

Deadline for Public Comments: May 16, 2022
ASB Standard 133, Standard for Age Estimation in Forensic Anthropology.

#	Section	Type of Comment	Comments	Proposed Resolution	Final Resolution
12	Entire Document		In looking at this iteration of ASB 133, I am pleased to see that you have cited ADA Document 1077 for dental age estimation. Additionally, many of our previous suggestions from a dental standpoint have been added. We are appreciative of the fact that our voices were heard. This document is looking good. Thanks for the opportunity to contribute throughout the process.		Noted. Thank you!
13	Foreward		The term subadult has been used		Reject with modification: No recommendation is offered and this information was not changed from the previous public circulation of this document. This term was eliminated from this document.
21	1	T	In adjudicating previous comments--particularly those suggesting this is a "Best Practices" document, rather than a standard--the Committee repeatedly refers back to the language in the scope that "specific methods and techniques are not included in the standard." The absence of specificity is precisely why this reads as a "Best Practices" document. The ultimate focus of a standard is not on the mere presence or absence of standards but on the scientific supportability of the methods governed by those standards. Absent information about what is scientifically supportable, the standard has little meaning because there are in fact no specific criteria that would show the examiner or someone reviewing their work whether the particular examination was performed reliably.	Expand the disclaimer in the Scope section to make clear that the absence of specificity does not mean that any unspecified method or technique will be acceptable under this standard. Suggested language: "This standard lists the procedures and protocols that a forensic science service provider should have for age estimation in forensic anthropology but does not fully specify the content that those procedures and protocols must have. This standard does not substitute for standards that will more specifically set forth minimum requirements or best practices for the procedures and protocols mentioned here."	Reject: The scope is appropriately written for this document and adequately summarizes this commenter's recommendation. Therefore no edits are required. The requirements section includes what this document contains or does not contain.
3	3	TE	a point estimate of age not defined	Term: point estimate Definition: a single value, often reported as mean, given as an estimate of a population parameter.	Reject: This is a commonly used and widely understood term in this discipline.
14	3.1	incomplete term	reported as an age interval	as a mean or median point estimate with the appropriate level of uncertainty e.g ± 1 sd of Interquartile Width The reason for this is that members of the judiciary 'think' in terms of a point estimate with what they describe as the error of the method.	Reject: Please see section 4.2.7. for further explanation of appropriate interval reporting.
15	3.3	incomplete term	this should make specific reference to dental findings	... Including dental findings where appropriate	Reject: In this document skeletal includes Osseous, cartilaginous, and/or dental tissues. See 3.8.
9	3.6	E	The Note states "For the purpose of forensic anthropology, most methods consider only eruption through alveolar bone." Is this statement implying that the forensic anthropologist should only use methods that consider eruption through alveolar bone?	I suggest the note be stated like this, In forensic anthropology methods that consider eruption through alveolar bone are more typical.	Reject: The note is appropriately written for the purpose of this document.
16	3.8	skeleton/skeletal	This is slightly confusing.	reduce to Skeletal (or Skeleton) and add in Dental so - Skeletal / Dental	Reject: In this document skeletal includes Osseous, cartilaginous, and/or dental tissues.

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1	4.1	E	Eliminate Dash at the end	Age estimation shall follow methods published in peer-reviewed sources.	Accept.
22	4.2.1	T	A new sentence reads: "Unless substantial differences in age exist between a set of remains and a missing person, age should not be the sole basis for exclusion for a possible identification." However, "substantial difference" is not defined.	We suggest an effort be made to define "substantial difference" or at least place some practical limits on what might reasonably be claimed to be "substantial." For example, if the estimated age of skeletal materials is 20-40 and the decedent in question is 50, is that "substantial"? What about 17? If examiners are allowed to differ on questions like this, then what is the point of having a standard? The subcommittee should provide some guidance on appropriate exclusion criteria or at least narrow the range of what is acceptable.	Reject: Differences in age resulting in an exclusions between a set of remains and a missing person will vary based on the age group to which the individual belongs and the specific case circumstances. Specific guidance will be included in a best practice document that this Consensus Body is currently working on.
17	4.2.1	ambiguous term	(i.e. subadult)	This term means many things to many people - mostly [it is claimed] those subject who are near adult life but the term does not logically lend itself to that interpretation] 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4, and 4.2.5 all cover this properly. I would replace this with (se below in 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4, and 4.2.5) There seems to be a reluctance to avoid using this ambiguous and inprecise term.	Accept with modification: This section was updated for clarity.
10	4.2.5	T	I'm bringing this up again, for every category of age estimation listed, Fetal, Infant and Child, Adolescent there is a reference to dental development and eruption, when it gets to the Adult dental is no longer used. There are many adult dental age estimation techniques based upon degeneration, biochemical and nuclear dating.	Consider : Adult age estimation shall be based on skeletal and dental maturation, degeneration, macroscopic, histologic, biochemical and nuclear (isotopic) features.	Reject: This section was not included in the redline (ASB guidance suggests: "Please note that comments on a re-circulation will only be accepted on revised sections of a document, comments made to text not revised from the previous public comment period will not be accepted.")
2	4.2.6	TE	In addition to the reasons stated, as you get older, development is completed	Change to "With increasing chronological age, development of skeltal and dental structures is complete and the variation produced by environmental factors and life history tends to increase.	Reject: This section was not included in the redline (ASB guidance suggests: "Please note that comments on a re-circulation will only be accepted on revised sections of a document, comments made to text not revised from the previous public comment period will not be accepted.")
4	4.2.6	TE	We appreciate the effort put in by the CB in response to numerous comments. We agree with the conclusion stated but suggest changes in the wording to better address the reasoning	See changes to the paragraph below (ASB Note: Comments #5 and #6)	Reject: See response to Comment #5 and Comment #6.
5	4.2.6	TE	This is not a theory. Skeletal development can only occur in living individuals. It ceases at death	It is unnecessary and should be removed	Reject: This section was not included in the redline (ASB guidance suggests: "Please note that comments on a re-circulation will only be accepted on revised sections of a document, comments made to text not revised from the previous public comment period will not be accepted.") While we understand that this is not a theory in the scientific sense, we are contrasting "in theory" with "in practice" in this paragraph (4.2.6 p4).

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6	4.2.6	TE	Point estimation should never be used not just in cases that address age of majority	Due to the limits of all population-based estimations of a parameter from a biological metric, age-estimation protocols in either the living or deceased should be used with caution. In addition, because an individual may be an outlier due to biological variation, environmental factors, method error, or unknown factors, the use of a point estimate of age without the age interval shall never be reported. In addition, wherever possible, the age intervals should include some measurement of confidence. This is especially important when asked to address whether an individual has reached the age of majority where reporting a probability may more appropriate than an actual age estimation interval.	Reject: Section 4.2.7 explicitly states that an age estimate shall be reported as an interval. Further, it specifies that if a method produces a point estimate that may be reported but only in conjunction with the associated interval. Also, see definition in section 3.1.
11	4.2.6	E	This section talks about how various considerations and adjustments may affect the anthropological age estimation but does not clearly say if any of the conditions listed do occur what the anthropologist should do to account for that.	The age estimate shall consider intrinsic or extrinsic variables for which there is evidence that may impact age estimation during the anthropological analysis and the direction of possible error shall be reported.	Reject: This section was not included in the redline (ASB guidance suggests: "Please note that comments on a re-circulation will only be accepted on revised sections of a document, comments made to text not revised from the previous public comment period will not be accepted.") The direction of possible error is often unknown.
20	4.2.6	E	"—either in the living or in the deceased." wording is a bit awkward	replace with "for either living or deceased individuals."	Accept
18	4.2.7	ambiguous statistical allusion.	There is a huge difference between the 95% Confidence Interval and the 95% Prediction Interval. An examination of the literature will reveal this. The 95% Prediction Interval is probably the one of greatest value in Age Estimation as it covers the range of ages that may apply to the subject under scrutiny. The 95% Confidence Interval is calculated estimate of the precision of the estimate of the mean. It is greatly altered by n, the number of subjects	The 95% Prediction Interval should be specified <i>separately</i> from the 95% Confidence interval. I would suggest (e.g. the 95% Prediction Interval - the most useful, or the 95% Confidence interval which is an estimate of the precision of the mean value),	Accept with modification: Updated for clarity.
7	4.2.7.	TE	The sentence "If multiple methods are used, an explanation as to how a final minimum age and maximum age were produced shall be documented" implies that the numbers reported are absolute when, in reality, they are a statistical estimate	If multiple methods are used, an explanation of how an <i>estimated</i> minimum age and maximum age were produced shall be documented.	Reject: This section was not included in the redline (ASB guidance suggests: "Please note that comments on a re-circulation will only be accepted on revised sections of a document, comments made to text not revised from the previous public comment period will not be accepted.") This entire section refers to the documentation and reporting of age estimates.
8	4.2.7.	TE	If the method produces a point estimation, it needs to be reported since it is part of the result	If a method also produces a point estimate, it should be reported but shall state its appropriate use requires its reporting as part of the entire age interval	Reject: Section 4.2.7 explicitly states that an age estimate shall be reported as an interval. Further, it specifies that if a method produces a point estimate that may be reported but only in conjunction with the associated interval. Also, see definition in section 3.1. The use of "may" is appropriate because it is not requiring it to be reported.
19			In looking at the above (ASB NOTE: Comments# 14-21) I ask the editors to note that although my background is rooted in The Oxford English Dictionary. I am fully signed up to the Chambers Dictionary of American English		Noted. Thank you!