

## Position Statement

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### Accreditation of Medical Laboratory Science Education Programs

It is the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science's (CSMLS) position that independent, third-party education program accreditation and the subsequent public disclosure of accreditation results demonstrate a commitment to a portion of the quality continuum required on the journey from student to competent practitioner (description below).

Third-party accreditation is a "procedure by which an authoritative body gives formal recognition that an organization is competent to carry out specific tasks (modified from ISO/TEC17000)."

<sup>1</sup> Accreditation ensures that these particular tasks (detailed in the scope of the accreditation) are carried out "in a reliable, credible, and accurate manner."<sup>2</sup> It "is the evaluation of processes to ensure quality and competence"<sup>3</sup> and provides educational programs/institutions with independent, third-party assessments, using standards built upon validated best practices. Accreditation is "the longest established and most widely known process for the external evaluation of health-care services . . . and also provides recognition that the service is meeting provincial standards of quality."<sup>3</sup>

"Health Education Accreditation is a quality improvement process that supports health education programs, preparing graduates to deliver safe and effective care at entry to practice."<sup>4</sup>

Key benefits of accreditation include:

- Providing a process for continuous quality improvements
- Improving credibility and visibility of the organization holding accreditation<sup>5</sup>
- Ensuring graduates receive a quality education that appropriately prepares them for the workplace
- Providing education programs with opportunities for self-reflection and feedback on program content and direction<sup>5</sup>
- Granting a credential to publicly signify that the academic program or institution has satisfied a set of quality criteria established by the accrediting body
- Supplying a framework for the thorough review of the academic program or institution's faculty, facilities, budgets, recruiting practices, course curricula, degree completion requirements and other pertinent considerations

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At the national level, education program accreditation is available through Accreditation Canada – via the EQal Program. It is the only accepted accreditation program for eligibility to the CSMLS national certification exams at this time.

### **Quality Continuum from Student to Practitioner**

Validated competency profile (CSMLS) --- Completion of Accredited program --- Successful certification --- Licensure (if available through provincial regulatory college) --- Practitioner complies with continuous professional development requirements

### **References**

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<sup>1</sup> Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute [CLSI]. GP26-A4 Quality Management System: A Model for Laboratory Services; Approved Guideline; 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Accreditation Process [Internet]. Institute for Quality Management in Healthcare [IQMH]; 2019. Available from: <https://iqmh.org/Services/Centre-For-Accreditation/Accreditation-Process#accreditationprocess>

<sup>3</sup> Accreditation Overview [Internet]. IQMH; 2019. Available from: <https://iqmh.org/Services/Centre-For-Accreditation/Accreditation-Overview>

<sup>4</sup> Health Education Accreditation [Internet]. Accreditation Canada; 2019. Available from: <https://accreditation.ca/health-education-accreditation/>

<sup>5</sup> Value of Accreditation [Internet]. Accreditation Canada; 2019. Available from: <https://accreditation.ca/accreditation/value/>