

NYC – OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER Forensic Anthropology – Quality Manual		Page: 1 of 4
Title: Competency Training	Control No. QM-002	Revision: 0
Approved by: Forensic Anthropology Director		Effective Date: 26 January 2018

1. Policy

All new employees to the OCME Forensic Anthropology Unit (FAU) who will be conducting anthropological analyses shall complete the required competency training and tests prior to completing casework unsupervised. The competency training will familiarize the new employee with the policies and procedures of the FAU Laboratory, as well as document competency in the analytical methods and techniques used in casework.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all new employees in the FAU that will be assigned casework. Portions of this SOP (Module 1) will also apply to interns and visiting scientists who will not be conducting casework.

3. Definitions:

Competency Tests: Competency tests are internally generated multiple-choice tests that are used to assess the trainee's knowledge of the policies and procedures in the FAU's Standard Operating Procedures and select sections of the FAU quality documents.

4. Competency Training

4.1 Purpose: The purpose of competency training is to provide the newly hired anthropologist with sufficient knowledge to perform anthropological analyses according to the FAU Standard Operating Procedures. Interns and visiting scientists will be required to complete certain modules, such as ANTH-001 Evidence Security and Management and ANTH-002 Anthropological Laboratory Analysis, or as determined by the Forensic Anthropology Director (Director).

4.2 Training Structure: Competency training for new employees is divided into three modules which are progressive and task-oriented. Each module must be completed to the satisfaction of the trainer(s) and/or Director. The required tasks and the time it takes to complete each module may vary depending on the education level, experience, and/or skill set of the new employee.

4.3 Responsibility of the Trainer(s): It is the responsibility of the FAU trainer(s) to make certain all policies and procedures detailed in the FAU Standard Operating Procedures are successfully presented to the analyst. The responsibility of training shall fall to all FAU members.

4.4 Responsibility of the Trainee: The trainee is required to familiarize themselves with the protocols and procedures outlined in the FAU Standard Operating Procedures and other documents deemed necessary by the Quality Assurance (QA) Specialist and/or Director.

NYC – OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER Forensic Anthropology – Quality Manual		Page: 2 of 4
Title: Competency Training	Control No. QM-002	Revision: 0
Approved by: Forensic Anthropology Director		Effective Date: 26 January 2018

The trainee is required to complete all competency training modules and successfully pass all competency tests.

4.4.1 **Competency Training Log:** The trainee is responsible for recording their competency training progress in their competency training log. Information that should be recorded in the log includes, but is not limited to, the date of completion for each training task, signature from FAU trainer(s) acknowledging the training task was sufficiently completed, and, when applicable, the written competency test score.

Note: Interns and visiting scientists only need to complete competency tests for select SOPs as assigned by the Director. Direct observation may be required for certain procedures. Maintenance of a training log and training through supervised casework will not be required for interns and visiting scientists as they will not be conducting casework.

4.5 **Methods of Evaluation:** Trainee's competency of FAU policies and procedures and anthropological analytical methods and techniques shall be evaluated through written competency tests and direct observation.

- **Written Competency Tests:** The FAU competency tests are specifically created to assess the trainee's general knowledge of the FAU's policies and procedures that are outlined in the FAU Standard Operating Procedures and Quality documents. The competency tests were created and approved by the OCME QA Director. The tests can be administered either by the QA Director or FAU personnel who have previously taken and passed the tests.
- **Direct Observation:** Some of the competency training will involve direct observation of the trainee by the FAU staff. For example, the trainee will be observed managing evidence or performing anthropological analyses to make sure they are adhering to the FAU policies and procedures.

4.6 **Competency Training Records:** All competency training documents (e.g., training log, acknowledgement forms, and competency tests) are retained in each employee's personnel binder or in a grouped folder of each year's interns and visiting scientists.

5. Competency Training Modules

5.1 **Module 1- FAU Orientation and General Procedures:** Module 1 is designed to familiarize new personnel with the OCME and FAU facilities and policies and procedures.

NYC – OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER Forensic Anthropology – Quality Manual		Page: 3 of 4
Title: Competency Training	Control No. QM-002	Revision: 0
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Facility and Laboratory Orientation:

1. The trainee shall receive a tour of the OCME and FAU facilities (buildings 520 and 421).
2. The trainee shall be advised on the competency training procedure and given their competency training log (if applicable).

Facilities and Laboratory Safety:

1. The trainee shall read and acknowledge the OCME Health and Safety Plans and the FAU Health and Safety policies (ANTH-003: Anthropological Laboratory Analysis, Appendix A).
2. The trainee shall watch and acknowledge the safety videos that cover the following topics: Bloodborne Pathogens and using an N95 Respirator.
3. The trainee shall be shown the building exit points and location of safety equipment (fire extinguishers, eyewash and shower stations, chemical safety data sheets (SDS), etc.).

Code of Conduct Training:

1. The trainee shall read and acknowledge the OCME Code of Conduct handout.
2. The trainee shall read and acknowledge the OCME Policy Manual.

FAU Policies and Procedures:

1. The trainee shall read the FAU Standard Operating Procedures and take the required written competency tests. The trainee needs to receive a passing grade (80% or higher) for all competency tests before they are given authorization to proceed to Module 2.
2. The trainee shall read the FAU Quality Documents and acknowledge their understanding of the management policies of the FAU.

Note: Successful completion of the written competency tests **only** states that the trainee has sufficient understanding of the FAU policies and procedures outlined in the FAU Standard Operating Procedures and does not give the trainee authorization to process evidence or perform analyses on casework unsupervised. All newly hired FAU personnel are required to complete modules 2 and 3 before authorization is granted by the Director to work independently on casework.

- 5.2 **Module 2 – Observation Period:** The objective of Module 2 is to allow the trainee to observe firsthand the FAU procedures for evidence management, anthropological analysis, analytical notes/report writing, and peer-reviewing anthropological reports.

During the observation period, the trainers shall demonstrate to the trainee:

1. The proper use of testing equipment.

NYC – OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER Forensic Anthropology – Quality Manual		Page: 4 of 4
Title: Competency Training	Control No. QM-002	Revision: 0
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2. Evidence management procedures.
3. The FAU maceration procedures.
4. How to create and manage case files and fill out analytical notes properly.
5. How to use the OCME Case Management System (CMS).

Additionally, the trainee shall observe casework and laboratory procedures by different FAU personnel. The cases should cover a variety of anthropological analyses. The number of cases a trainee may need to observe before being given supervised case work depends on their level of knowledge and experience.

- 5.3 **Module 3 – Supervised Casework:** The trainee shall process and analyze case material and author anthropological reports under the direct supervision of an FAU member until the FAU Director is satisfied with the expertise of the trainee.

6. Continuing Training/Education

After completing the competency training period the analyst is now responsible for maintaining their competency in anthropological methods and techniques used during analysis of casework. Annual proficiency testing, annual performance evaluations, and peer-review of casework are monitoring actions performed by the FAU to ensure the maintenance of competency (see QM-001: Quality Personnel, section 7.7).

Additionally, the analyst is must keep up with developing technology and analytical methods in the field of Forensic Anthropology by actively participating in continuing training and education activities. See QM-001: Quality Personnel, section 7.5.1 for more details about Continuing Training/Education.

7. Revision History

REV.	DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
0	26 January 2018	New document.