

THE BEST LABORATORIES ARE ACCREDITED

IT IS A KNOWN FACT

Many markets require that products are tested by accredited facilities before they will accept the goods as safe or fit for consumption and grant them entry. As exports out of the Caribbean¹ increase, so does the demand for accredited laboratories and other conformity assessment bodies (CABs).

Accreditation provides the assurance that CABs are adhering to internationally recognized standards. For calibration and testing laboratories that standard is ISO/IEC 17025.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

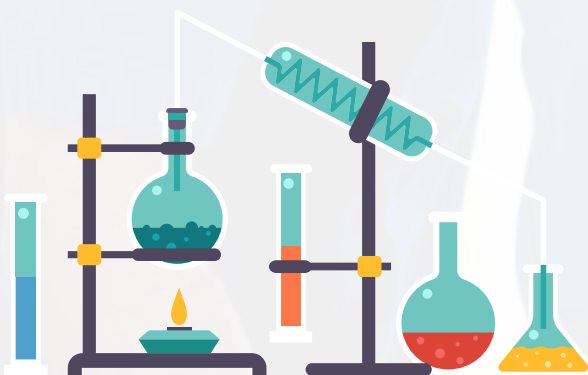
- Increased customer confidence in your work, your staff and the test results produced by your laboratory.
- Increased opportunities to service regulators and suppliers that require laboratory test results to be accredited to the ISO/IEC 17025 standard.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

A laboratory's competence is assured via an on-site assessment process and participation in applicable Proficiency Testing programmes. The on-site assessment process is a thorough examination of the laboratory's Management System and Quality System. This on-site assessment process assures that the laboratory is capable of producing accurate, traceable and reproducible data.

This Steps to Accreditation infographic is designed to put at your fingertips, the information you need to take the next step. Invest in your future success.

Call your National Standards Bureau to find out more.



¹ <https://www.iadb.org/en/news/latin-american-and-caribbean-exports-rise-slower-rate>

STEPS FOR LAB ACCREDITATION

By carrying out the following steps, a lab or certification body or inspection body otherwise known as Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) can become accredited, once it fulfils the requirements of the applicable standard:

1. Preparation

The CAB must go through the relevant accreditation standard and ensure that it has the requisite competence to perform the task (testing, inspection or certification) for which it wish to seek accreditation.

3. DOCUMENT REVIEW

The Accreditation Body will conduct a review of the applicant's submitted documents and may make requests for additional information and/or clarifications.

5. FINAL VERIFICATION

If there are any nonconformities to the standards that is identified, the CAB will have to take corrective action. Assessors which will then be verified in follow-up visits or other activities to ensure the effectiveness of the corrective action.

7. ACCREDITATION

Upon approval, a license to use the relevant accreditation symbol(s) is granted to the CAB for a specified period, agreement documents are signed and a notice of the CAB's accreditation status is declared.

2. APPLICATION

The CAB submits a completed Application along with its Management System Manual to the Accreditation Body along with other documents that will help with assessing the institutions readiness and cost. Once the CAB gets a quotation, they will then pay the associated fees as agreed.

4. ON-SITE INITIAL ASSESSMENT

The Accreditation Body's team of assessors visit the CAB to evaluate the level of conformance of its equipment, methods and staff to the required standards, in that way verifying the CAB's competence.

6. APPROVAL

The assessors write a report on the assessment of the CAB including a recommendation about whether or not to grant the accreditation.

This is reviewed by the Accreditation Body's Accreditation Board who makes a final decision as to whether or not to grant the accreditation.

8. SURVEILLANCE VISITS AND RE-ASSESSMENT

Each year there will be an annual surveillance visit conducted to ensure continued conformance. In the fourth year, a re-assessment visit is done.

