

Frequently Asked Questions During COVID-19 Pandemic

Please note that these are general responses and the situation presented in individual CABs will be dealt with directly.

All Conformity Assessment Bodies (CAB)

When should I consider voluntarily suspending my accreditation?

This should be considered on an ongoing basis by the CAB and in the event that you cannot continue to meet all accreditation requirements (e.g. absence of key staff, QC/PT issues premises deployed for other use), you should request voluntary suspension.

In the event that your organisation cannot perform accredited activity due to inactivity or cancellations, but all accreditation criteria continue to be met, then there is no need to voluntarily suspend accreditation. All decisions taken shall be based on your risk based / risk management approach, clearly documented and available for INAB assessment.

Will my 2020 assessment proceed?

INAB will complete the 2020 assessment programme in full.

Will there be any additional time allowed for closure of nonconformities?

The can be discussed with your assessment manager but if needed, INAB will allow 6 weeks instead of the standard 4 weeks, for surveillance purposes and minor NCs only.

How can a CAB address potential delays in the internal audit programme?

It is the accredited entities' responsibility to perform internal audits and have appropriate contingency mechanisms in place. INAB will expect to see records of internal audits at assessments and any realignment of the internal audit programme shall be based on the risk based / risk management approach, clearly documented and available for INAB assessment.

Please consult the individual accreditation standard in detail on the applicable internal auditing clause.

Laboratories

How is accreditation affected if calibration of equipment cannot be performed?

Laboratories shall review their calibration frequency and ensure that at all times equipment is fit for purpose and accurate for accredited results issued. Consideration should be given to increasing internal quality control checks and other mitigating factors shall be in place.

A risk based approach shall be used when making a decision. This must be clearly documented and available for INAB assessment.

Does the transition date for ISO 17025:2017 change?

For now, there is no change to this transition date so an assessment will need to be completed in sufficient time to ensure we meet the deadline. Should there be any guidance issued from EA or ILAC altering the deadline, we will take these into consideration.

What is the PT provider is unable to provide samples?

The lab is advised to amend their IQC programme and refer to the options available for independent quality verification in PS1.

All decisions taken shall be based on your risk based / risk management approach, clearly documented and available for INAB assessment.

Reference Material Producers (RMP)

How is accreditation affected if calibration of equipment cannot be performed?

RMP shall review their calibration frequency and ensure that at all times equipment is fit for purpose and accurate for accredited results issued. Consideration on increasing internal quality control checks and other mitigating factors shall be in place.

All decisions taken shall be based on your risk based / risk management approach, clearly documented and available for INAB assessment.

Inspection Bodies (IB)

How is accreditation affected if calibration of equipment cannot be performed?

Inspection Bodies shall review their calibration frequency and ensure that at all times equipment is fit for purpose and accurate for accredited results issued. Consideration on increasing internal quality control checks and other mitigating factors shall be in place.

All decisions taken shall be based on your risk based / risk management approach, clearly documented and available for INAB assessment.

Certification Bodies (CB)

Please consult the IAF FAQs which are continually updated and any European Commission information with regard to notified bodies.