
**Optics and photonics — Test methods
for surface imperfections of optical
elements**

*Optique et photonique — Méthodes d'essai applicables
aux imperfections de surface des éléments optiques*



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ISO copyright office
Case postale 56 • CH-1211 Geneva 20
Tel. + 41 22 749 01 11
Fax + 41 22 749 09 47
E-mail copyright@iso.org
Web www.iso.org

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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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 14997 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 172, *Optics and photonics*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Fundamental standards*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 14997:2003), which has undergone minor revision to adapt ISO 14997:2011 to ISO 10110-7:2009; the main changes are the deletion of one of the two test methods and the addition of a new Annex E.

Introduction

This International Standard was developed in response to worldwide demand for test methods for surface imperfections that are objective and permit fast assessment of component quality. Existing standards have been assessed (see Reference [9]) and found to be too variable in use to satisfy the current requirements of industry. Surface imperfections, such as digs and scratches, arise from localized damage during or after manufacture. They can be visible as a result of the light they scatter, giving rise to a false impression of poor quality. Alternatively, this light can appear as unwanted veiling glare (stray radiation) in an image plane, or it can lead to a degradation in signal quality at an image sensor. Imperfections can also provide centres of stress, eventually leading to failure of components exposed to high laser radiation power/energy densities.

Since modern methods of surface examination are capable of atomic resolution, no surface is likely to be found totally free of localized imperfections. Most surfaces produced are satisfactory for their intended purpose, but a small proportion can have suffered obvious damage and will be reworked or regarded as unacceptable. This can leave some components which, although slightly damaged, may still be found acceptable, when tested, depending on the level of acceptability of surface imperfections requested by the customer and specified on drawings in ISO 10110-7. This International Standard describes how these methods are implemented.

The obscuration of imperfections larger than $10\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ can be judged visually by comparison of areas with artefacts of known size on a comparison plate. The obscuration caused by imperfections equal to or less than $10\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ across and yet still visible under dark-field illumination either is too small for accurate area measurement or may transmit as well as scatter radiation. These need to be quantified by comparison of their radiometric obscuration with totally absorbing artefacts of known size. Every imperfection detected is measured and considered for summation to produce a level of grade for each surface.

It should be noted that other light scattering defects, which also need to be measured, can arise as digs distributed over the surface of an incompletely polished surface, and as bubbles and as striae within an optical material. The measurement of laser damage thresholds also requires sensitive means for quantifying the level of radiation scattered by damage in its early stages.

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1 Scope

This International Standard establishes the physical principles and practical means for the implementation of methods for measuring surface imperfections. This method evaluates the surface area obscured or affected by the imperfections.

The method is suitable for prototype, small-scale or large-scale production of a wide variety of optical components. Imperfection appearance or functional tolerances related to a particular component can be determined by agreement between supplier and customer.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application 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 10110-7, *Optics and photonics — Preparation of drawings for optical elements and systems — Part 7: Surface imperfection tolerances*

ISO 11145, *Optics and photonics — Lasers and laser-related equipment — Vocabulary and symbols*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 10110-7 and ISO 11145 and the following apply.

3.1

fully-developed imperfection

imperfection which scatters all radiation incident upon it

3.2

partially-developed imperfection

imperfection which transmits as well as scatters radiation incident upon it

3.3

line-equivalent width

LEW

width of a fully-developed scratch or absorbing line which obscures the same amount of radiation as a partially-developed scratch

NOTE The LEW of a fully-developed scratch equals its geometrical width.