

# LABORATORY QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

## CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

### GENERAL

This document specifies Trinidad & Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) minimum requirements for laboratories seeking recognition to Grades I, II and III of the Laboratory Quality Improvement Programme (LABQUIP). The requirements are based on the scope of training and consultancy offered by Premier Quality Services Limited (PQSL) at each level.

The requirements may be used by laboratories for basic guidance on developing systems for quality assurance and technical operations, in preparation for assessment.

The requirements do not cover compliance with statutory or safety regulations for laboratories.

Compliance with the requirements of Grade II and Grade III does not confirm competence in any test method. Compliance with **Grade I requirements includes competence in conducting one test/calibration using a standard test method.**

Housekeeping is an element for assessment at Grades I, II and III.

Private laboratories seeking recognition to Grade I or II or III shall provide evidence of registration with the Registrar of Companies.

Laboratories shall complete and submit the prescribed application form with all required documents, to the

Executive Director,  
Trinidad & Tobago Bureau of Standards  
1-2 Century Drive  
Trincity Industrial Estate  
Macoya, Tunapuna

# LABQUIP CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

## GRADE I

**Objective:** *To promote good laboratory practices through the introduction of principles contained in ISO/IEC 17025 - General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.*

## REQUIREMENTS

The laboratory shall implement and maintain a quality system that incorporates some elements of ISO/IEC 17025, in addition to specific elements of Grade II requirements.

The laboratory shall document its scope of operation, policies, objectives, management structure and procedures in a quality manual. Documentation shall be to the extent necessary to assure compliance with stated requirements and to maintain the quality of its test/calibration results.

Management should document its overall quality objectives in a quality policy statement.

Laboratory staff shall have a basic knowledge of ISO/IEC 17025.

Laboratory data and records shall indicate implementation of actions that support compliance with the TTBS requirements under the following headings:

### (1) **Management Requirements**

- *Management Responsibility*
- *Organization*
- *Control of Documents*
- *Control of non-conforming testing/calibration work*
- *Corrective Action*
- *Control of Records - identification, access, storage and retrieval of applicable quality records and technical records.*
- *Internal audits*

### (2) **Technical Requirements**

- *Competence of Laboratory Personnel*
- *Uncertainty of Measurement*
- *Test and Calibration Methods - Standard or recognized method only.*
- *Equipment - in relation to selected test/calibration method only.*
- *Calibration of Equipment*
- *Sampling (if applicable).*
- *Handling and transportation of test and calibration items.*
- *Assuring quality of test/calibration results - in relation to selected test/calibration method.*
- *Reporting results*

The ability to maintain an effective and appropriate quality system will be determined by assessment. This will include evaluation of the laboratory's technical competence to conduct one test/calibration using a standard method.

# LABQUIP CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

## GRADE II

**Objective:** *To improve skills in documentation, quality assurance and customer satisfaction.*

### REQUIREMENTS

The laboratory shall implement and maintain a system that incorporates at least one technique for each topic listed. Its ability to maintain an effective system will be determined by assessment.

The laboratory shall prepare a simple manual stating, at least, its scope of operation, management structure, policies and procedures, to the extent necessary for maintenance of its operations.

Laboratory data and records shall indicate implementation of actions that support achievement of:

**(1) *Customer Satisfaction***

- *Understanding customer requirements for testing/calibration;*
- *Importance of test/calibration results to the customer;*
- *Maintaining confidentiality of customer information*
- *Effecting corrective actions for complaints*
- *Timeliness of service*
- *Adequate reporting of test/calibration results*

**(2) *Improvement of operations and services:***

- *Customer feed-back*
- *Introduction of improved techniques*

**(3) *Quality Assurance***

- *Essential staff training*
- *Principles for handling test/calibration items*
- *Sampling*
- *Purchasing for quality results*
- *Essential techniques for assuring the quality of results*
- *Use of standard or recognized test methods*
- *Equipment calibration, management and records*
- *Maintenance of data, records, procedures, test/calibration methods and instructions*
- *Effecting corrective actions for test results.*

## **LABQUIP CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT**

### **GRADE III**

**Objective:** *To introduce concepts of customer satisfaction and principles for validity and reliability of test/calibration results.*

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The use of manuals, procedures and forms is at the discretion of the laboratory, but documentation shall be adequate to maintain its operation and demonstrate communication with clients.

Laboratory operations shall show evidence that the following basic principles of quality are understood and implemented:

- (1) ***Customer satisfaction***
  - *Understanding customer requirements for testing/calibration*
  - *Accuracy and precision - Reliability of test/calibration results*
  - *Timeliness of service*
  - *Confidentiality of customer information*
- (2) ***Improvement of operations and services through customer feedback.***
- (3) ***Quality of technical output.***
  - *Staff training*
  - *Equipment - calibration and maintenance*
  - *Standard or recognized test/calibration methods*
  - *Environmental conditions*
  - *Maintenance of data and records.*

**GW/kc  
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