



Designation: E1732 – 11b

Standard Terminology Relating to Forensic Science¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E1732; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This is a compilation of terms and corresponding definitions used in the forensic sciences. Legal or scientific terms that are generally understood or defined adequately in other readily available sources may not be included.

1.2 A definition is a single sentence with additional information included in a *Discussion*. It is reviewed every five years, and the year of last review or revision is appended.

1.3 Definitions identical to those published by another standards organization or ASTM committee are identified with the abbreviation of the name of the organization or the identifying document and ASTM committee; for example, ASME is the American Society of Mechanical Engineering.²

1.4 Definitions of terms specific to a particular field are identified with an abbreviation.³

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:⁴

E177 Practice for Use of the Terms Precision and Bias in ASTM Test Methods

E456 Terminology Relating to Quality and Statistics

E1301 Guide for Proficiency Testing by Interlaboratory Comparisons

E1402 Guide for Sampling Design

E2161 Terminology Relating to Performance Validation in Thermal Analysis

2.2 ISO Standards:⁵

ISO 3534:1993 (E/F) Statistics—Vocabulary and Symbols
Part 1: Probability and General Statistical Terms

Part 2: Statistical Quality Control

ISO 9000:2005 (E) Standard Quality Management Systems—Fundamentals and Vocabulary

ISO Guide 2 General Terms and Their Definitions Relating to Standardizing Activities

ISO Guide 30 Terms and Definitions Used in Connection with Reference Materials

ISO Guide 35 Reference Materials—General and Statistical Principles for Certification

ISO GUM Guide to the Expression of Uncertainty in Measurement (GUM)

2.3 Other Sources:

EURACHEM *The Fitness for Purpose of Analytical Methods*, EURACHEM Working Group, English Edition

IAAI Glossary *Glossary of Terms Related to Chemical and Instrumental Analysis of Fire Debris*, IAAI Forensic Science Committee⁶

IUPAC Terminology *IUPAC Compendium of Chemical Terminology*, Second Edition, 1997

3. Significance and Use

3.1 These terms have particular application to the forensic sciences. In addition, a hierarchy of sources of definitions were used in the development of this terminology. The hierarchy is as follows: *Websters New Collegiate 7th Dictionary*; technical dictionaries; and the *Compilation of ASTM Standard Definitions*.⁷ The subcommittee developed a suitable definition after all of the sources in the hierarchy were found wanting.

¹ This terminology is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E30 on Forensic Sciences and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E30.92 on Terminology.

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² Any definition that is unsourced has been developed by ASTM Subcommittee E30.92.

³ Abbreviations are as follows: CRIM = criminalistics, QD = questioned documents, ENGR = engineering, TOX = toxicology, PB = pathology/biology, ANTH = anthropology, and ODEN = odontology.

⁴ For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

⁵ Available from International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 1, ch. de la Voie-Creuse, CP 56, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, <http://www.iso.org>.

⁶ Available from the International Association of Arson Investigators, Inc. (IAAI), 2111 Baldwin Avenue, Suite 203, Crofton, MD 21114, <http://firearson.com>.

⁷ ASTM Committee on Terminology, *Compilation of ASTM Standard Definitions*, 7th ed., Philadelphia, PA: ASTM, 1990.