridge impressions
- f) Confirm criminal record through comparison of fingerprint impressions
- g) Analyze, compare, evaluate, individualize and preserve two- and three-dimensional impressions
- h) Identify and / or verify the origin of other physical evidence e.g. physical match; trace evidence
- i) Select, process and preserve evidence for investigational and court purposes

#### MANAGE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- a) Make equipment and supplies available and operational on a continual basis
- b) Maintain the work area in a clean, safe, and orderly fashion in compliance with Health and Safety requirements

#### PREPARE FOR COURT, FORMAL INQUIRY AND CORONER'S INQUESTS

- a) Prepare evidence for investigational and / or court purposes in a suitable, easily understandable format
- b) Inform all relevant parties of the evidence to be submitted in court
- c) Assist counsel in preparing for court
- d) Present and explain forensic evidence in a professional and understandable manner using appropriate scientific language
- e) Conclude forensic examination file in accordance with police service and court policies

#### ONGOING TRAINING AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

- a) Engage in regular, ongoing training and / or professional development activities to ensure currency in knowledge, skills and abilities in the field
- b) Keep abreast of new forensic methods and technology
- c) Join professional organizations and / or read professional journals and publications
- d) Comply with requirements of the professional development model as prescribed (to be further articulated when the model is adopted)

## TRAINING FOR COMPETENCE (REVISED NOVEMBER 2008)

In training for the performance of these forensic identification tasks, the following technical competencies have been identified by the Ontario Police College and the Canadian Police College:

1. Crime Scene and Evidence Photography and the photographic process:
  - a) Use photographic techniques for crime scenes and small objects
  - b) Manage exposure and contrast control
  - c) Use of filters, lenses of differing focal lengths and other accessories
  - d) Conduct close-up photography
  - e) Use Electronic flash techniques (e.g. Oblique, tented, bounce flash)
  - f) Control of light and lighting techniques (e.g. Long exposures through available light, oblique lighting, polarizing filter etc.)
  - g) Control lighting for large scenes at night (e.g. Paint by light, multiple flash in the scene, multiple flash at the camera; rear curtain synchronization etc.)
  - h) Use forensic lighting sources and techniques including ultraviolet and other specific bandwidths of visible light in forensic applications (e.g. Fluorescence)
  - i) Conduct assault victim photography
  - j) Use videography
2. Analytical Photography:
  - a) Use camera and lighting techniques for two and three dimensional impressions, such as, fingerprints, toolmarks, tire tracks and footwear
  - b) Process-and manage images including capture and storage of images (Photoshop calibration, channels, tracking enhancement) very generic and work flow.)
3. Crime Scene Examination:
  - a) Use forensic light sources to search for evidence
  - b) Recover and preserve physical evidence
  - c) Prepare and submit evidence for laboratory examination with particular attention to CFS/RCMP lab submission requirements and techniques available). *CFS Field Handbook for investigators (2008)*.
  - d) Search for and compare physical evidence (including two and three dimensional impression such as fingerprints and other evidence suitable for casting/physical matching e.g. Tire tracks, footwear toolmarks, bitemarks).
  - e) Measure and sketch crime scenes (including plan drawing)
  - f) Fingerprint deceased persons and be aware of other methods of identifying human remains
  - g) Comply with Major Case Management Model, and responsibilities of the forensic specialist including responsibilities regarding search warrants
  - h) Comply with forensic pathology requirements.
  - i) Manage crime scenes.
  - j) Prepare basic bloodstain documentation and be aware of analysis capability.
  - k) Comply with Case documentation requirements (especially continuity)
  - l) Comply with Major Case Management Model, and responsibilities of the forensic specialist including responsibilities regarding search warrants.
  - m) Collect DNA samples from persons and crime scenes.(blood, buccal and hair, wet and dry)
  - n) Comply with health and safety requirements.
  - o) Comply with quality assurance procedures.

4. Friction Ridge Analysis:
  - a) Describe history of fingerprinting
  - b) Describe skin structure
  - c) Describe philosophy, ethics and scientific principles and methodology of the identification process
  - d) Conduct friction ridge analysis (ridgeology)
  - e) Record fingerprints and palmprints
  - f) Recognise fingerprint and palmprint patterns and determine digits
  - g) Develop latent fingerprints using powder and chemical methods
  
5. Legal issues:
  - a) Comply with *Identification of Criminals Act*
  - b) Present forensic evidence identification evidence (including ethics, testifying as an expert witness)
  - c) Prepare charts
  - d) Apply case law and statutes, regulatory and legislative environment for forensic identification

Ashbaugh, David R. , 1999. Quantitative-Qualitative Friction Ridge Analysis an Introduction to Basic and Advanced Ridgeology. Taylor and Francis

CFS Field Handbook for investigators (2008).

Ministry Accredited Training Standards and Core Competencies for Forensic Identification

Provincial/Federal Statutes

Candidates are responsible for researching relevant statutes using internet or other means. OPC will not be providing hard copies of legislation. Legislation can be accessed electronically using the below websites:

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca> or <http://e-laws.gov.on.ca>

Please note that indices and tables of contents may not be included. Additional guidance on researching provincial and federal statutes, including how to conduct an electronic search, can be found in the Study Guide.

Ministry Policing Standards

A copy of the updated Policing Standards Manual (CD version) was distributed to all services on June 17, 2004 via an All Chiefs (Index No. 04-0053). OPC is not permitted to post this legislation on our website due to a government requirement for French translation where there is public access (this legislation is currently available in English only). Police services may post this document on their own website for access to members. Members may obtain additional copies of the CD from Public Safety Division by contacting Kay Ali by e-mail at [kay.ali@ontario.ca](mailto:kay.ali@ontario.ca) or by telephone at 416-327-4445 or by fax at 416-314-3092. Be sure to include your police service mailing address.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Why are there no exam reviews? How will I know where I went wrong?

Exam reviews by promotional examination candidates were discontinued effective May 2002 following the discovery of compromised exam security (note: exam items from these examinations will not be used in future examinations). The OPC Forensic Identification Examination Advisory Committee has elected to adopt similar procedures and will provide exam candidates with a breakdown of his/her individual exam scores by subject area, together with the provincial averages, including the overall mean (average) score for each exam level and subject grouping.

Although developmental learning is a secondary benefit of preparing for and writing OPC Forensic Identification examinations, the primary purpose is to assist in ensuring ongoing competence in foundational knowledge and skills. This purpose is best served by re-using a portion of quality exam items on subsequent examinations. Item writing is both expensive and resource intensive. Writing all new examinations each time would detract from the quality.

The formal Appeal Procedure provides candidates the opportunity to express concerns about the exam process and/or specific exam items (see Appeal Procedure and Appeal Review Process above).

### 2. How do I know that the correct answers are, in fact, correct?

Considerable quality control measures are in place to ensure accuracy and correctness. Firstly, the item writing process includes an item-writing template that provides item rationales detailing how the item assesses a job-relevant piece of knowledge and why the options are either incorrect or correct. Exam items are reviewed and verified by at least two subject matter experts beyond the original item writer (see Study Guide: Item Writing Process).

Following examinations, a detailed statistical item analyses is performed on all exam items. Item analysis statistics provide clues about potentially problematic items that may be flagged for further content review, regardless of whether the item was also the subject of appeal. Ultimately, the content review by subject matter experts is the foremost quality-control consideration (see Item Analyses and Review on page 11).

### 3. Why must appeals be submitted BEFORE scores are released?

Failure to meet the standard is not grounds for appeal. However, OPC is interested in knowing whether candidates have concerns about the exam process or content, including exam items that are perceived to be problematic (e.g. ambiguous, difficult to interpret, more than one correct answer). Given the large number of exam items, it would be difficult to commit to memory the exact wording of exam items, including response options. An opportune time to identify concerns would be immediately after

writing the examinations (while the candidate is still in possession of the exam paper), or within a few days after writing (when the information is still relatively fresh). The appeal process provides both of these options, i.e. on site or up to 7 days after.

4. How did OPC set the standard/passing score?

The passing score (cut score) is set at 7+5%. This is the same passing score normally used in the OPC Forensic Identification Course and at the Canadian Police College. While any cut score can be construed as arbitrary, various standard setting procedures have been undertaken to ensure that the cut score is a reasonable measure of competence in the written test.

5. Must we register one hour before the exam starts? (it feels like “hurry up and wait”).

Administration sizes will vary from very few candidates at the smaller sites, to as many as 200 candidates on four different exams at the larger sites. Registration at all sites will begin one hour prior to the start of examinations. The registration process includes a number of steps to safeguard exam security. We also acknowledge that the earlier candidates arrive, the longer they wait for exams to begin (appropriately described as “hurry up and wait”). However, based on experience, a full hour is needed to register all candidates at the larger sites. We appreciate that members keep this in mind when scheduling their travel/arrival times. Note: Details regarding exam sites/facilities/directions, including number of candidates registered at each site, will be available on the OPC website at [www.opconline.ca](http://www.opconline.ca).

6. The orientation (instructions) read by the proctor before exams start seems lengthy. Why can't we just start writing?

When examinations begin, the OPC proctor will instruct all candidates regarding key administrative procedures and protocols. This process is necessary to ensure fairness and consistency across all exam sites, and to ensure that all candidates are in receipt of the appropriate exam material before beginning to write examinations. This also affords candidates the opportunity to ask any questions or seek clarification about the exam process prior to examinations starting. We acknowledge that candidates are anxious to begin writing, however, we appreciate their patience and cooperation. Note: these instructions are exclusive of the three hours writing time. Relatively few complaints of this nature have been voiced. Largely, candidates' feedback reflected that the process was clear.

7. Why are proctor escorts required for washroom visits?

The provision of proctor escorts for washrooms is but one of a number of protocols in place to protect exam security and ensure fairness and consistency across all exam sites. Proctors will be instructed to monitor washroom usage to ensure that

only one person is using the washroom facility at any time and that examination material remains in the examination room. This will allow exam candidates to focus on writing the exam versus waiting in line for an opening at the washroom, in particular at the larger sites with limited washroom facilities. Proctor escorts also help to alleviate any perception of opportunity for dishonest activity.

8. How do I seek accommodation (e.g. for a learning disability)?

A request for accommodation must be communicated directly to the member's respective Chief of Police or designate. The police service will liaise with the OPC Forensic Identification Examination Coordinator concerning the member's accommodation, including any reasonable adjustment required.

9. Why does it take so long to get the exam results?

Considerable quality control measures are in place to ensure that the accuracy and correctness of examination results, all of which require considerable time and attention to detail. These include the Appeal Review Process, Item Analysis and Review, and Scoring of Examinations (information about these processes can be found earlier in this document).

The Appeal Review Process, much like the Item Analysis and Review Process, involves considerable time and resources, collating and reviewing data and consulting with subject matter experts. The end result is to ensure that problematic items (e.g. items that are either extremely difficult or flagged by exam candidates as ambiguous) are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner.

With respect to scoring, although Scantron forms are scanned and scored electronically (using appropriate hardware and software), random manual checks are also conducted to ensure accuracy of the scoring equipment.

Prior to reporting final results to police services, OPC cross-references the candidate information with the registration sign-in sheets to ensure that all member results are accounted for. Frequently, additional searches are required for candidates who have incorrectly entered their identifying information (e.g. name, exam level, police service code, etc.) on the Scantron form. These are but a few examples of the quality control measures undertaken prior to reporting final results to services. OPC appreciates everyone's patience in this regard.