

How Accreditation-Ready are our tests?

Rather than jumping in the deep end and sending NATA a list of all the tests you may ever want to get accreditation for, it's a good idea to work out how ready those tests are for accreditation.

If your laboratory is already accredited, this checklist provides a structured way of assessing whether it is worth contacting NATA about adding a new test yet.

YOU CAN USE THIS MATRIX TO

- ◆ **assess** which tests are closest to ready for a NATA assessment
- ◆ **prioritise** the work and budget needed to get accreditation
- ◆ **explain** to management what is needed or why you believe a test is not ready for accreditation

HOW TO USE IT

1 Score your laboratory against each requirement 1-5, where one is close to nothing and 5 is complete. Include notes to explain the score. Account for factors such as if you are able to get the information easily from other sources.

2 Work out the total for each test. If the ranks don't make sense, go back and review the scores. Did you think the test was more ready than it really is or have you scored it too harshly?

3 Call a meeting, review the scores, set priorities, and nominate responsibilities.

Having a clear idea of what work needs to be done and who will do it means you can get cracking!

Requirement	Example		Next method	
Do we have qualified and experienced staff in the technique/s involved? (Pathology labs also need clinical supervision.)	5	Yes, staff are qualified & experienced in relevant testing.		
Is the equipment in place and functioning?	3	No – still to be installed, but we have purchased.		
Are there any lab environment requirements? Does the lab meet them?	5	Just ambient conditions.		
Is there a written test method and/or procedures, including QC?	3	Instrument manual only		
Is test data recorded systematically, e.g. on worksheets, by direct data capture, or in workbooks?	3	In workbooks but varies depending on who does the work.		
Is reporting done in a defined format that meets ISO 17025 or ISO 15189?	1	We just send a spreadsheet		
Do we have evidence of traceability for equipment and reference standards?	3	Some certificates for reference materials. No external calibrations for equipment yet.		
Have we got some proficiency testing results? (inter-lab comparison, measurement audit)	1	Can't find a suitable program for this test. Get advice from NATA.		
Has the method been validated or verified? (If required)	3	Standard method, no modifications. Verification required.		
Do we need to estimate Uncertainty of Measurement (MU)?	2	We run QC samples. We can use that data to start our MU calculations.		
Total				