



**Forensic Science
Regulator**

Terms of reference: Firearms Specialist Group

FSR-TOR-FSG-0002

Issue 2.0

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This document sets out the terms of reference for the Forensic Science Regulator’s Firearms Specialist Group.

2. Implementation

2.1.1 This issue of the terms of reference became effective on 12/03/2026

3. Modification

3.1.1 This is the first issue.

4. Terms of Reference

4.1 Status

4.1.1 The Firearms Specialist Group (hereafter referred to as the “Specialist Group”) is a specialist group established to advise the Forensic Science Regulator (“the Regulator”) on matters within its remit.

4.2 Remit

4.2.1 The Specialist Group will support the Regulator by providing advice on all matters related to the preparation, implementation, and monitoring of quality standards for firearms forensic procedures and related issues within the Regulator's remit. This includes investigative, evaluative, and procedural aspects of firearms forensics. The Specialist Group will:

- a. Review the standards in place (and the factors influencing those standards) as they apply to the classification and forensic examination of firearms and the interpretation of related items. The review will consider, but not be limited to, the following.
 - i. Legal provisions (including common law, statute, and subsidiary legislation) in as much as they impact the requisite quality standards for firearms forensic procedures;

5. Operation

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 The Specialist Group will operate in accordance with a detailed plan presented by the Chair and approved by the Regulator.
- 5.1.2 The Specialist Group will conduct its business out of committee as far as possible, but will meet as and when required in order to discharge its remit.
- 5.1.3 In the interests of public accountability, the Specialist Group will carry out its work as openly as possible, subject to any necessary confidentiality requirements and any conditions agreed by the Regulator.
- 5.1.4 No budget is delegated to the Specialist Group but such assistance as is reasonably required to enable the Specialist Group to undertake its duties will be provided, within available resources.
- 5.1.5 Membership of the Specialist Group is unremunerated. The Regulator may approve repayment of travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on Specialist Group business by any members who are unable to obtain reimbursement from their employers. Repayment will only be made where the Regulator has agreed to entertain claims from a named individual under this provision.
- 5.1.6 Where the business of the Specialist Group gives rise to the need for expenditure from the Regulator’s budget, the Regulator’s written approval must be obtained in advance of any commitment to the expenditure.
- 5.1.7 The Chair of the Specialist Group may establish such other procedures as they consider appropriate for the operation of the Specialist Group, providing that these are not inconsistent with the above.

5.2 Working Groups

- 5.2.1 The Specialist Group may, with the approval of the Regulator, establish such working groups as it considers necessary for the efficient and effective conduct of its business. Such working groups will be constituted with clear written terms of reference and will report to the Specialist Group.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1.1 In accepting appointment to the Specialist Group, members are required to accept that there will be some information or documents presented to the Group that should not be disclosed without the approval of the Regulator; this will be indicated when raised in committee, in handling information on documents or covering emails. This includes any documents marked with any Government Protective Marking Scheme security classification (including 'Official-Sensitive') and the content of any discussions relating to such information. Members undertake not to make copies of any such documents, and to follow the advice provided by the Regulator and Forensic Science Regulation Unit about the handling of such documents.

