



Forensic Quality Services - International

Forensic Requirements for Accreditation

FQS-I Policy on Cross-Frontier Accreditation

FRAP-8

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REVISION LOG

Version	Issued	Changes
2008/1	05/30/2008	First issue of document

Scope:

This document describes FQS-I policy in situations where FQS-I accreditation is sought by an agency based outside of the United States.

References:

ILAC G21:2002, Cross-Frontier Accreditation—Principles for Avoiding Duplication

Background

There are situations where laboratories will seek accreditation in forensic testing from FQS-I , and it is their right to do so. Reasons why a laboratory may seek accreditation outside its own country include:

- Its local accreditation body/bodies do(es) not offer accreditation in forensic testing;
- The local accreditation body/bodies is/are not a signatory/signatories to the ILAC Arrangement;
- There is no local accreditation body;
- The FQS-I accreditation program has components which are required by the laboratory for its specific business purposes;
- Its clients demand a specific accreditation and will not be persuaded to accept an equivalent; or
- It is part of a chain of laboratories with a single owner who wants all the laboratories to have the same accreditation and who is not willing to work with the ILAC Arrangement partners.

FQS-I Policy

FQS-I , if asked to provide accreditation to a laboratory outside the United States, may respond positively. If there is no local accreditation body, the FQS-I application and assessment process will be conducted in the usual way.

If, however, a local accreditation body exists, FQS-I will take several steps before accepting a contract to provide accreditation services.

1) If the local accreditation body offers accreditation in forensic testing and is a signatory to the ILAC Arrangement, FQS-I will:

- Ask the prospective applicant if they are aware of local accreditation body(ies);
- Suggest that the accreditation could be more economically performed by a local body; and
- Point out the value of the local accreditation as demonstrated through the ILAC Arrangement.

If the prospective applicant decides to pursue accreditation with a local body, FQS-I will not attempt to convince the applicant to continue to pursue FQS-I accreditation.

If the prospective applicant persists in requiring FQS-I accreditation, FQS-I will accept the application for accreditation.

2) If the local accreditation body is a member of the ILAC Arrangement but does not offer accreditation in forensic testing, or the local accreditation body is not a member of the ILAC Arrangement, FQS-I will accept the application for accreditation.

3) Where FQS-I accepts an application for accreditation and a local accreditation body exists, FQS-I will do the following:

- Request the applicant to be allowed to inform the local accreditation body/bodies that it will be undertaking the work and to explain the circumstances; and
- Request the applicant to be allowed to offer the following options to the local accreditation body:
 - Sending an observer to the assessment;
 - Providing a team member or members to FQS-I's assessment team;
 - Performing a joint assessment with FQS-I, with the objective of dual accreditation

If the prospective applicant declines any of these requests, the FQS-I application and assessment process will be conducted in the usual way.

If the prospective applicant agrees to the requests, FQS-I will pursue a formal agreement with the local accreditation body. If the local accreditation body does not include forensic testing within its scope of accreditation activities, FQS-I will ask the AB whether the agreement and assessment activities should include FQS-I assistance to enable the local accreditation body to add forensic testing to its scope of accreditation. In this way, it may ultimately be possible for the local accreditation body to provide the accreditation services to the applicant, should the applicant so choose.

In all cases, FQS-I will endeavor to remain open to cooperation with other accreditation bodies.