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3 general T The standard does not include training requirements for courtroom testimony. Will this be covered in a subsequent training standard?

4 4.2.1 E The term trainee was added to the section three of the document but is not found anywhere else in the document.

5 4.2.7 E Was density purposely omitted from section 4.2.7? If blood needs to be thawed for training exercises, the difference in density of recently thawed blood and room temperature blood would impact pattern formation. Additionally, the positioning of bodies affects the density of blood. The standard could be interpreted as those are the only five areas that need to be covered in principles of physics.

6 4.2.18 T Does “Chemical testing” include presumptive and confirmatory tests for blood? No where in the standard is it stated that the trainee needs to confirm that they are in fact looking at blood.

7 4.2.22 E The new language to this standard creates confusion in sub sections of the standard as far as understanding when a trainee is competent, when training is over, and when a trainee should be offering expert opinion. The standard starts by stating that the trainee must be competent to enter the mentorship program. Standard 6.3 then discusses additional competency test that must be performed. It also isn’t clear if training is complete and true competency is established until the trainee completes the mentorship program. As standard 6.3 is written, it appears that a trainee can offer an expert opinion without completing the entire mentorship program. Competency for a practical exercise like independent photography of a scene is very different than competency for offering an expert opinion, especially since there’s little no information on reporting and testimony training requirements.

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9 4.2.22 E I disagree with the required EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS section. There is no good reason to wait five years for implementation of the requirement of a bachelor degree. Additionally, the degree must be in a natural science or criminalistics/forensic science (from a FEPAC-accredited program). Trigonometry is typically learned in a secondary educational setting, not in a tertiary institution.

10 4.2.10 E Section 6.2.6 should include “acceleration.”

11 4.2.10 E We in the working group all agreed to have seen in our professional experiences, people from all educational backgrounds make mistakes and conduct faulty analyses due to biases and other error types. Even within our own working group and consenss body we’ve seen member(s) with high academic achievements make a document(s) replicate with incorrect statements and assumptions, therefore it is my opinion that character is superfluous to education in a bloodstain pattern analyst.
The State of Maine has invested heavily in its BPA program, providing basic level training to all members of the Evidence Response Team and advanced level training and continuing education to select individuals who demonstrate the desire, capability, and motivation necessary to work at that level. That said, requiring a Bachelor’s degree would disqualify some of our best people. On the other hand, there are people in our agency who would meet that criteria but would not make good BPA analysts. I think that requiring a Bachelor’s degree to become a BPA analyst is too testing. It is not a requirement for other technical specialties such as crime scene, shooting, and accident reconstruction, so why do we consider it necessary to do so?

I have to agree with some of the comments from my colleagues before I can approve this revision. I believe the issue lies in the fact that we, as a consensus body, cannot control all of the training provided to current and prospective BPA practitioners. I will use my own experiences once again to say that some of the 40-hour courses I have taken have been excellent and have included the scientific method along with detailed analysis. Others have been abysmal and concentrated on the instructor’s vast “knowledge” of numerous areas of crime scene analysis and their own fudges rather than the subject in-chief. That said, I also understand the time and financial limitations of requiring a Bachelor’s degree for some students have the desire to learn, but cannot complete the necessary requirements because of outside responsibilities. This is a real conundrum for us and we have to take all of these issues into consideration before we put out a blanket statement. I realize that being wishy-washy does not help the situation. After reading the below comments, I believe that Peter Valentice has a reasonable solution in his multi-pronged approach and I agree. Giving options seems to be the best resolution to satisfy everyone's vastly different experiences, educational levels, and requirements for those who wish to practice in this area.

Putting forth a requirement for a specific, scientific undergraduate degree from a TEPSA-accredited institution will vastly limit not only those who wish to pursue this avenue, but it will also discourage those without the availability of such an institution to even attempt to acquire this qualification. That could potentially limit the pool of truly dedicated, excellent future analysts and I don’t wish to shut the door on anyone with the drive and interest to become successful. Other institutions offer a solid, scientific platform on which to build expertise and understanding of the requisite analytical thought processes to perform well. I believe that we can find a fair balance that is most beneficial to the scientific, judicial, law enforcement and laboratory communities.

I disagree with the educational requirement set forth in this document. I will repost my comments from an earlier vote because I feel that it might be the compromise that we desperately need to move forward. But, even as written, the standard is flimsy. If we are going to only make this a choice, we are not doing anything to advance our field forward from the problematic conclusions that incompetent analysts have offered too many times. This standard should not be evaluated by saying that I know good analysts that do not meet this requirement because that is irrelevant to our current problem. We should also not frame this in such a way that minimizes the value of a scientific education because that is also not productive. Medical doctors make mistakes all the time but would any of us argue that medical degrees are not necessary because of that fact? What we should be moving to is a standard that recognizes the importance of scientific/analytical thought and in line with other forensic disciplines. That can be accomplished a few different ways which I spell out in my comments below.

The standard as written is illogical. Many students entering college do not take trigonometry there because they have moved beyond that so they could not demonstrate that they have taken it in college. Furthermore, there would be no way to get lab work done in college in biology, chemistry, and physics without taking a class so the earlier portion of the sentence is misplaced. Perhaps what is intended is that someone cannot demonstrate that they have lab work in those areas, a science-related course would count!

Lastly, my comments from an earlier vote and perhaps a framework for resolving this recurring issue:

...During our discussions on this issue, I informally recommended a multipronged approach to address the difficulties of making such a substantive change to our discipline with no real educational standard. I proposed that the educational standard be a choice of:

1. BS in a natural science or
2. BS or BA degree in another major with substantive science coursework (what courses and how many credits to be decided)
3. Successful completion of coursework (topics/hours/modes to be decided)

**This choice would be the option for those already practicing BPA with the commitment to continue their work without returning to college. By deciding what subjects and topics needed to be covered (and to what depth), we would be creating a framework for a training program that agencies/individuals could offer to others in a laboratory or investigative unit. This would not be a watered down 40-hour experience, but rather a comprehensive, examination and practical based training program that would demonstrate knowledge roughly equivalent to the coursework present in option B above. Ideally, this program would be led by someone qualifying under choice 1 or 2 above.**

As part of standard option 3, we would offer a window of several years for the successful completion of all the material with the understanding that those who would be willing to enter into a training program might not immediately be able to do so.

Because this idea never gained much momentum, the concept is admittedly left on details. However, I believe it has the potential to satisfy those of