



Frequently Asked Questions

What is “forensic document examination”?

The examination of questioned documents consists of the application of various investigative techniques, using scientific equipment, to establish the authenticity, origin, or writer of a contested document, or to detect its alteration.

This analysis may include the comparison of handwriting, hand printing, commercial printing, photocopies, typewriting, papers, inks and other documents in order to establish the authenticity of the contested material.

Why are professional document examiners needed?

Questioned documents may include wills, trusts, contracts, deeds, loan agreements, business partnerships, medical records, income tax records, checks, anonymous letters, election records, and autograph authentication.

In addition to assisting victims of forgery or fraud, Document Examiners help attorneys prepare to present their findings in a court of law. Furthermore, a skilled document examiner can be professionally deposed and even assist the attorney in cross-examination of opposing experts. Attorneys benefit from a Document Examiner’s specialized knowledge in the field, and often rely on that expertise to win the case.

What level of education is required to become a document examiner?

There are no government or legal standards required to testify as a document examiner in the United States. However, testifying as an expert witness in the field of document examination totally depends on the judge in the individual court proceedings. The majority of working document examiners have an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. This is not necessarily a requirement for admission into The School of Forensic Document Examination; however, it is often required by certain forensic science organizations as a condition of membership. Membership in one or more of these organizations helps you to establish credibility, but does not necessarily make you a better forensic document examiner.

There is no college degree available in forensic document examination from the traditional educational institutions. Most document examiners trained via some type of apprenticeship program or were government trained.

The goal of your training is to become a “court-qualified document examiner”. That essentially means that a judge has recognized you as an “expert” in a court of law. In order to become court-qualified it is common for the judge and attorneys to review your training, educational background, and industry experience.

What does it mean to be “certified” by your program as a document examiner?

There is no national licensing for documents examiners in the United States. Our training is the only comprehensive training program that combines solid traditional education with practical career and business knowledge. Being certified indicates you have completed our training and acquired a level of competence that our faculty feel is necessary in running a successfully documents examination business.

Is graphology the same as forensic document examination?

No. They are different fields entirely. Each discipline requires a different training program. Graphology (handwriting analysis) is the science of understanding character traits and personality from the handwriting. Forensic document examination does not involve concepts of personality, character, or therapy. Forensic document examination routinely involves the comparison of questioned documents with comparison (known) documents in order to identify the author or origin of the questioned document.

If you have training as a graphologist, it is a smart decision to learn the skills of a forensic document examiner. However, they must be approached as completely different disciplines. It is not a prerequisite to have any graphology training in order to enroll in the document examination program.

Is this training worth the price of tuition?

Absolutely! This training program will provide you with access to some of the best minds in the business. Our faculty has over 50 years of experience. They must be compensated for their time and expertise. You will also be provided with an expert to oversee your cases that are active in the legal system.

The program also provides a secure, student-only online training center where you can learn at your own pace.

A college degree from a private institution can cost upwards of \$25,000 per year. Yet, many students of four-year universities have limited marketable skills upon graduation.

Frequently Asked Questions

When you receive your certification of completion from our program, you will have already worked, and been paid, as a professional document examiner. Without real-life case experience, you will not qualify to graduate.

Completion of this program will give you a skill that is in demand, with tremendous income potential. Many document examiners earn between \$100-\$300 per hour to examine documents, and \$500-\$1000 per day to appear in court. A recent advertisement for a full-time document examiner offered a salary of over \$80,000, working in the Los Angeles, CA area.

If you choose the career track training program, it includes business and marketing coaching. We will support you throughout your training to help you obtain new clients and maximize your income.

Why do you require a deposit with my application?

The deposit is required to reserve your spot in the program. We only have limited spaces per school year, so your financial investment provides evidence of your commitment.

If for any reason you are not accepted into the program, your deposit is fully refundable.

Will this training guarantee that I will earn money or have a successful business upon graduation?

No. Our role is to provide education and training. Our faculty members have had tremendous success using our methods, and we feel anyone that is competent can also have financial success. However, we do not make any financial promises or guarantees. We are not responsible for your business success or failure, and make no promises that you will profit from this education.

Upon graduation, you will be an independent entrepreneur, unless you choose a full-time position with an established organization or laboratory. If self-employed, your annual income will depend on how many clients you work with per year.

What happens if I change my mind and do not want to continue the program?

The next class of the Document Examining Program will contain 20 ambitious, hand-selected students. Once accepted into the program, your tuition is non-refundable and your contract remains in place. You are under an obligation to complete the training or attend class. The penalty for non-compliance will be that you do not graduate. Please be sure you intend to complete the program before you submit your deposit.

How often will my teacher or mentor be personally available?

You will have access to your teacher or mentor at assigned class times, during scheduled tutoring hours, or by privately arranged appointment. This system will provide the hands-on support you need. However, out of respect for our “working faculty”, instructors will not be available at all times.

If you require more “tutoring time” than our basic curriculum provides, you can purchase that time from your preferred instructor on an individual “as-needed basis”. Our faculty must have the freedom to teach, do their own work, and instruct and support you on a predictable schedule.

Frequently Asked Questions

How soon can I start earning money?

Many enrolled past students have earned money the first month of their training. Other students chose to only officially open their business upon graduation. If earning money and beginning your career as soon as possible is important to you, it is highly recommended that you apply for and enroll into the optional Career Track Program. Handwriting University wants you to start making money as soon as possible. However, you can't take money until you are trained, and you can not complete your training without experience solving real cases.

Our apprenticeship program bridges the gap between your training and experience by lending our credibility and faculty to your actual cases. Once you have gained a basic knowledge of the document examination procedure, you will be encouraged to market your services. In Module 6, you will solicit active cases, and your case examination and conclusion will be verified by your mentor. The revenue from these clients will be shared between you (the student) and the faculty mentor.

How much time each week will I spend on the program?

Your time commitment will depend on how quickly you read, study, and complete the appropriate tests. Students with more free time are encouraged to complete the Modules faster than the estimated time frame. Based on the recent classes the average student spent between 2 - 6 hours per week completing their assignments. Files, books, handwriting samples, and other class materials will be available on-line and we will use e-mail to communicate times, locations, and class updates. This program is designed to be self-paced. However, students are highly encouraged to attend live tele-seminars, webcasts, or faculty tutoring when scheduled.

Who do I call when I have questions?

Contact the Administration Office for information about admission, enrollment, financing, or the curriculum. You may also speak with the Founder, Bart Baggett, or another faculty member prior to enrolling, by requesting an appointment. Our current Program Administrator is Beth Chrisman who will gladly answer all your questions.

Beth can be reached at 310-779-7224

or

Call toll- free: **1-877-2-WRITING**
(877) 297- 4846

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