

FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline Procedures for Open Proficiency Testing

1 Scope

These procedures apply to personnel in the FBI Laboratory who perform friction ridge print analytical or interpretative procedures on evidentiary items or approved FBI Laboratory personnel who want to retain qualification in processing (enhancement) and/or comparisons (physical comparison and individual characteristic databases) in the friction ridge discipline.

2 Procedures

The Technical Leader will ensure that proficiency tests are prepared, distributed, evaluated and/or records are maintained as appropriate. The Standards and Practices Program Manager will serve as the Proficiency Test Representative for the FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Print Discipline in accordance with the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing. Any external proficiency tests that are conducted for research purposes only will follow all appropriate practices and procedures but records or reviews will not be retained in Forensic Advantage. An external or internal proficiency test may be used for a re-qualification test.

2.1 Participation

All tests will be external and obtained from an approved vendor. However, an internally created test may be substituted if an external test is not available in the FBI Laboratory at the needed time.

2.1.1 Individuals who want to retain both processing and comparison qualifications will complete one open proficiency test annually in the area of latent print comparison.

Additionally, individuals will complete one open proficiency test per accreditation cycle in the area of latent print processing.

2.1.2 Individuals who want to retain only processing qualification will complete one open proficiency test annually in the area of latent print processing.

2.1.3 Individuals who want to retain only comparison qualification will complete one open proficiency test annually in the area of latent print comparison.

2.1.4 Laboratory personnel who no longer work in the FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline may continue participation in comparison proficiency testing through the Latent Print Support Unit. Approval is required from the Technical Leader and will last no more than one

year. Individuals will follow the relevant sections in the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing to record authorization.

2.2 Preparation of an Internal Processing Proficiency Test

For internal processing proficiency tests, prints will be deposited on a specimen(s) and the specimen(s) will then be processed by the participant using a latent print processing technique(s). The participant will be evaluated on appropriate sequential processing of the specimen(s) in the test and the designation of prints suitable for capture, if developed. Refer to the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing for additional requirements for internal proficiency test preparation.

2.2.1 The Standards and Practices Program Manager will ensure a test design is prepared and recorded on the *Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form* (Appendix A).

2.2.1.1 The test design must be approved by the Technical Leader. The approval will be recorded on the *Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form*.

2.2.1.2 The test design must be reviewed by the Laboratory Proficiency Test Program Manager to determine the appropriateness and completeness of the design relative to quality assurance. The review will be recorded on the *Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form*.

2.2.2 The Standards and Practices Program Manager will ensure the required test or batch of tests is prepared according to the test design and assign each test a unique identification number. The preparation will be recorded on the *Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form*.

2.2.3 The test or batch of tests will be verified by a second employee who witnesses the preparer deposit latent prints on the specimens to be processed and confirms the accuracy of the test identifiers. The verification will be recorded on the *Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form*.

2.2.4 The test or batch of tests will be validated by a third employee, qualified in processing, who will process one of the prepared specimens according to the test design. If the test is satisfactory, validation will be recorded on the *Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form*.

2.3 Preparation of an Internal Comparison Proficiency Test

An internal comparison proficiency test may be created with or without using a previously administered external proficiency test. Such tests will be generated following the appropriate sections of the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing with the following modifications.

2.3.1 The Standards and Practices Program Manager will ensure a test design is prepared and recorded on the *Internal Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation Proficiency Test Form* (Appendix B).

2.3.1.1 The test design must be approved by the Technical Leader. The approval will be recorded on the *Internal Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation Proficiency Test Form*.

2.3.1.2 The test design must be reviewed by the Laboratory Proficiency Test Program Manager to determine the appropriateness and completeness of the design relative to quality assurance. The review will be recorded on the *Internal Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation Proficiency Test Form*.

2.3.2 The Standards and Practices Program Manager will ensure the required test(s) are prepared according to the test design and assign each test a unique identification number. The preparation will be recorded on the *Internal Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation Proficiency Test Form*.

2.3.3 An internally prepared test(s) will be verified by a second employee who confirms the accuracy of the unique identification numbers as well as any other needed identifiers per the test design. The verification will be recorded on the *Internal Analysis Comparison, and Evaluation Proficiency Test Form*.

2.3.4 Any test(s) not based on a previously administered external proficiency test will be validated by a third employee, qualified in comparison, who will examine the specimens according to the test design. If the results are satisfactory, the validation will be recorded on the *Internal Analysis, Comparison, and Evaluation Proficiency Test Form*. Tests based on a previously administered external proficiency test will not be validated as described above.

2.4 Recording of Internal and External Proficiency Test Results

Recording of internal and external proficiency test results will follow procedures established by the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing. For an external processing or comparison proficiency test, the participant will record his/her results in Forensic Advantage and on the test provider's website. For an internal processing or comparison proficiency test, the participant will record his/her results in Forensic Advantage.

2.5 Processing Proficiency Test Results

2.5.1 In some cases, friction ridge detail or other indications that a print may be present may appear on an item but are not deemed suitable for capture. Due to the nature of external tests, indications of touch will be considered in determining appropriate responses with external tests. Internal tests will be dependent on the discipline definition of suitability for capture only.

2.5.2 Processing proficiency test results will be checked in one of two ways listed below. The participant will record all processing results in the appropriate case notes.

2.5.2.1 Developed prints or indications of touch will not be captured. Instead a check of any development (whether suitable for capture or not) by another individual will be recorded in the test records.

2.5.2.2 Alternatively, the participant will capture and retain developed prints or indications of touch in a digital image retention system per the FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline Standard Operating Procedures for Digital Images.

2.6 Verification and Review of Internal and External Proficiency Tests

2.6.1 For latent print comparison proficiency tests, a verification (as defined in the FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline Quality Assurance Manual, Procedures for Verification and Blind Verification) of all conclusions reached will be completed. The verification(s) will not be recorded on a separate photograph(s) and blind verification(s) will not be conducted on proficiency tests. A participant must have all conclusions successfully verified before conducting the verification and/or review process on another participant's test, as applicable.

2.6.2 For both processing and comparison proficiency tests, the test records of the participant will be technically and administratively reviewed after completion of the proficiency test to ensure the conclusions are fully supported by test records and the records are in compliance with Laboratory and discipline policies, practices, and procedures. The technical and administrative reviews for all tests will be recorded in Forensic Advantage.

2.7 Evaluation of Internal and External Proficiency Tests

2.7.1 The Standards and Practices Program Manager will ensure each completed proficiency test is evaluated and will compare the observed results with the expected results for internal tests or provider supplied results for external tests. If the evaluation individual is being tested, another qualified employee will conduct the evaluation(s) of the individual's test.

2.7.2 The evaluation of the test will be recorded in Forensic Advantage by the evaluator.

2.7.3 The results of the tests will be reviewed with the Technical Leader.

2.7.4 If the evaluation is found to be satisfactory, no subsequent action is necessary.

2.7.5 If the evaluation is found to be unsatisfactory, appropriate action will be taken according to the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing.

2.7.6 The test results and evaluation will be provided to the employee who will record the receipt in Forensic Advantage.

2.7.7 Refer to the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing for additional evaluation requirements.

3 Records

Applicable proficiency test related records will be permanently retained by the FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline or in Forensic Advantage. Refer to the FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing for additional records requirements.

4 References

FBI Laboratory Operations Manual, Practices for Open Proficiency Testing, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division. Latest Revision.

FBI Laboratory Quality Assurance Manual, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division. Latest Revision.

FBI Friction Ridge Discipline Operations Manual, Standard Operating Procedures for Digital Images. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division. Latest Revision.

FBI Friction Ridge Discipline Quality Assurance Manual, Procedures for Verification and Blind Verification. Federal Bureau of Investigation, Laboratory Division. Latest Revision.

Rev. #	Issue Date	History
6	10/02/17	Minor wording, grammar, and punctuation changes throughout the document. Position and document abbreviations modified throughout document. Changed “Unit” to “Units” throughout document (to include Appendices) to add Biometrics Analysis Unit. Section 2, added category numbers. Section 3 through Section 3.5 removed and remaining renumbered. Section 3 paragraph added. Section 3.1, changed end of year to needed time. Section 3.1.1, Section 3.1.2, Section 3.1.3, and Section 3.1.4, wording modified. Section 3.1.1 and Section 3.1.2, removed suitability requirement. Section 3.2.1 and Section 3.2.2, changed manager to ensuring process is done. Section 3.2.1.2, added job title. Section 3.3.1, changed manager to ensuring process is done and ACE defined. Section 3.3.2, changed manager to ensuring process is done and added last sentence. Section 3.4, changed header and first word of first sentence. Section 3.5.1, document changed and removed internal test review recording. Section 3.5.2, modified to address changes due to external test design. Section 3.5.3 number added and removed recording location. Section 3.6.1, changed manager to ensuring process is done and SPPM reference removed in rest of section. Section 3.6.2, wording changed and SPPM reference removed. Section 3.6.3, SPPM reference removed. Section 3.6.4 and Section 3.6.5, reworded. Section 4, retention changed. Appendix A and Appendix B modified.
7	04/01/21	Replace Latent Print Units with Friction Ridge Discipline or equivalent. Minor wording changes. Section 1 removed and remaining renumbered. Scope modified to remove category of testing reference and added the ANAB specific duties to each. Section 2, specified discipline and clarified representative. Section 2.1, clarified location. Section 2.1.4, aligned with Laboratory and specific to comparison. Section 2.2, removed designated. Section 2.3, moved first paragraph from further down in section. Removed last sentence of Section 2.3.2. Section 2.3.3, clarified. Section 2.3.4 distinguishes between external or not. Section 2.5 and Section 2.6, updated and reorganized. Section 2.7, removed category of testing. Appendix A and Appendix B modified.

Approval

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Friction Ridge Discipline
Technical Leader

Date: 03/31/2021

Acting Latent Print Operations
Unit Chief

Date: 03/31/2021

Latent Print Support Unit Chief

Date: 03/31/2021

Scientific and Biometrics
Analysis Unit Chief

Date: 03/31/2021

QA Approval

Quality Manager

Date: 03/31/2021

Appendix A: *FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline Internal Processing Proficiency Test Form*

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Appendix B: FBI Laboratory Friction Ridge Discipline Internal ACE Proficiency Test Form

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