



**RULES GOVERNING THE USE OF THE
ALAB LABORATORY ACCREDITATION SYMBOL**



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Board of Laboratory Accreditation Australia Pty Ltd



Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. APPLICABLE STANDARDS	3
3. TECHNICAL FIELD	3
4. ACCREDITATION PROCESS	3
5. APPROVED ACCREDITATION DECISION-MAKER (“APPROVED CERTIFIER”)	6
6. APPROVED USERS	6
7. CONDITIONS OF USE CONCERNING THE ACCREDITATION SYMBOL (THE MARK)	7
8. DISPUTE RESOLUTION	7
9. OTHER MATTERS	8

1. Introduction

- a) Laboratory Accreditation Australia Pty Ltd (ACN 608 026 786) trading as Australian Laboratory Accreditation Body (ALAB) owns the certification trademark known as the *ALAB Laboratory Accreditation Symbol* (the Mark)
- b) The objectives of ALAB are as follows:
 - i. To operate independent and impartial accreditation services in accordance with AS ISO/IEC 17011 as amended from time to time.
 - ii. To provide accreditation services to test laboratories and calibration laboratories.
- c) These rules apply to all holders of accreditation certificates granted by ALAB.
- d) Pursuant to the concept of accreditation, it is acknowledged that test laboratories and calibration laboratories require a unique and traceable accreditation symbol to demonstrate to their clients and other stakeholders that they have received accreditation from ALAB.
- e) Subject to these Rules, holders of current ALAB accreditation are granted the non-exclusive right to use the Mark.
- f) Use of the Mark is restricted to bona-fide holders of a current accreditation certificate issued by ALAB.
- g) The Mark may only be used in relation to test and calibration services that are within the approved technical scope granted by ALAB.

2. Applicable Standards

- a) “Applicable Standards” means the Standard against which the test laboratory or calibration laboratory is assessed by ALAB.
- b) The applicable Standard is AS ISO/IEC 17025 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, as amended or revised from time to time.

3. Technical Field

- a) “Technical field” means the testing and calibration areas in which the laboratory works.
- b) Technical fields are defined within ALAB procedures.
- c) Technical fields are used by ALAB to categorize a laboratory and to build a corresponding competency framework for ALAB’s technical resources.

4. Accreditation Process

- a) The accreditation process commences once ALAB receives and approves a completed application form together with the applicable fee from an applicant.
- b) An applicant is a corporate entity or governmental body that provides testing or calibration services. Such services may be provided exclusively to internal stakeholders or may be provided to other entities or bodies and members of the public.

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- c) The process for determining if the applicant for accreditation conforms with the applicable Standard is as follows:
- i. At the option of the applicant, ALAB conducts a preliminary on-site visit to determine the preparedness of the applicant for an initial assessment.
 - ii. ALAB conducts a desktop review of submitted documentation to determine if the applicant's laboratory management system includes the required elements defined in the applicable Standard and other specified requirements as appropriate to the technical field in which the laboratory operates. A report is prepared which includes any discrepancies. The report is provided to the applicant.
 - iii. Once all outstanding discrepancies found during the document review are resolved, ALAB conducts an initial on-site assessment at the location where the test laboratory or calibration laboratory operates.
 - iv. The initial on-site assessment includes verification that:
 - a. the documented laboratory management system is being implemented in accordance with the applicable Standard,
 - b. the test or calibration laboratory is capable of demonstrating competence within the relevant technical scope of testing or calibration,
 - c. the test or calibration laboratory is capable of producing results within the relevant levels of measurement uncertainty,
 - d. evidence of successful participation in proficiency testing or measurement audit is capable of being verified,
 - e. the calibration laboratory is capable of producing results that are traceable to National Standards as administered by the National Measurement Institute or its equivalents or successors and,
 - f. reports produced by the laboratory comply with the minimum requirements of the applicable Standard.
 - v. The initial on-site assessment is performed by an Assessment Team comprising, as a minimum:
 - a. Lead Assessor and,
 - b. Technical Expert(s)
 - vi. Depending on the size of the laboratory, the Assessment Team may include additional Assessors.
 - vii. The initial assessment is conducted in accordance with AS ISO/IEC 17011.
 - viii. A report is issued that summarizes the findings of the assessment and itemizes any discrepancies.
 - ix. Discrepancies are required to be addressed through corrective actions and closed prior to a recommendation for accreditation being made.
 - x. Depending on the nature and extent of findings raised during the initial assessment, a follow-up assessment may be required to verify satisfactory implementation of corrective actions.
 - xi. Once all outstanding discrepancies are closed, a review of the the assessment reports (comprising document review report, initial assessment report and

where applicable, follow-up assessment report) is performed. The review shall be conducted by an individual appointed by the Board of ALAB. The reviewer shall be able to demonstrate competence in the use of the applicable Standard and other specified requirements as appropriate to the technical field in which the laboratory operates. The reviewer shall not have had any involvement in assessment activities relating to the Applicant.

- xii. The accreditation decision is made by the accreditation decision maker ('Approved Certifier') taking into account the recommendations of the Lead Assessor and of the independent reviewer and any other information that is relevant at the time of decision-making that may have a bearing on the applicant's capability to comply with the accreditation requirements. The Approved Certifier and reviewer shall not be the same person.
- xiii. If the decision of the Approved Certifier is negative, the detailed reasons for the decision shall be communicated to the applicant in writing.
- xiv. If the decision of the Approved Certifier is positive, the accreditation certificate shall be issued with an appended schedule defining the technical scope of accreditation.
- xv. ALAB's publicly-accessible list of accredited laboratories shall be updated with information concerning the newly-accredited laboratory as follows:
 - a. Laboratory full name and street address
 - b. Date of accreditation
 - c. Technical scope of accreditation
 - d. Whether the laboratory provides testing or calibration services.
- xvi. The accreditation certificate shall bear the signature of the Approved Certifier and the date of accreditation. The date of accreditation shall be the date when the accreditation decision was made.
- xvii. ALAB shall conduct a surveillance assessment at the site of the accredited laboratory within two years of the date of the accreditation.
- xviii. Surveillance of the laboratory is conducted to verify on-going compliance with accreditation requirements. Surveillance includes regular on-site assessment by ALAB. Surveillance assessments include verification of:
 - a. changes to the organization and documentation used by the laboratory,
 - b. changes to technical methods,
 - c. implementation of testing and calibration procedures through the review of records and observation of tests and calibrations as applicable to the scope of accreditation,
 - d. continued successful participation in proficiency testing or measurement audit, as applicable,
 - e. implementation of staff selection, training and monitoring procedures and,
 - f. implementation of management system procedures.
- xix. ALAB shall conduct a reaccreditation assessment within four years of the accreditation decision.

- xx. The purpose of the reaccreditation assessment is identical to the purpose of the initial assessment.
- xxi. Following a reaccreditation assessment and closure of any discrepancies, ALAB shall perform an independent review of the reaccreditation assessment report.
- xxii. The reaccreditation recommendation of the Lead Assessor together with the endorsement of the independent reviewer are considered by the approved certifier together with any other information concerning the performance of the laboratory as an ALAB-accredited entity during the course of the out-going four-year accreditation cycle.
- xxiii. Negative decisions are communicated as detailed in item xiii of this Clause.
- xxiv. A positive reaccreditation decision is communicated to the laboratory and ALAB's publicly-accessible directory of accredited laboratories is updated accordingly.

5. Approved Accreditation Decision-Maker ("Approved Certifier")

- a) ALAB's accreditation decision-maker ("Approved Certifier") shall be a person who:
 - i. is an employee of ALAB;
 - ii. is a person appointed by the Board of ALAB and whose credentials have been reviewed by ALAB's Advisory Council with positive results.
 - iii. has had no involvement with the assessment of the applicant;
 - iv. has had no involvement with the independent review of the assessment reports, and;
 - v. has no conflict of interest with the applicant.
- b) The Approved Certifier shall demonstrate the following attributes:
 - i. Holder of tertiary science or engineering qualification.
 - ii. A minimum of ten years experience working in the conformity assessment sector in a role requiring judgment of technical matters.
 - iii. Be a fit and proper person in the meaning defined within ALAB procedures.

6. Approved Users

- a) An approved user is an entity that has been awarded accreditation in accordance with Clause 3 of these Rules and is the holder of current accreditation.
- b) Approved users are permitted to use the Mark as follows:
 - i. On test and calibration reports issued within the scope of ALAB accreditation
 - ii. On advertising and marketing media
 - iii. On correspondence, such as letterheads and email footers.
- c) Approved users shall ensure that the unique facility number assigned by ALAB is always reproduced in conjunction with the Mark.
- d) Approved users shall ensure that the Mark is only used in relation to services that are within the technical scope of the current ALAB accreditation certificate.

7. Conditions of Use Concerning the Accreditation Symbol (the Mark)

- a) The ALAB accreditation certificate is deemed to be a licence to use the Mark and confers on the entity named on the certificate the status of Approved User.
- b) Approved Users must only use the Mark in relation to the technical scope of accreditation described in the current ALAB accreditation schedule
- c) Approved Users shall not use the accreditation certificate or the ALAB Mark in any way that may bring disrepute to ALAB.
- d) Upon suspension, cancellation or withdrawal of accreditation, Approved Users shall immediately cease the use of the Mark and remove the Mark and any reference to it from all advertising material and other matter.
- e) The ALAB accreditation certificate remains the property of ALAB and shall be returned in the event of it being cancelled or withdrawn.

8. Dispute Resolution

- a) An applicant or Client of ALAB is entitled to lodge a written complaint or written appeal with ALAB in relation to services provided by ALAB.
- b) Complaints relate to the conduct of services performed by ALAB as defined in these Rules and ALAB's relevant policies and procedures.
- c) Appeals relate to accreditation decisions made by ALAB which the Applicant or Client disagrees with.
- d) In the case of both complaints and appeals, ALAB undertakes to provide formal acknowledgment within three working days of receipt.
- e) ALAB shall appoint a person who is independent of the subject of the complaint or appeal, to review the complaint or appeal and within one week prepare a statement of chronological facts for review by ALAB Management.
- f) In the case of complaint the following process shall be followed
 - i. ALAB Management shall consider the complaint and the statement of facts and decide what correction and corrective action is required to address the particular matter that is being complained about and to address the root cause of the complaint in order that such matter does not recur.
 - ii. Management shall respond to the complainant within one month outlining the actions taken to address the complaint and providing the complainant with the opportunity to comment.
 - iii. The matter shall be considered closed when, either the complainant acknowledges the actions taken by ALAB, or tacit agreement from the complainant is interpreted by no response being received within 14 days of the ALAB response being sent to the complainant.
- g) In the case of appeals, the following process shall be followed;
 - i. Management shall submit the chronological statement of facts to the ALAB Advisory Council for review and decision. Included with the statement of facts shall be the complete set of documented information upon which the decision which is the subject of the appeal was made.

- ii. If any member of the Advisory Council has a potential or actual conflict of interest with the appellant then this shall be made known to the Chair of the Advisory council and that member shall excuse him/her self from participating in the review and decision.
- iii. Should the Advisory Council require additional technical expertise to arrive at a decision, this shall be provided, at ALAB's expense, in the form of a technical expert that is independent from the particular project under appeal and is demonstrably not linked in any way with the appellant such that a conflict of interest could be inferred.
- iv. Management shall inform the appellant of when the Advisory Council is scheduled to consider the matter, giving the appellant the opportunity to be present.
- v. The Advisory Council shall hand down its recommendation within 60 days of receiving the statement of facts.
- vi. A decision consistent with the recommendation of the Advisory Council shall be provided by Management to the appellant within one week of receiving recommendation.
- vii. The decision shall be final.

9. Other Matters

- a) These Rules may only be varied by authority of the Board of ALAB.
 - b) Variation of a material nature that may affect the nature of these Rules shall be resubmitted for approval by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission prior to implementation by ALAB.
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