


Policy		
 LABORATORY ACCREDITATION BUREAU	Subject: Proficiency Testing	Policy 002
Approved by: R. Douglas Leonard	Revision No: 9 Date: 12/14/10	Page 1 of 4

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. The purpose of the policy is to define the requirements for proficiency testing (PT) in order to obtain accreditation and to maintain accreditation by Laboratory Accreditation Bureau, LLC (L-A-B).

2. REFERENCE


- 2.1. ILAC-P9:2005 – ILAC Policy for Participation in National and International Proficiency Testing Activities.
- 2.2. ISO/IEC 17025:2005 – General Requirements for the Competence of Testing and Calibration Laboratories
- 2.3. ISO/IEC 17043:2010 - Conformity assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing

3. SCOPE


- 3.1. Laboratories that wish to become accredited and maintain their accreditation are responsible for participating in a proficiency testing, interlaboratory comparison, round robin, or quality assurance program that will meet the requirements of L-A-B and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).
- 3.2. L-A-B maintains a listing of acceptable PT program providers on the L-A-B website. This listing should be reviewed by the laboratory to determine when changes are made and on a periodic basis.
- 3.3. L-A-B strongly encourages the use of an “Accredited” PT provider over another, albeit acceptable PT provider, simply because Accreditation of the program provides additional confidence to the user of the PT program. It is always permissible however, for any of the PT providers on the L-A-B list to be used where they have a program that is operated in conformance with ISO/IEC 17043 for the parameter in question.

4. POLICY

- 4.1. Applicant laboratories must have performed satisfactorily in one approved PT / ILC for a Major Field with Related Discipline on their proposed scope of accreditation before accreditation can be granted.
 - 4.1.1. Evidence of satisfactory performance is evidenced in either a preliminary or final report issued by the PT / ILC provider no more than two years prior to the initial assessment.
- 4.2. Accredited laboratories must participate in annual (having submitted their results) proficiency testing in order to maintain their accredited status. The Major Fields and Related Disciplines are defined in the L-A-B Policy 002.1 - Major Field Parameters with Related Disciplines. *Note - It is recommended that each laboratory participate in at least 25% of their scope per year.*

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- 4.2.1. Accredited laboratories with more than four Major Fields with Related Disciplines per L-A-B Policy 002.1 on their accredited scope are required to participate in a minimum of two approved PT / ILC's each year (between January 1 and December 31) of their accreditation.
- 4.2.2. Accredited laboratories with four or fewer Major Fields with Related Discipline per L-A-B Policy 002.1 on their accredited scopes are required to participate in a minimum of one approved PT / ILC each year (between January 1 and December 31) of their accreditation.
- 4.3. Each accredited Major Filed Parameter with Related Discipline of Testing and/or Calibration shall be covered within a four (4) year period defined by the PT/ILC Tracking schedule.
- 4.4. The laboratory is required to complete and maintain an up to date documented PT/ILC tracking schedule (Form 28.12 or equivalent) meeting the requirements of L-A-B and ISO/IEC 17025 section 5.9.
 - 4.4.1. Where specific PT / ILC programs are not available, the schedule shall represent the other methods of meeting the requirements of section 5.9.
 - 4.4.2. Where applicable, L-A-B program requirements apply
- 4.5. The schedule shall cover at least one four year PT/ILC cycle; the schedule must include each Major Field with Related Discipline with proposed dates, and must be provided to L-A-B prior to each assessment.
 - 4.5.1. Laboratories shall ensure that proficiency testing samples are distributed among personnel trained and qualified for the relevant test within a 4 year period. L-A-B program requirements may supersede this requirement.
 - 4.5.2. While data gathered from technicians not officially participating may be a useful exercise to verify technician competence or other aspects of the laboratory, this does not count as official PT/ILC activity within a given year or a 4 year PT cycle for Policy 002.
- 4.6. If the laboratory has determined there are no approved PT / ILC programs available for a particular test listed on their scope of accreditation as defined by the L-A-B Policy 002.1 then the laboratory MUST have a documented program that meets the requirements of section 5.9 of ISO / IEC 17025:2005.
 - 4.6.1. This may consist of, but not limited to, comparisons with other laboratories, internal performance-based checks, regular use of certified reference materials, internal quality control using secondary reference materials, replicate tests using the same or different methods, re testing of retained items, and correlation of results for different characteristics of an item.
- 4.7. As required, laboratories shall participate in international or national PT programs arranged through L-A-B (NACLA, APLAC, ILAC, ect.). *Note – There is typically minimal cost associated with these programs.*
- 4.8. L-A-B strongly encourages laboratories to utilize the approved PT / ILC providers listed on Form 205.7 available on our website. Any laboratory which chooses a

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proficiency test, interlaboratory comparison, or round robin PT / ILC that does not utilize an approved PT provider (including those performed internally) must submit the "Proficiency Scheme" on L-A-B Form 28.14 – PT / ILC Application for Non PT Provider Schemes for approval by L-A-B prior to starting the proficiency test.

- 4.8.1. A "Proficiency Scheme" shall be submitted for each PT / ILC proposed.
- 4.8.2. Each "Proficiency Scheme" must be resubmitted for approval during subsequent Full Reassessments.
- 4.8.3. Laboratory may be asked to provide evidence that no approved PT services are available.
- 4.9. Laboratories shall notify L-A-B immediately in writing of any results found outside the predefined criteria.
 - 4.9.1. Laboratories are required to investigate, per section 4.9 of ISO/IEC 17025, all unsuccessful results of PT / ILC parameters, and if necessary take corrective action.
 - 4.9.2. These investigations and corrective actions of unsatisfactory results shall be provided to L-A-B along with the PT / ILC results.
- 4.10. Laboratories must notify their PT provider allowing L-A-B to receive or obtain PT results directly from the PT provider if so desired or required by specific program requirements.
- 4.11. The laboratory shall have all of their current and past PT / ILC results available for the Assessor to review.


5. REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Revision	Revised By	Brief Description of Revision
Original Issue through Rev 8	2/6/01 to 10/31/06	Archived	Archived (available up on request)
9	12/14/10	Jason Stine / Randy Long / Ryan Fischer	Laboratories may submit a Form 28.12 or equivalent Laboratory personnel whose main function is to perform a particular major field of accreditation is to perform PT/ILC within a 4 year period. Clarified requirement for applicant laboratories. With a 2 year stipulation. Clarified requirement to participate vs. complete PT. Added requirement for resubmission of 28.14 at subsequent reassessments.



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Annex A:

In the mock scope below, Length and Electricity & Magnetism are the major fields of accreditation.

Length, in this case has 2 related disciplines: Dimensional Metrology - Hand Tools and Precision Gages 1D and Dimensional Metrology - Artifacts and Standards 1D.

In this case, only 1 PT is required per year as there are 3 "Major Fields with Related Disciplines".

If the laboratory participates in a gage block PT this year, they have satisfied the 4 year requirement for Length - Dimensional Metrology – Artifacts and Standards 1D.

L-A-B recommends that different line items are sampled within a Major Field with Related Discipline in subsequent 4 year periods; in this case a plug gage would be scheduled.

Length - Dimensional Metrology – Hand Tools and Precision Gages 1D

Calibration Parameter/Equipment	Range	Calibration and Measurement Capability (+/-)	Remarks
Outside Micrometers	(0 to 3) in	(28 + 13L) μ in	Gauge Blocks
Calipers	(0 to 20) in	(580 + 5L) μ in	Gauge Blocks

Length - Dimensional Metrology – Artifacts and Standards 1D

Calibration Parameter/Equipment	Range	Calibration and Measurement Capability (+/-)	Remarks
Gage Blocks	(0 to 4) in	4.3 μ in	Gage Block Comparator
Cylindrical Plug Gages	(0 to 12) in	(8 + 3.5L) μ in	Supermicrometer

Electricity and Magnetism – Voltage

Calibration Parameter/Equipment	Range	Calibration and Measurement Capability (+/-)	Remarks
DC Volts - Source	(0 to 110) mV (0.11 to 1.1) V	0.48 mV 0.02 V	Process Calibrator
DC Volts - Measure	(0 to 110) mV (0.11 to 1.1) V	1 mV 0.2 V	