

6.170 Quality assurance

Examiners shall seek peer review of at least two examinations per year, using the protocol specified in Appendix ****. Additional peer reviews may be requested by the community supervision team. Quality assurance reviews shall consist of a systematic review of the examination report, test data, test questions, scored results, computer score (if available), audio/video recording, and collateral information. Documentation of six quality assurance peer reviews shall be submitted to the SOMB at the time of re-application. The purpose of the Quality Assurance Protocol shall be to facilitate a second professional opinion regarding a particular examination, to gain professional consensus whenever possible, and to formulate recommendations for the community supervision team.

Discussion Point: The Quality Assurance Protocol is intended to advise members of the CST on the polygraph test about the strengths and limitations of a particular test, and to provide examiners with a formal vehicle for gaining professional feedback and consensus. Quality assurance activities include: compliance with standards of practice, certification requirements, ongoing training, supervision and oversight, options for recourse in the event of identified problems, and program evaluation. Quality assurance activities take place at varying levels of formality, including informal data checks via audio/video recording, procedural or follow-up case-staffing with the examiner, collaborative peer review, blind review, panel review, or referral to an outside agency for quality assurance review.

6.171 Initiating the quality assurance review

With the exception of exams required for reapplication purposes, quality assurance reviews shall be initiated by a member of the community supervision team. Quality assurance reviews may be initiated in response to a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- A. A formal or informal complaint regarding non-compliance with these standards, or when critical decisions may be influenced by the information or results from the polygraph test.
- B. When separate examinations yield differing test results regarding the same issue(s) and/or time period. This review would then be completed by the two examiners whose examinations yielded differing results. The purpose of this review is to clarify the reasons for the differing test results and formulate a recommendation for the community supervision team. If consensus cannot be reached, the team shall consult with a third, independent, SOMB listed full operating level polygraph examiner, agreed upon by both polygraph examiners, to review the conflicting information and offer an opinion regarding the issue. If differences in test results remain unresolved, both examinations shall be set aside and a new polygraph examination shall be conducted. Whenever consensus cannot be reached, the community supervision team must err on the side of community safety when considering their response.
- C. When an examiner determines the test subject has attempted to use manipulative techniques to alter the test results. The purpose of the review is to confirm the offender's use of manipulative techniques prior to the imposition of sanctions or consequences for non-cooperation. This review may not be necessary when the offender admits non-cooperation, explains his or her in-test behavior, and is forthcoming in discussing his or her knowledge of the polygraph technique. In these cases the test results may be regarded as inconclusive or unresolved until the issues are subject to re-examination.

6.172 Selection of the reviewing examiner

When initiating a quality assurance review, the CST members shall contact the original examiner and, together with the original examiner, select an independent, full-operating level polygraph examiner to complete an objective peer review.

The reviewing examiner shall contact the original examiner with any questions and feedback, and shall complete the Quality Assurance Protocol and the one-page Quality Assurance Summary Report together with the original examiner.

Discussion Point: It should not be assumed that a reviewer or reviewers present more expertise than the original examiner. Studies have found that results obtained by original examiners have outperformed those of subsequent reviewers (National Academy of Sciences, 2003). Quality assurance reviews serve only to offer an additional professional opinion to further advise community supervision team members regarding a polygraph test whose decisions may be affected by the information and results obtained.

6.173 Conclusions from the quality assurance review

Community supervision team members shall include the one-page Quality Assurance Summary Report in the offender's treatment and supervision files. Quality assurance reviewers shall refrain from making global or generalized conclusions regarding an examiner's work or competence (which cannot be done based upon a single examination). Unless an empirical flaw is identified, the reviewing examiner shall endorse the original examiner's reported results, and shall limit professional opinions to the following conclusions:

- A. Examination is supported - results shall be accepted.
- B. Examination is not supported - results shall be set aside.
- C. Examination is supported but qualified by identifiable empirical limitations - results may be set aside or accepted with reasonable caution. Such qualifying limitations may include identifiable empirical limitations pertaining to offender suitability, data quality, and clarity of the issue/s under investigation, and are often noted by the original examiner in the examination report.

Discussion Point: Setting aside an examination result does not include removal of the examination report from the offender's supervision and treatment files, but should include the addition of documentation regarding the community supervision team's response.