



24/06/2026

Assessment Programme for Accredited CABs under the Four-Year Accreditation Cycle

In view of the extension of the accreditation cycle from two years to four years, the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) has implemented the following assessment programme to ensure continued compliance of accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) with the requirements of the applicable accreditation standards, relevant NABL specific criteria (where applicable) and NABL policies.

The assessment programme during the accreditation cycle shall comprise:

- Surveillance-1 (Onsite/Desktop)
- Midcycle Assessment (Onsite)
- Surveillance-2 (Onsite/Desktop)

Assessment Schedule

The assessments shall normally be conducted as follows, reckoned from the effective date of grant of accreditation following initial assessment or renewal of accreditation:

- Surveillance-1: Within 12 months (preferably between the 10th and 12th month)
- Midcycle Assessment: Between the 13th and 24th month (preferably between the 22nd and 24th month)
- Surveillance-2: Between the 25th and 36th month (preferably between the 34th and 36th month)

Enhanced Monitoring

Where deemed necessary based on assessment findings, complaints, changes in operations, adverse information or any other relevant factors, NABL may increase the frequency of surveillance up to four assessments per year (quarterly). NABL may also conduct additional assessments (onsite/remote) or unannounced assessments until sufficient confidence in the CAB's continued competence and compliance is established.

Modality of Surveillance Assessments

Onsite surveillance shall be conducted for all accredited CABs, except those that have:

- Maintained continuous NABL accreditation for at least ten years without interruption; and
- Not been subjected to any adverse accreditation decision during the preceding accreditation cycle.

For such CABs, Surveillance-1 and Surveillance-2 may be conducted through desktop assessment. However, the Midcycle Assessment shall be conducted onsite for all accredited CABs without exception.



Assessment Team Composition

1. For Surveillance-1 and Surveillance-2

A Lead Assessor shall normally be deputed to conduct surveillance assessments. Technical Assessor(s) may also be included in the assessment team depending upon:

- The complexity of the scope of accreditation.
- Assessment findings from previous assessments;
- Complaints or adverse information received;
- Results of unannounced assessments; and/or
- Any other relevant risk-based considerations

2. For Midcycle Assessment

A team comprising a Lead Assessor and Technical Assessor(s) shall be deputed to conduct the midcycle assessment.

The assessment shall cover:

- All relevant groups within the accredited scope of Testing and Calibration Laboratories;
- All disciplines within the accredited scope of Medical Laboratories;
- All disciplines within the accredited scope of Proficiency Testing Providers; and
- All categories within the accredited scope of Reference Material Producers.

For Accredited Biobanks

For accredited Biobanks, assessment teams comprising a Lead Assessor and Technical Assessor(s) shall be deputed for Surveillance-1, Midcycle Assessment, and Surveillance-2, with coverage extending to the entire accredited scope during each assessment.

This assessment programme is intended to provide continued assurance of competence, impartiality, consistency and conformity of accredited CABs throughout the four-year accreditation cycle while adopting a risk-based and efficient approach to accreditation oversight.

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