



Accreditation of laboratories with facilities on multiple sites

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RELATED DOCUMENTS

ISTA Seed Testing Laboratory Accreditation Standard

Acc-WI-09 How to conduct an on-site assessment

Acc-G-01 ISTA Accreditation Guidelines

The accreditation process follows the principles outlined in the documents listed as reference. For organisations with multiple sites in different geographical locations either of the two approaches (A or B) cited below applies as appropriate.

In the following, **accredited laboratory work** comprises all those activities covered by the laboratory's intended or existing scope of accreditation. It is assumed that all these activities are carried out at the laboratory's permanent facilities, except 'sampling from the seed lot', which is, by its nature, typically conducted outside the laboratory premises.

A.) Single site means an establishment that has its facilities for conducting accredited laboratory work within one site or on nearby multiple sites. Nearby means that each of the facilities can be reached from the main site by ordinary means of transport within one hour. The overall travelling time to visit all facilities from one laboratory must neither exceed two hours nor may it involve the crossing of national borders.

Over the course of the accreditation process the laboratory has to provide information concerning the organisational and legal setup. In case it makes use of organisationally separate units in a way that cannot be considered subcontracting arrangements because the units are part of one organisation, as a minimum following criteria have to be met:

- There has to be a single quality management system applicable in the fields relevant to accreditation,
- The laboratory has to provide evidence that it is able to implement its policies to the required degree in all locations involved in accredited laboratory work,
- The laboratory's appointed manager assumes full responsibility for the accredited laboratory work carried out in the separate units,
- There must be one position assuming the overall responsibility for operating the quality management system,
- Key functions that have to be centrally managed:
 - Internal audits
 - Management review
 - Corrective actions
 - Changes to the system

B.) Multi site establishments that require substantial effort or time to reach the individual facilities conducting accredited laboratory work have to apply for individual accreditation for each of the single site units intended to carry out accredited work. Obviously, membership status must be obtained for each site before accreditation may be sought.