

# Australian Standard®

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## Sensory analysis of foods

### Method 1.3: General guide to methodology— Selection of assessors

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#### PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee on Sensory Examination of Foods as a new Standard in the series AS 2542, *Sensory analysis of foods*. It is based (in part) on ISO 8586-1:1993, *Sensory analysis—General guidance for the selection, training and monitoring of assessors—Part 1: Selected assessors*.

The objective of this Standard is to provide guidelines for the selection of assessors to participate in laboratory-supervised sensory test programs using the methods set out in the AS 2542 series. The Standard is concerned only with the recruitment of candidates who have the willingness and aptitude to become members of test panels. The prescribed screening tests are designed to assess candidates' suitability and aptitudes for the sensory tests involved in the envisaged test programs. Candidates are not required initially to possess knowledge of sensory analysis and the program supervisor is expected to provide training to enable selected assessors to perform the sensory tests required. It is acknowledged that assessors may need special training to acquire expertise for certain sensory tests or for specialized product testing but such training is not within the scope of this Standard.

The term 'informative' has been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. An 'informative' appendix is only for information and guidance.

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#### FOREWORD

Persons taking part as assessors in laboratory-controlled sensory analysis usually require certain traits to enable them to provide responses and information which are meaningful in the overall interpretation of the results of a test program.

The selection procedures described in this Standard are designed to—

- (a) recruit candidates who are interested in becoming members of a team or panel of assessors used in sensory analysis programs;
- (b) provide information on candidates' ability to participate effectively in such programs and on the aptitude of candidates to carry out the various types of tests that may be used; and
- (c) identify those who would be unsuited for sensory analysis in general or for particular tests.

## METHOD

**1 SCOPE** This Standard provides guidelines on the selection of assessors used in laboratory-controlled sensory analysis of foods.

**NOTES:**

- 1 It is recognized that, when establishing a test panel, the supervisor may have to use the best available assessors, who may not conform with all the guidelines provided in this Standard.
- 2 The Standard does not apply to persons used in consumer and market research tests involving sensory appraisal of products.
- 3 The Standard does not cover training procedures which may be necessary for assessors to acquire expertise in certain sensory tests or in specialized product testing.

**2 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS** The following documents are referred to in this Standard:

AS

- 2542 Sensory analysis of foods
- 2542.1.1: Part 1.1: General guide to methodology—General requirements
- 2542.1.2: Part 1.2: General guide to methodology—Types and choice of test
- 2542.2.2: Method 2.2: Specific methods—Triangle test
- 2542.2.3: Method 2.3: Specific methods—Rating
- 2542.2.6: Method 2.6: Specific methods—Ranking
- 2542.3: Part 3: Glossary of terms

**3 DEFINITIONS** For the purpose of this Standard, the definitions given in AS 2542.3 apply.

**4 RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES FOR SELECTION AS ASSESSORS** Candidates may be recruited by means of talks, circulars, noticeboards or personal invitation. Information should be given on the general purposes of sensory analysis, on duties of assessors and on the envisaged programs and objectives. It may be necessary to channel this initial approach through departmental heads or supervisors.

**NOTE:** It is essential that food industry management recognize the use of sensory analysis in product development and in quality control and encourage the recruitment of company personnel as members of test panels.

## 5 PRELIMINARY SCREENING

**5.1 General information and background** Before candidates undergo any practical tests to assess their capabilities and aptitudes, certain background information should be obtained to determine whether they have the personal attributes that are usually required in a competent assessor. Information on matters referred to in Clauses 5.2 to 5.7 should be sought by means of questionnaire and interview.

**5.2 Interest and motivation** Candidates should show an interest in sensory analysis and in the objectives of the proposed program.

**5.3 Health** Candidates should be in good health, with no permanent impairment to the senses. Abnormal colour vision would exclude assessors from tests involving judgment or matching of colours.

**5.4 Food idiosyncrasies** Candidates who have food fads, strong culinary dislikes, or reactions to particular foods may not be suitable for certain tests.

**5.5 Communication skills** Candidates should have the ability to follow directions and to communicate and describe their sensory perceptions. This is particularly important for descriptive analysis.