
**Sensory analysis — Guidelines for the
use of quantitative response scales**

*Analyse sensorielle — Lignes directrices pour l'utilisation d'échelles de
réponses quantitatives*



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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 4121 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*, Subcommittee SC 12, *Sensory analysis*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 4121:1987), which has been technically revised.

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Sensory analysis — Guidelines for the use of quantitative response scales

1 Scope

This International Standard provides guidelines describing quantitative response scales (where the response obtained indicates the intensity of perception) and their use when assessing samples.

It is applicable to all quantitative assessment, whether global or specific and whether objective or hedonic.

It is intentionally limited to the most commonly used measurement scales for sensory assessment.

It is necessary to distinguish between two common uses of the term “scale”: response scale (see 3.1), and measurement scale (see 3.5).

NOTE Annex A gives examples of an application.

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 5492, *Sensory analysis — Vocabulary*

ISO 6658, *Sensory analysis — Methodology — General guidance*

ISO 8586-1, *Sensory analysis — General guidance for the selection, training and monitoring of assessors — Part 1: Selected assessors*

ISO 8586-2, *Sensory analysis — General guidance for the selection, training and monitoring of assessors — Part 2: Experts*

ISO 8587, *Sensory analysis — Methodology — Ranking*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 5492 and the following apply.

3.1

response scale

means (e.g. numerical, verbal or pictorial) by which an assessor registers a quantitative response

NOTE 1 In sensory analysis, this is a device or tool to capture the reaction of an assessor to some property such that it can be converted into numbers.

NOTE 2 The term “scale” is widely used as being equivalent to the expression “response scale”.