



PNAC POLICY FOR PARTICIPATION IN PROFICIENCY TESTING

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1. Purpose

To meet the requirement of ISO/IEC 17025 of quality control procedures, this policy outlines the requirements of PNAC for participation in interlaboratory comparisons or proficiency testing programmes.

2. Policy

- a. It is the policy of the Pakistan National Accreditation Council that all accredited laboratories participate in proficiency testing and in cases where PT is not available inter-laboratory comparisons
- b. It is the policy of the PNAC to accept all proficiency testing/ inter-laboratory comparisons recognized by the National and International bodies i.e., APLAC, ILAC, EA, members of ILAC and APLAC.

3. Scope


This policy is applicable to all testing and calibration labs seeking accreditation from PNAC.

4 Terminology

- a. *Proficiency testing (PT)* is the determination of the calibration or testing performance of a laboratory or the testing performance by means of interlaboratory comparison with the proficiency testing provider.
- b. *Interlaboratory comparison (ILC)* is the organization, performance and evaluation of calibrations/tests on the same or similar calibrations/tests items by two or more laboratories in accordance with predetermined conditions.

5. PNAC's requirements on participation in PT

- a. Accredited laboratories are required to participate and achieve satisfactory performance on an annual basis for each round in an appropriate proficiency testing scheme or inter-laboratory comparison where such schemes are available and relevant to their scope of accreditation. Accredited laboratories must participate in, at a minimum, at least one activity for each sub discipline (note 1) within the laboratory's scope of accreditation, between periods of re-assessment.
- b. Laboratories preparing for accreditation are required to participate and achieve satisfactory performance in a proficiency testing or inter-laboratory comparison where such schemes are available and relevant to their scope of accreditation before a recommendation for accreditation can be considered.
- c. The PNAC assessment team will review at each surveillance visit the laboratory's performance in proficiency testing / inter-laboratory comparisons.
- d. Laboratories are required to have appropriate acceptance criteria and a procedure for investigating the cause of problems and for implementing corrective actions when these acceptance criteria are not met. A written record of these activities must be maintained. The laboratory must ensure that it does not claim accreditation for any tests that could be affected by the events that caused "out of specification" proficiency testing / inter-laboratory comparison results until it is satisfied that the investigation into the anomalous result has fully resolved the issue.

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- e. If at any time the laboratory's performance in proficiency testing / inter-laboratory comparisons in the opinion of PNAC, casts doubt on the integrity of test results, PNAC may suspend the relevant tests from the laboratory's scope of accreditation. The laboratory will be required to provide PNAC with written evidence that the problem has been identified and satisfactorily rectified (which may include demonstrated satisfactory performance in subsequent proficiency testing/ inter-laboratory comparisons) before reinstatement of accreditation can be considered.

Note 1: Examples of major sub disciplines are given below:

- environmental analysis: soil (including solid waste, sludge, compost);
- environmental analysis: water (waste water, ground water, drinking water);
- environmental analysis: air (emission);
- materials testing: chemical parameters;
- materials testing: physical quantities;
- materials testing: non destructive testing;
- microbiology.
- food testing

References:

ISO/IEC 17025:1999 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.

ISO/IEC Guide 43-1: 1997 Proficiency Testing by Interlaboratory Comparisons- Part 1: Development and Operation of Proficiency Testing Schemes.

ILAC G13:2000 Guidelines for the Requirements of the Competence of Providers of Proficiency Testing Schemes.