



Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science  
Société canadienne de science de laboratoire médical

## Course Assessment Handbook

Reference Guide, Fees, Application and Checklist  
Submitting Courses and Programs to be assessed for:  
CSMLS PEP Hours  
CSMLS CPS Credits

## Introduction

Course participants (both CSMLS members and non-members) and those who provide learning programs may submit courses and programs to determine if they are eligible for CSMLS Professional Enhancement Program (PEP) hours and Certificate of Professional Studies (CPS) credits. Individuals may use the results of the assessment for the CSMLS PEP program, the CSMLS CPS program, or the continuing competency program of their regulatory college. Those who provide learning programs consider assessment results a marketing advantage.

Course assessments are performed by valued CSMLS volunteers. This document clarifies the process and expectations for those who may be submitting a course for assessment and improves the application process. This makes more efficient use of our volunteers' time and results ultimately in better and faster assessments for those applying.

This document contains information on:

1. Reasons for getting a course assessed
2. Understanding CSMLS course assessments
  - CSMLS Competency Profiles
  - Advanced application of Medical Laboratory Technology
  - Medical Laboratory and Medical Laboratory-related content
  - Timing – duration of valid assessment results
3. Criteria for Assessment results
4. Turn-around-time
5. Required Documentation
6. Assessment results
7. Assessment Quality Control
8. Fee Structure
9. Appeals process
10. Process Map
11. Related Documents
12. Assessment Application
13. Checklist

## 1. Reasons for getting a course assessed

Assessment results are used for the following professional recognition programs:

1. Professional Enhancement Program (PEP)
2. Certificate of Professional Studies (CPS)

Courses are compared against the current competency profiles. Please indicate on your application form which competency profile you would like your course assessed against. If you do not indicate this, we will assess based upon the general MLT competency profile. The results of your assessment may include PEP hours, MLA CPS credits, MLT CPS credits, clinical genetics CPS credits or cytotechnology CPS credits.

## 2. Understanding Course Assessments

A CSMLS course assessment is different than the university assessment systems, PACE or other assessment processes you may encounter. To understand CSMLS assessments you must consider the following:

a) The current competency profile(s). This is the break-off point to determine content that is entry-level or advanced. Other organizations do not use the CSMLS competency profiles for assessments – so the assessments are *not comparable, equivalent or transferable*. 3 university credits will not necessarily equal 3 CPS credits from the CSMLS.

Determining entry-level content requires our volunteer assessors to put aside their personal experience on the path to their CSMLS certification and to focus instead on the current competency profile. We need a single point of comparison and that is the current competency profile. The current competency profile can be found on the CSMLS website.

b) What does advanced application of medical laboratory technology look like?

Advanced application may include:

- The scientific specialist or expert
  - Generalist (advanced expertise in multiple lab disciplines – think advanced general MLT)
  - A lab discipline specialty (e.g. Hematology)
  - Something very specific within a lab discipline (e.g. Coagulation or sub-specialty of hypercoagulation).
- Lab Management (human resources, finance, quality systems, business etc.)
- Lab Education (learning to support clinical placements, training of new hires or new methodologies/technologies, preceptors for MLT/MLA program training)

Competencies not on the current competency profile but that ARE on the next competency profile, identified as required and validated but not yet implemented.

c) What is Medical Laboratory and Medical Laboratory-related content?

Credit and/or PEP hours are only awarded for medical laboratory and medical laboratory-related content.

The general competency profile is a useful tool to help understand what medical laboratory content is. Medical laboratory content is what is taught in medical laboratory technology/assistant programs and their goal is to develop the competencies described in the current general MLT and MLA competency profiles. Medical Laboratory content is the knowledge and skills used when a person is employed in any of the pre-analytical, analytical and post-analytical areas of a typical medical laboratory.

Medical Laboratory - related content is best determined by thinking of the above description of advanced application and by thinking of the knowledge and skills that will help a laboratory professional do their job (e.g. University-level poetry, botany, drama would not be lab related. However accounting, teaching adults, writing clearly and concisely, customer service, preventing pre-analytical errors, medical terminology, ethics in healthcare, WHMIS would all be medical laboratory-related and worthy of PEP hours and possibly CPS credits.)

d) Timing

Our assessment results are valid from the date of the materials we receive to a maximum of 10 years later. This period is indicated by the check-digit. For instance: course number 4888-03 was assessed from 2003 course materials and the assessment will be valid from 2003 to 2013 maximum. If you took this same course in 2000, then this assessment result does not apply to you because it was not your version of the course that was assessed. The only exception would be if your course provider produces a signed original letter, on their letterhead, that indicates that the content and learning assessment for your version of the course (e.g. 2000) is the same as the assessed version of the course (e.g. 2003). This letter will be a necessary part of your PEP or CPS application.

The 'Assessed Course List' of completed assessments is posted for your convenience. Check this list and the check-digits carefully. Your version of your course may already be assessed.

**CSMLS will not assess courses that are 10 years old or will become so within 3 months of receipt of the application**

### 3. Criteria for Assessment Results

The following information is excluded from the Assessment

- Content that is not medical laboratory or medical laboratory related
- Content that is related to other healthcare disciplines but is unrelated to a medical laboratory (e.g. positioning patients for an X-ray)
- Content that may be below entry-level material when there is not adequate documentation to prove otherwise (e.g. acid-base reactions. Reason: could be secondary school level or entry level. With adequate documentation, this content will be categorized appropriately and included where applicable)
- Homework hours

**The following criteria are considered when determining PEP Hours:**

- Number of hours of study of medical laboratory or medical laboratory-related material
- Foundational learning for a stated competency (e.g. human anatomy)
- Advanced and Entry-level content

When the above criteria are assessed:

**Total laboratory or laboratory-related contact hours = PEP hours awarded**

**The following criteria are considered when determining CPS:**

- Number of hours of study of material that are medical laboratory or medical laboratory-related AND are advanced content as compared to the current competency profile
- Courses or learning programs are 5 hours or more in length
- At least 60% of the content is beyond entry-level (as compared to the current competency profile) (e.g. a course with 50% advanced content will not be awarded credit)

Courses or learning programs must have a formal evaluation/assessment of student learning that adequately reflects the depth and scope of the course material and indicates whether the learning objectives were mastered, or not

When the above criteria are met, as supported by course provider documentation, then:

**CPS credits=  $\frac{\text{med lab/med lab-related contact hours} \times \% \text{ of the course that is advanced content}}{15}$**

**The number of credits is based upon advanced level content only.**

A CSMLS credit is only assigned for 15 hours of advanced level laboratory-related study, when mastery of learning is indicated. Assignment / homework hours are not used to compute credits unless they are a part of the learner assessment.

**4. Turn-Around-Time**

Assessments are performed by our valued volunteers. Our target turn-around-time is 3 months, depending upon the availability of our volunteers, the volume of applications that come in at a given time, and the match of our assessors to the content they are being asked to assess.

Fast-tracking is a strategy applied to improve turn-around-time overall. Course assessments are fast-tracked when they are very straight-forward: clearly 100% medical laboratory or medical laboratory related content and no assessment of learning. When the initial review of the assessment application and content indicates this situation, the program will immediately be assigned PEP hours (no credits) and the application will go directly to the quality control phase. See the process map for more information.

**Would you like to be a volunteer course assessor?**

**Contact CSMLS Learning Services!**

## **5. Required Documentation**

The onus is on the applicant to keep the original course material and send us a copy to perform the assessment. You may choose to save content to a CD and send 2 CDs to us, rather than photocopying the materials. The documentation must be from your course provider – it is not adequate to self-report (e.g., ‘I spent 30 hours on the course’ or ‘this is much more in-depth than what I learned in my lab program’ are not suitable). The course number on the documentation from the course provider must be the same as on your application (and PEP/CPS application).

## **6. Assessment Results**

The process of assessing courses for PEP hours and CPS credit is open and transparent. The procedure is included within this document and posted on the CSMLS website.

You, the applicant, will receive written notification of your assessment results. The results will also be posted on the CSMLS website, in the Assessed Course List.

Credit assessments are valid until the content of the program changes significantly or 10 years after the content is established, whichever comes first. Course providers should resubmit the course for reassessment at this time.

If you are a course provider, you may choose to direct your course participants to the Assessed Course List to find the assessment results of your program. CSMLS only issues results to the applicant.

## **7. Assessment Quality Control**

Each assessment is reviewed as part of quality control. However, our results are only as good as the documentation we receive. It is your responsibility to submit the required documentation for your course assessment. CSMLS volunteer assessors will not do internet searches or phone your provider to discover missing information. If you’ve already done the course, the best situation is if you’ve kept the course information and materials from that time. However, if you have not, it is best to go to the course provider for information from when you took the course rather than pulling current course information off of the internet (see timing, above). If your application is obviously missing critical information, it will be returned to you without processing. However, sometimes it isn’t obvious and we will complete the assessment to the best of our ability, based upon the information you’ve provided. You may later choose to appeal the assessment result and submit further substantiating documentation.

To help you determine if you’ve compiled all the required documentation from your course provider, we’ve created a check list for you to use.

## 8. Fees

### Terms:

**Member:** You must be a CSMLS member at the time your application for assessment is received by CSMLS

**Provincial Societies/Regulatory Bodies:** External organizations with medical laboratory professionals as members. (BCSLS, CMLTA, SSMLT, CMLTM, MAMLS, CMLTO, MLP AO, OPTMQ, NBSMLT, NSCMLT, PEISMLA, NLCMLS)

**Course Provider:** Organization, educational institution or individual that develops a course or learning program.

**Coverage period:** Yearly rates cover a 12 month period from the date of payment.

### Method of Payment:

Accepted methods of payment include cheque, money order or credit card. Once payment is processed, your credit card information on the application will be hidden.

|               | <b>Member</b> | <b>Provincial Societies and Regulatory Bodies</b> | <b>Course Provider</b><br><b><u>INCLUDED IN THE PRICE:</u></b><br><b>Permission to use CSMLS assessment results in course advertisements and communications</b> | <b>Non-Member</b>          |
|---------------|---------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| Single course | Free          | \$100   | \$250   | \$300                      |
| Yearly rate   | N/A           | \$500<br>Max: 10 courses                          | \$1,250<br>Max: 10 courses  | \$1,500<br>Max: 10 courses |
| Appeal        | \$25          | \$100   | \$250   | \$300                      |

## 9. Appeals

If you disagree with the result of the course assessment, you can request an appeal. The charge for appeals is listed in Section 8: Fees. An appeal is any reassessment of the same course, and same version of a course, whether or not additional documentation is sent and the fee will apply. You may choose to send additional documentation to support your appeal.

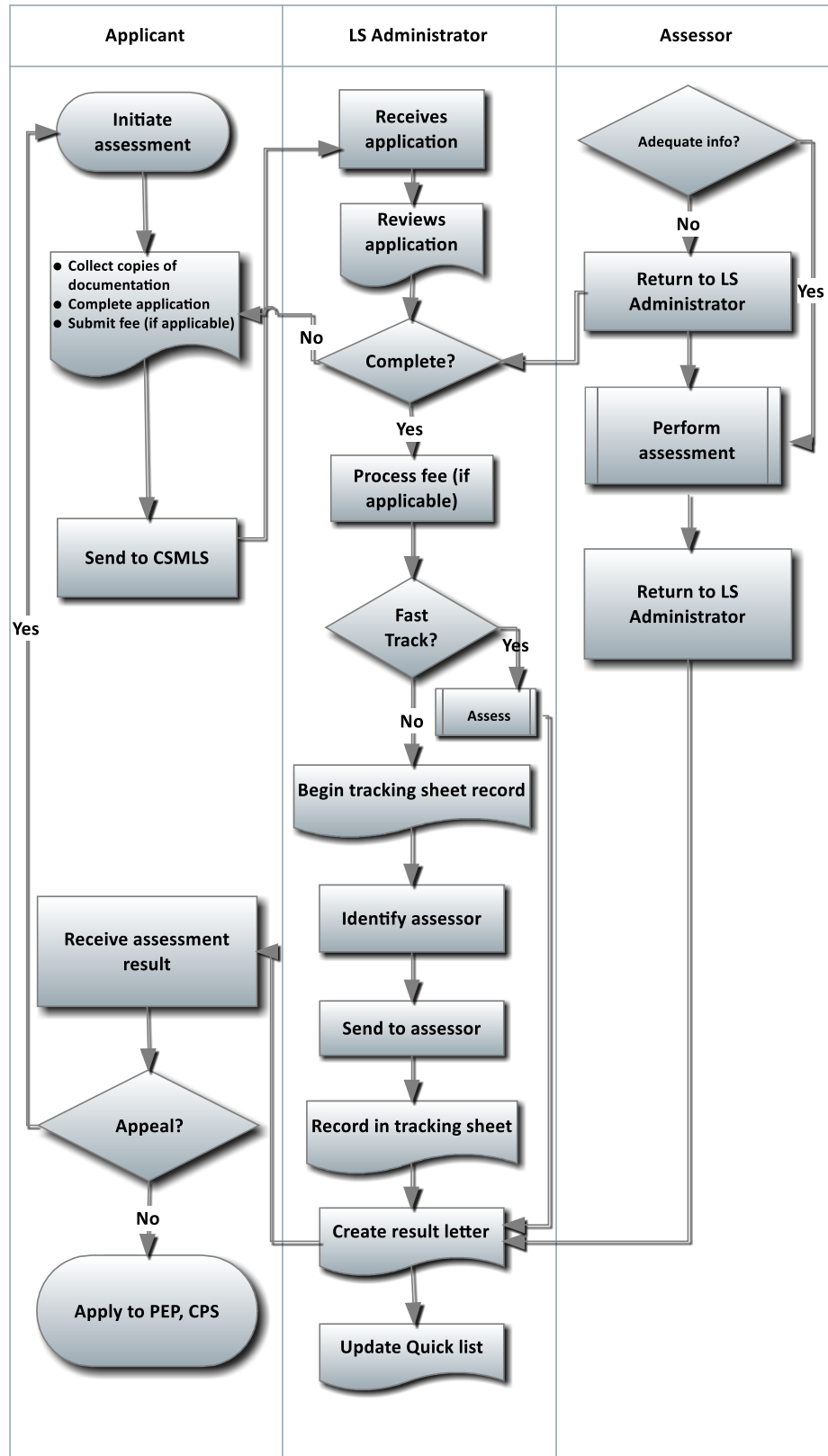
If an application does not pass the initial review and does not proceed to the assessor, a subsequent resubmission is NOT considered an appeal. Please refer to the process map.

The fee must accompany a written request for appeal. The request describes the nature of your appeal (the basis for your disagreement as it relates to the procedure for assessing courses and the current competency profile) and any new documentation you may be submitting.

Appeals are performed by a different assessor than the original. The original application will be forwarded to the new assessor as well as the request for appeal and any new documentation. The appeal will be considered the final result. An appeal cannot be appealed.



## 10. Process Map



## 11. Related Documents

All documents are accessible on the CSMLS website at [www.csmls.org](http://www.csmls.org).

1. General Medical Laboratory Technologist Competency Profile
2. Medical Laboratory Assistant Competency Profile
3. Diagnostic Cytotechnologist Competency Profile
4. Clinical Genetics Technologist Competency Profile
5. Professional Enhancement Program (PEP) Rules and Regulations (with application form)
6. Certificate of Professional Studies (CPS) Rules and Regulations (with application form)
7. Procedure for CSMLS Course Assessment
8. Assessed Course List

### Mail or email your application and copies of your documentation to:

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Mail to:            | Telephone: 905.667.8698, or                                 |
| Learning Services   | 1.800.263.8277 Ext. 8698                                    |
| CSMLS               | FAX: 905.528.4968   |
| 33 Wellington St N  | e-mail <a href="mailto:coned@csmls.org">coned@csmls.org</a> |
| Hamilton ON L8R 1M7 |   |

### Direct questions about this information or your assessment result to:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Learning Services | Telephone: 905.667.8698, or 1.800.263.8277                  |
|                   | Ext. 8698   |
|                   | e-mail <a href="mailto:coned@csmls.org">coned@csmls.org</a> |

**Application for Credit Assessment - please print clearly**

**Course Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Provider:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Membership #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fee enclosed:**     Member    Non-member    Provider    Provincial Society/Regulatory Body  
                           Single course    Appeal    Yearly rate

|                        |
|------------------------|
| <b>Total enclosed:</b> |
|------------------------|

**Method of Payment:**    Cheque    MasterCard, Visa or Amex # \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Course Learning Materials:** \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Evaluation    Re-evaluation    Appeal                      CSMLS file # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

What percentage of the course do you consider at advanced level? (Beyond the scope of knowledge and the competencies expected of an entry-level medical laboratory technologist) \_\_\_\_\_%

Number of lecture hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lab/practicum hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Examination hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL CONTACT HOURS** \_\_\_\_\_

I would like this course assessed for (choose one)  
 Advanced MLA credit  
 Advanced MLT credit  
 Advanced Cytology credit  
 Advanced Clinical Genetics credits

**FOR CSMLS USE ONLY**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Date received _____                               | Date assessed _____                                 |
| Verified Contact hours _____                      | Unrelated course content _____ %                    |
| Entry level content _____ %                       | Advanced content _____ %                            |
| PEP HOURS: _____                                  | CPS CREDITS: _____ ( N/A <input type="checkbox"/> ) |
| Comments (continue on reverse as required): _____ |   |

Assessor #1 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor #2 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Checklist:

Please make sure your application includes **1 copy of documentation from your course provider.**

- My course is laboratory or laboratory-related as described above.
- I took this course within the last 10 years (please do not send course materials that will become 10 years old within the next 3 months. They will not be assessed.)
- 1 copy** of course learning objectives (not the topics taught, but the knowledge and skills you are intended to develop.) YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 copy** of a comprehensive course outline YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_
  - What a course outline is:**
    - Details on the course content taught.
    - Course sections, with detailed descriptions of what will be taught in each section.
    - Enough information on each course topic to determine if it is medical laboratory or medical laboratory-related, entry-level medical laboratory technology, advanced medical laboratory technology or unrelated.
    - If your instructor has not developed a comprehensive course outline, you may need to use your course handouts to document the course content sufficiently. It is better to send more documentation than required rather than too little documentation.
  - What a course outline isn't:**
    - High-level statement of a topic. (e.g. 'scientific nomenclature')
    - Table of Contents of the course reference text.
    - Course advertisement in a course calendar or on a provider website. (content description available prior to registration)
- 1 copy** of documentation of course contact hours YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Total hours of study, broken down as described on the application (E.g. Number of weeks, hours of lecture per week, hours of lab per week, hours of tutorial per week. This combined would give total contact hours)
  - Ideally – the time commitment for each topic described in the course outline and as determined by the course provider which may be less than or greater than the actual time you spend on the course
  - Homework hours are not part of the total hours of study – unless they are assignments or exercises that are part of the assessment of learning
- 1 copy** of the mechanism to determine if learning has been successful (if applicable) YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Documentation of the test(s) or exam(s) given, pass mark, time limit to write the exam(s), what portion of your final mark comes from the exam (s)
  - Assignments that contribute to your final mark and related information (as above)
  - The same description of any other activity that contributes to the determination of whether or not learning was successful
  - What is a pass mark for your course?
  - How did your instructor come up with your final mark? (e.g. 20% mid-term, 30% assignment, 50% final exam)
  - If you do not submit documentation of how learning is assessed, and how pass/fail is determined, then we will assess the course without it. To be credit-worthy, there must be an assessment of learning with a measure of pass/fail. Without this, your course will be eligible for PEP hours at most.
  - A course assessment that collects information on how you liked the course is not suitable
- COMPLETED APPLICATION** for EACH course. Incomplete applications will be returned without processing.
- DO NOT** include your course marks or transcript. At this stage, we are only interested in the course and not your performance. Your performance will apply to your PEP or CPS application. CSMLS LS is not responsible for any mark or transcript received in error.