
APA MODEL POLICY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

(Approved July 20, 2017)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: This Model Policy for Quality Assurance is provided to assist field practitioners and other professionals in the determination of compliance with established standards and best practices. Examiners should know and adhere to all legal requirements and practice regulations in their local jurisdiction. This Model Policy may serve as a point of reference for the development of quality assurance practices and requirements for an agency or local jurisdiction. In case of any conflict between this Model Policy and any local practice requirements the local regulations should prevail. Examiners who work in jurisdictions and programs without local regulations may refer to this Model Policy as a guide.

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 **Quality Assurance (QA):** Quality assurance activities are varied and can include requirements for training, experience, continuing education, professional certification, program accreditation and program evaluation activities. Quality assurance activities can also include quality control programs intended to ensure compliance and identify substandard work products. Quality assurance for the purpose of this model policy refers to activities related to the review of a single polygraph examination for compliance with evidence-based field -practice standards and best practices. Quality assurance reviews of this type can include self-review, internal review by another examiner within the same agency, external review by an independent examiner, or blind review in which the reviewer is not informed of the examiner's conclusion or other case facts.

2. EXAMINER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 All polygraph examinations should be conducted in compliance with applicable law, APA Standards of Practice and best practices.
- 2.2 Examiners should maintain all case materials, including referral information, interview notes, test data, analysis, results, examination report and audio/video recordings in a manner that is consistent with applicable law, APA Standards, best practices, and agency policies. Where differences exist, local statutes applicable to the polygraph will prevail.
- 2.3 Examiners should retain all examination materials and make all materials available for quality assurance review, except where prohibited by agency policy or statute.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW
 - 3.1 Reviewers should thoroughly review all examination materials including written examination reports, recorded test data and audio/video recordings.
 - 3.2 All quality assurance reviews should be conducted under an agreement for confidentiality. Reviewers should remain aware that all examination materials and copies are the property of the original examiner and should not be retained without permission.
 - 3.3 Quality Assurance review, whether self-review, internal review, external review or blind review, should document the review process and conclusions in written form, including the following suggested items.
 - 3.3.1 Requesting Parties:
 - 3.3.2 Examinee (optional):
 - 3.3.3 Date of Examination:
 - 3.3.4 Original Examiner:
 - 3.3.5 Type of Polygraph (Diagnostic / Screening)
 - 3.3.6 Detailed list of materials for review
 - 3.3.7 Review of the polygraph setting
 - 3.3.8 Review of the pretest interview
 - 3.3.9 Review of the question formulation
 - 3.3.10 Review of the test data collection
 - 3.3.11 Review of the test data analysis
 - 3.3.12 Summary
 - 3.4 A review of the pretest information to the examinee should include:
 - 3.4.1 Examiner verified the identity of the examinee.
 - 3.4.2 Examiner explains the instrumentation and process, including that the examination can be terminated at any time, and obtained the informed consent of the examinee.
 - 3.4.3 The purpose of examination was explained.
 - 3.4.4 The examination topics were adequately reviewed with the examinee.
 - 3.4.5 Examination questions were fully reviewed with the examinee prior to beginning the in-test recording phase.
 - 3.5 A review of the examiner conduct during the pretest should include:
 - 3.5.1 Interview conducted in a non-accusatory manner.
 - 3.5.2 Target issues are thoroughly reviewed to assure examinee's understanding.
 - 3.5.3 Relevant questions are descriptive of the issue under investigation, and not likely to cause confusion or uncertainty.

- 3.5.4 Development of comparison questions was consistent with the type of comparison question utilized.
 - 3.5.6 All questions were discussed and reviewed prior to the administration of the test and were answerable with a yes or no or other instructed answer.
- 3.6 Review of the collection of physiological data should include:
- 3.6.1 Verification that the examiner conducted an Acquaintance chart where applicable.
 - 3.6.2 Verification that the examiner utilized a validated test format.
 - 3.6.3 Verification that recording sensors, including activity or movement sensor, are functioning properly.
 - 3.6.4 Verification of proper question pacing, including the correct location of the start and stop of each question and answer.
 - 3.6.5 Verification of effective placement and attachment of recording sensors.
 - 3.6.6 Verification of correct use of In-test chart annotations that indicate any instructions or other events occurring during the recording of each question series.
 - 3.6.7 Verification that test stimuli questions are presented in a neutral manner.
- 3.7 A review of test data analysis should include:
- 3.7.1 Verification that physiological data is of adequate quality for interpretation.
 - 3.7.2 Verification that the examiner used a validated method for test data analysis.
 - 3.7.3 Avoidance or notation of attempts to score data of artifacted or unusual quality.
 - 3.7.4 Identification of the analysis method for the examiner and the review.
 - 3.7.5 Identification of the source of any discrepancies between the conclusions of the examiner and the quality assurance review.
4. REVIEWING EXAMINER'S REPORT
- 4.1 Reviewers should be objective and factual in determining compliance and non-compliance with published standards of practice.
 - 4.2 Reviewers should document all deviations from standards, but should refrain from making inference about the qualifications or competency of the testing examiner.

- 4.3 Reviewers should only report on issues of compliance with local statutes, APA Standards of Practice and other applicable guidelines.
- 4.4 Reviewers should not attempt to reverse the conclusion or offer a conclusion in opposition to that of the examiner unless a gross error is identified. (original examiners have tended to be more accurate than blind review).
- 4.5 Reviewer opinions shall be expressed as:
 - 4.5.1 Examination is supported.
 - 4.5.2 Examination is not supported.
 - 4.5.3 Review cannot be completed without additional information.