

Questions to Ask About a Digital Forensic Report

Use these questions to follow the chain from source material to a claimed conclusion.

This checklist is a practical aid for legal practitioners and professional organisations. Adapt it to the matter and the applicable instructions. It is not a completed instruction or a finding about any evidence.

Source and acquisition

- ☐ What exact artefact, file, database record or acquisition supports this finding?
- ☐ What was acquired, what was inaccessible and what limitations were recorded?
- ☐ How is the supplied report linked to the source material and its identifiers?
- ☐ What do the integrity checks establish, and what do they not establish about completeness?

Processing and meaning

- ☐ Which tools, versions and settings produced this output?
- ☐ Were filters, time conversions, decoding rules or joins applied?
- ☐ What does the displayed label mean in this system and context?
- ☐ Could the same observation arise from background activity, synchronisation or another technically reasonable cause?

Inference and further work

- ☐ What links a device or account record to a particular person or state of knowledge?
- ☐ Which assumptions and alternative explanations affect the opinion?
- ☐ Would examining the underlying artefacts resolve a material uncertainty?
- ☐ What further material or testing would be useful, and which conclusions remain limited without it?

Further guidance

Read [How to instruct a digital forensic expert](#), [Fees & engagement](#) and the [forensic questions hub](#).
[Contact the laboratory](#) with a concise, non-sensitive enquiry.