

INTERNATIONALLY EDUCATED MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGISTS

There was a new reporting requirement in 2010 under the Foreign Qualifications Recognition Plan (FQR Plan) for the College to gather data and statistics on Alberta regulated Members educated outside of Canada. The College worked with Alberta Employment and Immigration to develop a standardized reporting template to accurately capture key elements related to the assessment and licensing of foreign-qualified applicants or Internationally Educated Medical Laboratory Technologists (IEMLTs). Various government departments such as Alberta Employment and Immigration and Alberta Health, use this data to support ongoing improvements to the foreign qualification assessment system for IEMLTs including:

- Identifying information resources on specific countries and qualifications which may support professional regulatory organizations in the assessment of foreign credentials;
- Developing appropriate “bridge to licensure” programs to assist foreign-qualified applicants to meet the minimum entrance to practice standards in Alberta;

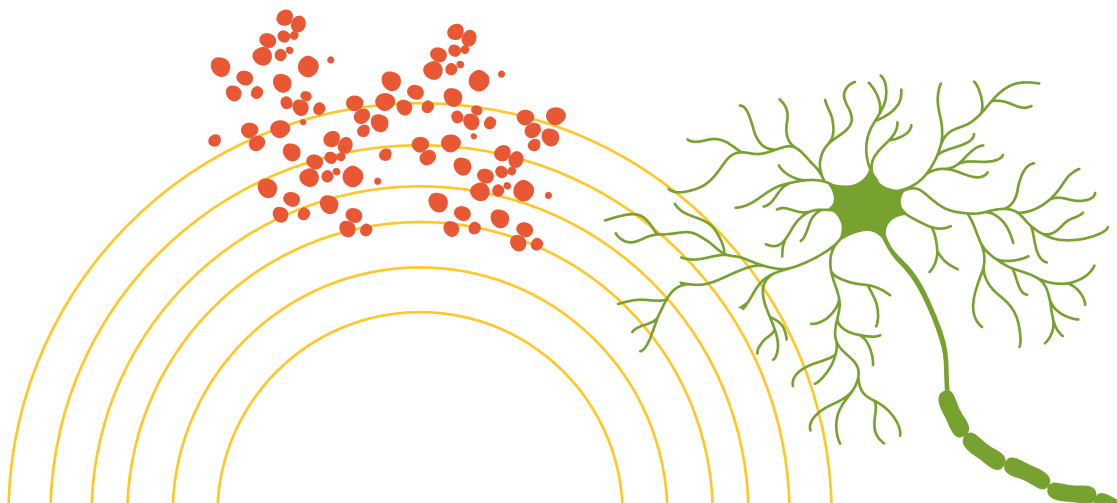
- Implementing strategic support services for immigrants during the registration/licensing process; and
- Supporting a system-wide discussion and sharing of information on leading practices related to foreign qualification assessment, approaches, and procedures.

Registration as an IEMLT in Alberta is a two-step process which involves the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) and the College. Initially IEMLTs are directed to the CSMLS to undergo a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) which involves the submission of supporting documentation and the assessment of academic credentials, language proficiency, clinical training, and professional work experience. Depending upon the length of time an individual needs to obtain documentation (including original transcripts from the country of formal post-secondary education), and the number of refresher courses and remedial work required to address deficient competencies, the PLA process can extend 2-3 years, averaging 18 months for most applicants.

Once an IEMLT has successfully completed the PLA and is granted permission to challenge the CSMLS national certification examination, an individual is eligible to apply for a one-year registration and

MLT Provisional Practice Permit with the College. Prior to the expiry of the Provisional Practice Permit, an individual must provide evidence of CSMLS certification and 900 MLT professional practice hours. Upon receipt of this documentation, an individual is upgraded to a full-standing registration and MLT Practice Permit on the appropriate register. If an applicant has successfully challenged the CSMLS certification examination prior to applying for MLT registration with the College, an individual can apply for a one-year registration and MLT Conditional Practice Permit to obtain the 900 MLT professional practice hours required in the initial registration year.

In 2013, applicants were permitted three attempts to successfully challenge the CSMLS certification examination and if unsuccessful, had to complete a formal Learning Plan with refresher/remedial coursework as identified by the CSMLS. Applicants were then permitted to challenge the certification examination an additional three times (for a total of six occurrences) once the specified Learning Plan was completed. New for 2014 the CSMLS instituted a *three-strike policy* and if unsuccessful after three attempts, completion of an accredited formal MLT training program of study from a recognized Canadian educational institution is



REGISTRATION OF COLLEGE MEMBERS

required to challenge the certification examination. This new policy also applies to all Canadian trained MLTs to ensure a transparent, fair, and consistent process is in place for all individuals seeking national certification.

Pursuant to section 31(1) of the Health Professions Act, all applicants have a formal appeal process which states “an applicant whose application for registration is accepted subject to conditions or whose registration is deferred or whose application is refused by the registrar, registration committee, or competence committee may, within 30 days after being given a copy of the decision, request a review by the council in accordance with subsection (3)”. Furthermore, section 31(3) states “a request for review must be in writing, set out the reasons why the applications for registration should be approved with or without conditions, and be given to the registrar, who must give a copy of the request to the Council”. In 2014, the College did not receive any requests for appeals from IEMLTs which is evidence of fair, transparent, timely, and consistent application and registration practices.

The following tables summarize data on IEMLTs representing figures validated by both the College and the CSMLS.

COUNTRY OF EDUCATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFIED APPLICANTS



- Philippines
- China
- India
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Algeria
- United Kingdom
- Hongkong

Number of New Applications Received in 2014	12
Total Number of Applications Open (New and Ongoing from 2013)	30
Total Number of Applications Processed to a Registration Decision	30
Number of Applicants Meeting Minimum Initial Registration Requirements	30
Number of Applicants NOT Meeting Minimum Initial Requirements	0

NOTE: All applications were processed to a registration decision within 5 business days once all required documentation was submitted by the applicants.

REGISTRATION DECISIONS

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Number of Applicants Not Meeting Educational Standards	0 0
Number of Applicants Not Meeting English Language Proficiency Standards	0 0
Number of Applicants Not Meeting Certification Examination Standards	0 2 ¹
Number of Applicants Not Meeting Minimum Work/Clinical Experience Standards	0 28 ²

- Registration NOT Issued
- Alternative Class of Registration Issued

¹ Provisional Practice Permit

² Conditional Practice Permit

NOTE: No applicants were issued full standing registrations without provisions and/or conditions as they did not initially meet all educational, language, certification, and work/clinical experience standards. Thirty (30) applicants were issued an alternative class of registration and eleven (11) were upgraded to full standing registration on the appropriate register. This process has taken approximately eleven months to complete. Applicants upgrading from an alternate class of registration to a full standing MLT Practice Permit have the ability to practice without limitations/conditions. Thirteen (13) applicants carried over from 2013 to 2014 canceled their registrations as they did not secure MLT employment. Six (6) were issued an alternative class of registration which spans two registration years (2014 and 2015) as their registration and MLT Practice Permits are valid for one full year from the date of issue. It is anticipated these individuals will upgrade to full standing status on the appropriate register in 2015 when their alternative classes of registration expires.