

Questioned Document Examination

Lecture Notes

Appearance of a Document that the Examiner should take Note

1. Fold and creases – lines that indicates that the document was folded or kept in a small container
2. Impressions – like that of a paper clip, stamp pads, and the like
3. Cancellation stamps – indications that some of the part of the documents were cancelled
4. Erasures – by rubbing the surface of the paper resulting in the reduction of the thickness of the paper
5. Surface – to detect any chemical erasures
6. Blots and smears – blots are used by forgers to hide a mark; smears are a result of contact with other documents
7. Dimensions – trimming of the original document can be used to eliminate an important part of the document
8. Perforations – slight irregularities in tearing
9. Adhesive stamps
10. Holes and tears – used to hide deliberate acts of forgery
11. Wire marks and watermarks – markings in the paper itself
- 12.

Basis of Handwriting Identification

Handwriting – result of a very complicated series of acts, being as a whole a combination of certain forms of visible mental and muscular habits acquired by long continued painstaking efforts.

Different Styles of Writing

1. Cursive – writing in which the letters are for the most part joint together
2. Script – any disconnected style of writing in which each letter is written separately
3. Block – all the letters are capitalized

Characteristics – any distinguishing property or mark

1. Class or common characteristics – common to a group of people
2. Individual characteristics – highly personal or peculiar and is unlikely to occur in other circumstances

Points of Comparison

1. Slant/ Slope – the angle of inclination of the axis of letters relative to the baseline
2. Size of handwriting – may differ depending on the circumstances like disguise, change in speed and fatigue.
3. Ratio and proportion of writing – relation between the tall and short letters
4. Relative size of letters – letters should be approximately of the same width with each other
5. Initial stroke – first element of a stroke

6. Terminal spur – short horizontal terminal strokes mostly found on a small letter
7. Connecting strokes – stroke which connects two strokes or letters
Garlanded – rounded at the base, either circular or oblong
Arcaded – in the form of arches, rounded on top
8. Hiatus – gap between strokes caused by speed of writing and a defective writing instrument
9. Pen lift – an obvious appearance of a gap in the writing
10. Hesitation – irregular thickening of the ink line when the writing slows down or stops while the writer takes stock of the position
11. Lateral spacing – space between the letters
12. Shading – splitting of the pen nib, resulting in the widening of the ink lines, as controlled by the variation in pen pressure
13. Line quality – visible record in the written strokes of the movements and manner of holding the writing instrument
14. Rhythm – flowing succession of motion which is recorded as the harmonious recurrence of stress, impulse motion
15. Tremor – writing portrayed by irregular, shaky strokes or one that deviates from uniform stroke
16. Diacritics – elements added to complete the letters
17. Eye/ eyelet – minute or small loop or curve formed inside the letter
18. Hook – minute curve or angle which often occurs at the end of the terminal stroke
19. Loop – oblong curve that may be found at the upper or lower part of the letter
20. Retrace – any part of a stroke which is super imposed upon the original stroke; any stroke which goes back over the same writing stroke
21. Staff/ stem – any major long downward stroke of a letter that is the long downward stroke of the letter b and g
22. Buckle/ buckle knot – a loop made as a flourish which is added to the letters as in small letters k and f
23. Terminal stroke – last element of a letter
24. Patching/ retouching – going back over a defective portion of a writing stroke