
Professional Certificate in Forensic Document Examination

Questioned Documents in Fraud Investigations

Absolute Writing Style: A writing style used in questioned document examinations where the examiner makes definitive statements about the authenticity or origin of a document. This style is typically used when there is sufficient evidence to support the examiner's conclusions.

Anonymous Letter: A letter that is sent without a return address or any identifying information about the sender. These letters are often associated with threats or other malicious intentions.

Authentication: The process of verifying the genuineness of a document. This can be done through a variety of methods, including handwriting analysis, ink analysis, and paper analysis.

Cut-and-Paste Forgery: A type of forgery where words or phrases are physically cut out of one document and pasted onto another document to alter its meaning or content.

Document Examination: The process of analyzing a document to determine its authenticity, origin, or contents. This can be done through a variety of methods, including handwriting analysis, ink analysis, and paper analysis.

Electronic Signature: A digital version of a handwritten signature that is used to authenticate electronic documents. These signatures can be created using a variety of methods, including a stylus or a finger on a touchscreen.

Evidentiary Value: The weight given to a piece of evidence in a legal case. In questioned document examinations, the evidentiary value is based on the strength of the evidence and the reliability of the methods used to analyze it.

Exemplar: A sample of handwriting or printing used for comparison purposes in questioned document examinations. Exemplars can be obtained from known writers or from reference materials.

Forgery: The act of creating a false document with the intention of deceiving others. This can be done through a variety of methods, including handwriting forgery, ink forgery, and paper forgery.

Handwriting Analysis: The process of analyzing the physical characteristics of handwriting to determine the identity of the writer. This can be done through a variety of methods, including comparison of individual letters, slant, spacing, and pressure.

Indented Writing: Writing that is imprinted onto a piece of paper due to the pressure of a pen or pencil on a sheet of paper above it. This can be used to identify the original source of a document.

Ink Analysis: The process of analyzing the chemical composition of ink to determine the age, origin, or type of ink used in a document.

Issuer: The person or entity responsible for issuing a document. In questioned document examinations, the issuer may be a potential suspect in a forgery or fraud case.

Machine-Generated Documents: Documents that are created using a machine, such as a printer or a typewriter. These documents can be analyzed to determine the type of machine used and the settings that were used to create the document.

Non-Repudiation: The ability to prove that a document or transaction is genuine and has not been altered or tampered with. This is important in legal and financial contexts to prevent fraud and ensure the validity of transactions.

Obfuscated Writing: Writing that is deliberately difficult to read or understand. This can be done through a variety of methods, including using unusual fonts, changing the spacing between letters, or adding unnecessary marks or symbols.

Origin Analysis: The process of determining the origin of a document. This can be done through a variety of methods, including handwriting analysis, ink analysis, and paper analysis.

Paper Analysis: The process of analyzing the physical properties of paper to determine its origin or age. This can be done through a variety of methods, including microscopic examination and chemical testing.

Patent Slant: A characteristic of handwriting where the writing slants consistently in one direction. This can be used to identify the writer of a document.

Questionable Document: A document that is suspected of being forged, altered, or fraudulent. These documents are typically analyzed in questioned document examinations.

Reference Materials: Materials used for comparison purposes in questioned document examinations. These can include handwriting samples, ink samples, and paper samples.

Simulated Writing: Writing that is created to imitate the handwriting of another person. This can be done for a variety of reasons, including to deceive others or to avoid responsibility for a document.

Standardized Writing: Writing that is consistent in form, size, and arrangement. This can be used to identify the machine or process used to create a document.

Traced Writing: Writing that is created by tracing over existing letters or words. This can be done to create a forgery or to disguise the writer's handwriting.

Trademark: A recognizable sign, design, or expression that identifies products or services of a particular source from those of others.

Typewriting: The process of creating a document using a typewriter. These documents can be analyzed to determine the type of typewriter used and the settings that were used to create the document.

Variable Writing: Writing that varies in form, size, or arrangement. This can be used to identify the writer of a document or to distinguish between different writing instruments.

Watermark: A design or pattern that is embossed or printed onto paper during its manufacture. Watermarks can be used to identify the source or age of a document.