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Surface chemical analysis — Sample handling, preparation and mounting —

Part 2: Documenting and reporting the preparation and mounting of specimens for analysis

Analyse chimique des surfaces — Manipulation, préparation et montage des échantillons —

Partie 2: Documentation et notification des données de préparation et de montage des échantillons pour analyse

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee TC 201, *Surface Chemical Analysis*, Subcommittee SC 2, *General Procedures*.

This first edition of ISO 20579-2 cancels and replaces ISO 18116:2005, which has been technically revised.

A list of all parts in the ISO 20579 series can be found on the ISO website.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user’s national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

0.1 General introduction to the ISO 20579 series

Because sample preparation and handling can have a significant impact on the physical and chemical properties of a sample surface, reliable surface analysis depends upon knowing the analysis objective and knowledge of the sample history including aspects of how the sample has been prepared, stored, processed, and handled prior to and during analysis. The ISO 20579 series specifies information that is required to be collected and included as part of the sample history (sample provenance information). The ISO 20579 series describes information that anyone seeking surface analysis is required to provide to an analyst[2] and additional information that an analyst is required to include in the sample provenance record regarding sample handling, storage, and processing.[3] ISO 20579-1 and ISO 20579-2 describe the information to be recorded regarding sample selection, handling, and storage. ISO 20579-1 describes information that is necessary for the sample provenance record and an analyst regarding sample selection and preparation when requesting surface analysis. ISO 20579-2 indicates information about sample handling, preparation, mounting and processing to be recorded and reported by the analyst. ISO 20579-3 and ISO 20579-4 focus on specific reporting requirements associated with biomaterials[5] and nanomaterials,[4] respectively. Each part of the ISO 20579 series can be used independently of the other parts, although the general reporting requirements described in ISO 20579-1 and ISO 20579-2 are applicable to a wide range of materials and are not reproduced in ISO 20579-3 and ISO 20579-4.

Although primarily prepared for the surface-analysis techniques of Auger-electron spectroscopy (AES), X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) and secondary-ion mass spectrometry (SIMS), the methods described in this document are also applicable to many other surface-sensitive analytical techniques such as ion-scattering spectrometry (ISS and including low- and medium-energy scattering LEIS, MEIS), scanning probe microscopy (SPM), low-energy electron diffraction (LEED) and electron energy-loss spectroscopy (EELS), where specimen handling can influence surface-sensitive measurements. AES, XPS, and SIMS are sensitive to surface layers that are typically a few nanometers thick. Such thin layers can be subject to severe perturbations caused by specimen handling or surface treatments that can be necessary prior to introduction into the analytical chamber. Proper handling and preparation of specimens is particularly critical for dependable analysis. Improper handling of specimens can result in alteration of the surface composition and unreliable data.[6][7]

0.2 Introduction to ISO 20579-2

This document is intended for the analyst and describes information that is required to be recorded and reported regarding the sample handling, storage, mounting and other aspects of preparing a sample for surface analysis. This information becomes part of sample provenance record to help validate the reliability and usefulness of data obtained from surface-analysis methods.[8]

Although the categories of necessary reporting are similar for all specimens, the details of the required sample handling can vary depending on the nature of the sample and analysis objectives. When the outer surface of a specimen is to be analysed the specimen needs to be handled carefully so that the introduction of spurious contaminants is avoided or minimized. The goal is to preserve the state of the surface during preparation and mounting so that the analysis remains representative of the original specimen. In other cases, sample processing is required to enable access to the surface or interface to be analysed and some aspects of the sample handling might be less stringent. In all cases, the nature of sample handling and preparation for the desired analyses need to be recorded and reported.

Normative annexes to this document describe methods that the surface analyst can use to minimize the effects of specimen preparation when using any surface-sensitive analytical technique. Annexes also describe methods to mount specimens to ensure that the desired analytical information is not compromised. Annex A describes approaches, issues, and good practices regarding sample handling in preparation for analysis. Annex B provides information about sources of contamination, sample handling and storage requirements for differing analysis objectives.

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Surface chemical analysis — Sample handling, preparation and mounting —

Part 2: Documenting and reporting the preparation and mounting of specimens for analysis

1 Scope

This document specifies information to be reported by an analyst in a datasheet, certificate of analysis, report or other publication regarding the handling, preparation, processing and mounting of specimens for surface analysis. Appropriate sample handling with adequate documentation is needed to ensure and assess reliability and reproducibility of analyses. Such information is in addition to other details associated with specimen synthesis, processing history and characterization, and should become part of the data record (sometimes identified as provenance information) regarding the source of the material and changes that have taken place since it was originated.

This document also includes normative annexes that summarize important processes and common approaches relevant to sample preparation and mounting for surface analysis. The descriptions of procedures for which records and reporting are required follow the steps that an analyst would follow from receiving the samples, to cleaning or processing outside of the analysis chamber, sample mounting and then treatments in the analysis chamber. The descriptions of the processes and their implications are intended as an aid for the analyst in understanding the reporting requirements for the specialized sample-handling conditions and approaches required for analyses by techniques such as Auger electron spectroscopy (AES), secondary-ion mass spectrometry (SIMS), and X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS). The methods described are also applicable for other analytical techniques, such as total reflection X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (TXRF), low energy electron diffraction (LEED), some types of scanning probe microscopy (SPM) including atomic force microscopy (AFM) and scanning tunnelling microscopy (STM), ultra-violet photoelectron spectroscopy (UPS) and medium- and low-energy ion scattering (MEIS and LEIS [also called ion surface scattering, ISS]) that are sensitive to surface composition.

This document does not specify the nature of instrumentation, instrument conditions (e.g., calibration or vacuum quality), or operating procedures required to ensure that the analytical measurements described have been appropriately conducted.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 18115-1, *Surface chemical analysis — Vocabulary — Part 1: General terms and terms used in spectroscopy*

ISO 18115-2, *Surface chemical analysis — Vocabulary — Part 2: Terms used in scanning-probe microscopy*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 18115-1 and ISO 18115-2 apply.

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