



Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science
Société canadienne de science de laboratoire médical

**January 1, 2027: CSMLS General MLT PLA Stage 1
Applications will be discontinued.**

**January 1, 2029: CSMLS General MLT PLA and Exam services
will be discontinued.**

ALBERTA

General Medical Laboratory Technologist

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT Information Handbook

(for Alberta residents ONLY)

CPLA-041-H1

Version 2026-JUN

Effective on June 1, 2026

Note: The CSMLS does not offer discipline-specific certification

Policy/process changes may occur,
please check our website for the most current version of this Handbook.

www.csmls.org

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Disclaimer

Before applying and paying for a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), all the policies and regulations outlined in this handbook must be read and understood. Failure to do so may result in cancellation of your PLA application and a loss of your payment.

By signing the application form, a PLA client is agreeing to all of these policies and regulations.

To maintain fairness, we do not accept documents at our door nor do we allow visitors at the CSMLS office.

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The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is the national association for medical laboratory professionals.

The CSMLS revised this document according to plain language principles with funding from the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program.



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Carefully Read the Entire Handbook at Least Three (3) Times.

It contains a large amount of information. Review of the Exam Handbook is also recommended which is found on our website.

The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is the national association for Canada's medical laboratory professionals. Our members practice in hospital laboratories, private medical laboratories, public health laboratories, government laboratories, research and educational institutions.

The CSMLS is also the national certifying body for Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLA) and is the Alberta certifying body for General Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT).

We are a not-for-profit organization that is funded entirely by membership dues and revenues from goods and services. We do not receive operational funding from governments or other organizations.

Our Mission, Vision, and Values

The CSMLS' mission is to be the unified national voice of medical laboratory professionals across Canada, supporting our members in delivering high-quality health care.

Our vision is that every medical laboratory professional is thriving as a crucial part of Canadian health care.

Our values ground us and guide the decisions we make:

- *Our members are at the heart of everything we do—they inspire our mission and guide our work.*
- *We treat every individual with dignity, empathy, and respect.*
- *We believe big ideas drive progress—and we never stop reaching for the extraordinary.*
- *We embrace change with agility, continuously evolving to meet new challenges.*
- *We are committed, accountable, and follow through on our promises.*
- *We invest in continuous learning to grow our expertise and better serve others.*

Our Purpose

- To promote, maintain and protect the interests of the medical laboratory professional, their professional identity, and of the profession in Canada.
- To promote and maintain a nationally accepted standard for medical laboratory technology by which other health professionals and the public are assured of effective and economical laboratory services.

CSMLS Membership

A CSMLS membership has many benefits, including reduced PLA application fees.

Members are connected to a comprehensive network of peers, news and updates, almost 1000 hours of free continuing education, employment opportunities and much more.

For questions about membership, please contact Member Services at 1-905-528-8642 or

1-800-263-8277 or memserv@csmls.org.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Clients can apply for an annual Associate Membership. Information about memberships can be found on the CSMLS website under "[Member Categories & Fees](#)".

CSMLS annual membership expires on December 31 of each year, dues are prorated throughout the year.

Regulation, Prior Learning Assessments (PLA), and Certification Examinations (Exams)

The Alberta provincial government has delegated the College of Medical Laboratory Technology of Alberta (CMLTA) to regulate the practice of the MLT professional in Alberta. CMLTA does this by registering applicants who meet their provincial requirements and ensuring their registrants comply with safe practice within their province.

The CSMLS is contracted to provide Exam and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) services on behalf of the CMLTA for residents of Alberta **only**. CMLTA recognizes the long history CSMLS has of providing pan-Canadian Certification Examinations (since 1938 for General MLT and 1972 for MLA) as an entry-to-practice requirement to work in the Alberta and Canadian medical laboratory profession, and of providing pan-Canadian PLA services for Internationally Educated Medical Laboratory Technologists (IEMLTs) who seek Canadian MLT Certification (since the early 1990s).

If you are not a resident of Alberta but plan to move, live, and practice there, please contact CMLTA (a simple internet search will bring you to their website) for more information.

Graduates of an Alberta EQual™ accredited MLT/S program who did not register for an exam within 12-months of graduation and would like to apply for a PLA to become eligible for three (3) exam attempts, please contact pla@csmls.org. The requirements for this type of PLA are slightly different than for an IEMLT.

To be eligible to write the CSMLS MLT General Exam a CSMLS PLA Client's (Client) eligibility at the MLT level is assessed using their theoretical and clinical (practicum/ internship) education, clinical work experience, academic credentials, continuing education/professional development, and their English or French language proficiency.

Acceptable education and work experience must be at the MLT level in clinical/ diagnostic human testing not in research, plants, or animals.

Assumptions about Medical Laboratory Technology/Science in Canada

MLTs perform sophisticated diagnostic medical laboratory investigations on specimens taken from the **human** body. They also evaluate the technical sufficiency of the investigations and their results. The results of these tests provide important information that doctors, or other health care professionals need to make decisions about their patients' health.

THE CSMLS CERTIFIED MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGIST

- Has developed a broad knowledge base and practical skills that enable the MLT to analyze specimens and assess and report laboratory results, at the technologist level, according to institutional policies and professional standards.
- Applies critical thinking and problem-solving strategies to ensure best practices.
- Practices and promotes the principles of quality management.

- Practices to ensure the safety of patients, colleagues, self, and the environment.
- Contributes to the health care and education of the public, promotes patient welfare and respects patient diversity, dignity, and confidentiality.
- Is an integral member of the health care team who shares knowledge that is essential to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease, promotes learning, and collaborates with other health care professionals in providing effective patient care.
- Is responsible and accountable for professional acts, follows standards of practice, as well as laws and regulations governing the profession, and abides by the CSMLS Code of Professional Conduct.
- Uses effective interpersonal skills to maintain a professional relationship with colleagues, patients/clients, and other health care professionals.
- Is prepared to work in a variety of settings.

THE PATIENT/CLIENT

- Is any individual who interacts with the medical laboratory technologist (e.g., patient, patient representative, health care professionals, other laboratory professionals).

GENERAL MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGISTS

General MLTs must be competent in the following disciplines, as they **relate to humans (not research, soil, plants, water, other animals, etc.)**:

- Clinical Chemistry;
- Hematology;
- Clinical Microbiology;
- Transfusion Science; and
- Histotechnology.

If a Client has *little or no education or clinical experience (or both)* at the technologist level in more than one of the above disciplines, they will not qualify for the Exam through PLA. They will be directed to successfully complete a full Canadian EQual™ accredited Medical Laboratory (Technology/Science) Educational Program.

Reciprocity

CSMLS does not offer reciprocity with any domestic non-EQual™ accredited or foreign university or college providing medical laboratory education, or with any other country. PLA Clients' (Client) education and experience in another country or in a Canadian non-EQual™ accredited or a Canadian non-medical laboratory program does not grant eligibility to the Exams.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

CSMLS does NOT get involved in immigration issues for Clients. Clients are provided with two (2) copies of their Technical Report and, if successful in their PLA, two (2) copies of their Statement of Eligibility to the CSMLS National Certification Examination (Eligibility Statement,) should they need to submit this documentation to immigration authorities or to a Canadian provincial MLT Regulatory Authority.

Non-Discrimination

CSMLS does not discriminate for any reason, including age, gender, race, ethnic origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, or marital status.

MLT Prior Learning Assessment Considerations

The CSMLS PLA reviews MLT General education, training, and clinical work experience to determine if Clients are equivalent to the relevant [Competency Profile](#).

The CSMLS PLA provides a single point of access for IEMLTs who are seeking Canadian certification in Alberta (proof of residency may be required).

The PLA process evaluates academic credentials, language proficiency, detailed educational course descriptions (theory and clinical), clinical training, and clinical work experience.

The CSMLS recognizes only EQual™ accredited Alberta (or Canadian) MLT Educational Programs for General MLT Exam Eligibility.

Any individual seeking eligibility to the General MLT Exam who attended a non-EQual™ accredited educational program is required to undergo the PLA process to determine equivalence of their education to the CSMLS General MLT competency profile, whether this person was educated in Canada or not.

The PLA program reviews theory and clinical (practicum/internship) education, and clinical work experience, if applicable, to determine if a Client is equivalent to the CSMLS National Competency Profile for a given MLT designation.

Since over 80% of IEMLT applicants need to complete some form of upgrading of skills or education before they can write the Exam, the process of becoming a CSMLS certified MLT can be long and difficult.

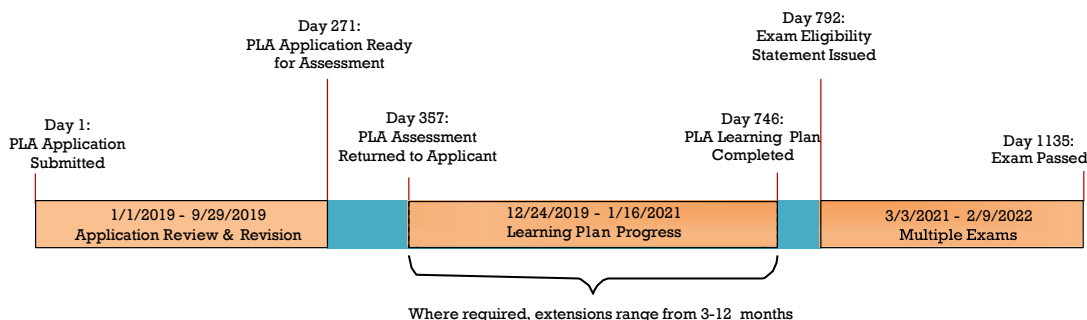
Some Clients have chosen an alternate career as a medical laboratory assistant (MLA) while they complete their assigned technical report learning plan (TRLP).

NOTE: *All MLT General PLA Clients who are assigned a [PLA Learning Plan \(TRLP\)](#), without comprehensive course work, will be given eligibility to attempt the MLA Exam.*

Therefore, it is very important to clearly understand the PLA process prior to applying as this can be a costly and time-consuming process to complete.

Many individuals find the PLA process to be a long and challenging journey. It requires a time commitment between one to three (1-3) years before successfully writing the Exam with significant expense (see [Figure 1](#)).

Figure 1. PLA Process Timeline example



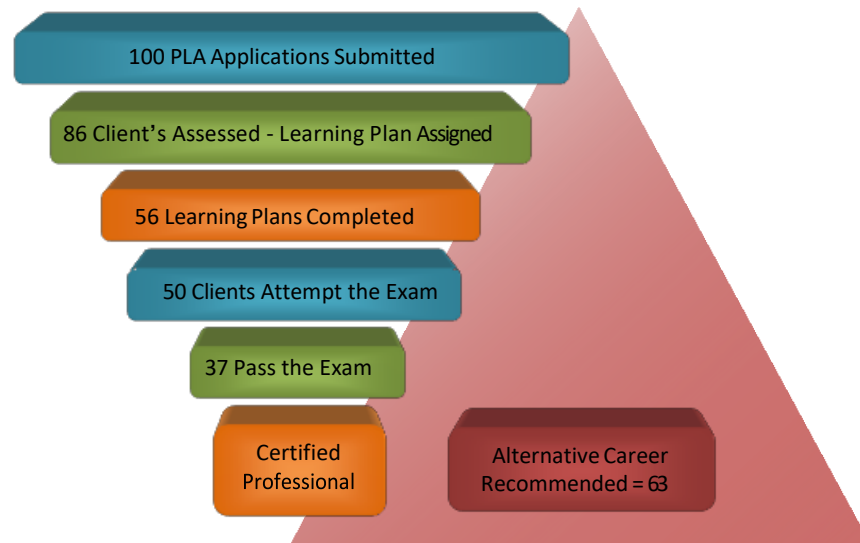
The CSMLS offers several resources that allows interested applicants to reflect on their previous professional education and clinical experience to determine if a career as a

certified MLT is right for them.

These resources will also help an interested applicant determine how much upgrading may be required before they will be eligible to write the Exam.

CSMLS statistics show that approximately 40% of General MLT Clients pass the Exam on their first attempt compared with approximately 85% of candidates from EQual™ accredited Canadian MLT programs. As well, the practice of laboratory medicine in Canada may be quite different for some who have practiced in other parts of the world. Becoming a CSMLS certified and provincially registered MLT may not be the most practical or fulfilling choice for these individuals (see [Figure 2](#)).

Figure 2. PLA Success Rates



Reference: Johnson, K. (2014). *Development of Alternate Career Inform on for CSMLS Internationally Educated MLT Applicants: When the Fit is Not Quite Right*,

Alternate Careers

Since over 80% of IEMLT applicants need to complete some form of upgrading of skills or education before they can write the Exam, the process of becoming a CSMLS certified MLT can be long and difficult ([Figure 1](#)).

Since approximately 40% of General MLT Clients pass the Exam on their first attempt (see [Figure 2](#)) compared with approximately 85% of candidates from EQual™ accredited Canadian MLT programs. As well, the practice of laboratory medicine in Canada may be quite different for some who have practiced in other parts of the world. Becoming a CSMLS certified and provincially registered MLT may not be the most practical or fulfilling choice for these individuals.

As a result, some individuals might consider pursuing an alternative to medical laboratory technology in which they could transfer their current skills, knowledge, education and work experience. For these individuals, alternate or related careers may be pursued while in the process of becoming a licensed MLT or as a permanent career option.

An alternate career often requires many of the same skills and abilities as the intended career but may involve fewer processes and /or qualifications to begin working. These careers may also be called related careers, alternate career options, or alternative careers.

While the CSMLS does not have anything to do with granting or applying for alternate

careers, a website was created to help IEMLTs navigate this path. Please visit the Alternate Careers website at <http://altcareers.csmls.org> as it contains information on several potential alternate careers. These are professions related to medical laboratory technology but do not require a license to practice.

General information related to eleven (11) alternate careers have been gathered, including:

- The type of work environment
- Required qualifications expected from Canadian employers
- Employers' expectation of communication skills
- Average wages
- Opportunities for advancement
- Resources for more information

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AN ALTERNATE CAREER?

There are several potential benefits associated with pursuing one of the listed alternate careers.

- Certification is not required so these individuals may begin working right away.
- Very little additional training or upgrading is required for most of the careers listed.
- The employers in these fields value the skills, knowledge, and abilities that these individuals possess.



CSMLS PLA PROCESS

Read this PLA Handbook completely and more than once (at least three (3) times), as it contains a large amount of information.

Review of the [Exam Handbook](#) found on our website is also recommended.

The PLA process evaluates a Client's education (theory and clinical), clinical work experience and other relevant training to determine if they are equivalent to the relevant [CSMLS National MLT General Competency Profile](#). Contracted CSMLS trained assessors are responsible for evaluating a Client's file.

The CSMLS Competency Profiles outline the entry-level expectations in the Canadian medical laboratory context.

The CSMLS online PLA Portal is where all PLA applicants open a PLA account and complete the CSMLS PLA application process. Once the application is submitted, the office will review for completion and will let applicants know if their application requires correction or if they can submit payment for their application. The PLA Portal is also where Clients can see which supporting documents have been processed into their PLA File, and when their assessment is complete, an unofficial copy of their PLA Technical Report will be uploaded for their review.

The PLA Portal allows Client supporting documents to be uploaded into their PLA account. Unofficial documents can be uploaded in their PLA account by the Client. Official documents must be uploaded directly into a Client's PLA account by the submitting institution, if the organization has an email account that is recognized by the CSMLS PLA submission requirements. These documents can also be submitted to the office by email or mail. Please review the [Submission of Official Supporting Documents section](#) for more information.

Once all required supporting documents have been processed by the office, the Client will be notified by the office of their next steps.

Once paid, PLA fees are non-refundable.

Three PLA Stages

There are three (3) stages in the PLA process:

1. Pre-assessment.

On January 1, 2027, CSMLS MLT PLA Stage 1 Applications will be discontinued.

This stage begins when the PLA Stage 1 fee has been processed and ends after all required documents have been received and processed (including document scanning) into a Client's PLA Document Submission File.

The fee for this stage is strictly for the administration of Client documents for twelve (12) months once payment has been processed. After 12 months, if all the documents have not been received, the Client's PLA Stage 1 expires, their Stage 1 fee is forfeited, and their PLA Document Submission File is closed.

All supporting documents must be submitted to the PLA Team or the Client's PLA account by **December 31, 2027, document extensions will not be provided, due to all CSMLS General MLT PLA and Exam services being discontinued after**

January 1, 2027: CSMLS MLT PLA Stage 1 Applications will be discontinued.
January 1, 2029: General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued.

December 31, 2028.

2. Assessment.

This stage begins once the Client's PLA Stage 2 fee has been processed. Once the Stage 2 fee has been processed, the PLA file is placed into the assessment queue to be assigned to an assessor.

Client's must pay the PLA Stage 2 fee no later than June 15, 2028, to have their PLA File assessed to be able to attend the last CSMLS General MLT Exam in October 2028, if found equivalent.

Once assigned, the assessment itself can take four (4) to six (6) weeks to complete.

3. Post-assessment.

This stage begins when a Client's documents have been assessed and their Technical Report is sent to them.

This stage may expire two (2) years after the assessment, depending on the PLA outcome. If a Learning Plan is assigned but not completed **before December 31, 2028**, the PLA Team will not be monitoring or processing course transcripts for these as of **January 1, 2029, when all General MLT PLA services will be discontinued.**

After PLA Stage 1 Application Processing

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY POLICY

This language policy is strictly for determining equivalency to the CSMLS Exam only.

Clients must prove language proficiency at the Canadian Language Benchmark level 6 (CLB6) before their PLA will be placed in the assessment queue and must prove Canadian Language Benchmark level 8 (CLB8) become eligible to take the CSMLS Exam (if all other requirements have been completed).

Client who can prove, through a [credential evaluation](#), their language of instruction for their full MLT educational program (didactic and clinical) was **only** in English **or** French will have the language proficiency requirements waived.

If a Client's language of instruction was **not only** in English **or** French, they must prove their language proficiency through an approved Language Proficiency test.

Language Proficiency Test – Minimum Requirements

The CSMLS has a two (2)-level language proficiency requirement for Clients whose language of education was not English or French.

If Clients are unsuccessful in language proficiency testing by the expiry of their PLA Technical Report, an extension may be requested (see [Learning Plan Extension section](#)). This request must be made before the Technical Report expires and has additional costs associated with it.

Level One (1): Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 6

These minimum requirements in Tables 1a and 1b for each test section, must be met to have documents assessed for a Technical Report.

Level Two (2): Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) 7 and 8

These minimum requirements in Tables 2a and 2b for each test section, must be met to be eligible to write the Exam.

Table 1a. English Level One (1) Equivalencies

Test Section	IELTS – GT ^{1,3}	MELA ²	IELTS-AC ³	TOEFL iBT ⁴
Listening (CLB6)	5.5	6	5.5	7
Reading (CLB6)	5.0	6	6.0	13
Writing (CLB6)	5.5	6	5.5	18
Speaking (CLB6)	5.5	6	5.5	16

Table 1b. French Level One (1) Equivalencies

Test Section	TCF ¹	TEF ¹
Listening (CLB6)	398-457	393-433
Reading (CLB6)	406-452	393-433
Writing (CLB6)	7-9	379-427
Speaking (CLB6)	7-9	422-455

Table 2a. English Level Two (2) Equivalencies

Test Section	IELTS – GT ^{1,3}	MELA ²	IELTS – AC ³	TOEFL iBT ⁴
Listening (CLB8)	7.5	8	7.5	27
Reading (CLB8)	6.5	8	7.5	27
Writing (CLB7)	6.0	7	6.0	21
Speaking (CLB8)	6.5	8	6.5	20

Table 2b. French Level Two (2) Equivalencies

Test Section	TCF ¹	TEF ¹
Listening (CLB8)	503-522	462-502
Reading (CLB8)	499-523	462-502
Writing (CLB7)	102-131	428-471
Speaking (CLB8)	122-133	456-493

1. Government of Canada website. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/operational-bulletins-manuals/standard-requirements/language-requirements/test-equivalency-charts.html>

2. MELA - Michener English Language Assessment <https://michener.ca/continuing-education/ce-courses/mela/>

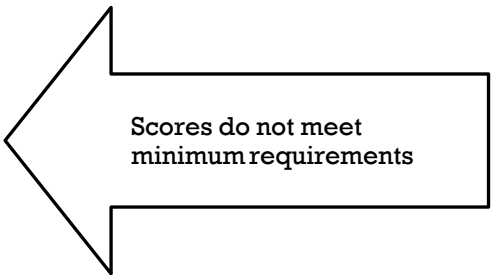
3. Comparison of IELTS-AC to IELTS-GT <https://www.manhattanreview.com/ielts-academic-vs-general-training/#:~:text=IELTS%20scoring%20concordance%20tables%20show,terms%20of%20vocabulary%20and%20style>

4. Comparison tables TOEFL with IELTS-AC <https://www.ets.org/toefl/institutions/ibt/compare-scores.html#accordion-3a9d6db32b-item-f7e1e1c9f1>

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Example of not meeting language requirements:

Test Section	TEF
Listening	275
Reading	230
Writing	380
Speaking	425



Scores do not meet minimum requirements

Stage 1: Pre-Assessment

On January 1, 2027, CSMLS will no longer be accepting General MLT PLA Stage 1 applications, as PLA Stage 1 will be discontinued for new applicants.

CSMLS will be discontinuing all MLT PLA services beginning January 1, 2029.

Pre-Assessment includes:

- PLA Application and [Fee\(s\)](#)
- [Submitting Supporting Documents](#)

PLA APPLICATION AND FEE(S)

Clients are encouraged to review the organizations in Canada that may have funding opportunities (micro loans) available for those seeking help with the costs associated with the PLA process ([see Appendix 4](#)).

Read this handbook carefully before using the PLA Portal to open a PLA account and complete the online PLA Application. See [Appendix 2](#) for instructions on how to use the online PLA Portal.

When a PLA Application has been reviewed and processed by the office, the applicant will be told to pay the PLA Stage 1 fee ([see Table 3](#)).

Once the PLA Stage 1 fee is processed, the Client file is opened and the Client can have their PLA supporting documents submitted into their file.

If documents have been submitted to the office **prior to applying and paying for PLA Stage 1**, the documents will be **destroyed according to the [Document Receipt and Retention Policy](#)**.

As supporting documents are submitted for a Client's file, Client's will be notified by email. Clients can also log into their PLA account to see which documents have been processed into their account and checked off as received by the CSMLS office at any time.

NOTE: Receipt of PLA supporting documents is not acknowledged by the office when they are delivered (by mail or email). The PLA Team only sends an update once the document(s) is/are processed into the PLA Client's File.

Due to the large volume of documents submitted to the office, PLA supporting documents acknowledged as received **ONLY** when they are processed into an **active*** Client file.

*Active PLA Client files are those that have had their PLA application fees processed, have been notified by PLA that their file is open, and their Stage 1 is not expired.

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Applicants **must** read and understand all PLA policies and processes in this handbook because:

- a) PLA Application fees are **non-refundable and non-transferable**.
- b) PLA Stage 1 Applications have a **twelve (12) month expiry** for receipt of required documents to the CSMLS office.
 - A document extension may be requested, **only until December 31, 2026**, before a PLA Application expires, for up to an additional twelve (12) months, if there is difficulty in obtaining the required documents.
 - A document extension application form and fee payments must be requested from the office, before the PLA Application expires, and **before January 1, 2027**.
- c) Clients can only **reapply and pay for PLA Stage 1 again until December 31, 2026**, if all required documents will not be submitted to the CSMLS office by a Client's application expiry (12-months).

PLA payments are accepted by:

- Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or American Express).
 - Due to PayPal security restrictions we are unable to accept credit card payments from some countries.
- Canadian cheques or Canadian money orders, payable to the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science or CSMLS.
 - If payment is refused for insufficient funds, applicants will be charged a \$25.00 NSF fee.

Table 3. PLA Fee Schedule

PLA Fee Schedule <i>Payments must be in Canadian Funds.</i>	Member	Non-Member
PLA Stage 1 Fee: The PLA Application Fee. This must be paid at the time of application.	\$820	\$975
PLA Stage 2: The PLA Assessment and Technical Report Fee. This must be received before a file is sent for assessment. Clients will be contacted when it is due.	\$720	\$875

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Clients must contact their educational institutions and employers to have them submit the required official documents **directly** to CSMLS on their behalf. All official documents received at the office **become the property of the CSMLS**, original documents will not be given back to Clients. They may apply and pay for a copy of their document(s), depending on the document, by contacting the office at pla@csmls.org.

If **documents** arrive without an identifier (Client name or CSMLS ID number) or the documents are for people who have not yet paid for PLA Stage 1, they **will be discarded according to the [Document Receipt and Retention Policy](#)**.

Clients are responsible for all costs associated with delivering supporting documentation to the CSMLS. Shipping fees are the responsibility of the Client, we will not accept documents that require the CSMLS to cover any shipping fees.

Personally-submitted or -faxed official supporting PLA documents will not be accepted.

[Table 4](#) gives a list of Supporting Documents and their requirements. A checklist to assist Client document submissions can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

Table 4. Supporting Documents

DOCUMENTS	REQUIREMENTS
Personal Competency Rating Booklet (PCRB)	Required
Credential Evaluation	Required
Language Proficiency Testing	Required If the Client's approved credential evaluation indicates their MLT General Education was ONLY in English or French, a language proficiency test report is not required
MLT Didactic Education	Required Detailed Course Outlines (or syllabus) and transcripts for all MLT disciplines (If clients are using WES ICAP credential evaluation, transcripts are not required to be submitted by the educational institution to CSMLS)
MLT Clinical Education (clinical placement/ clinical internship in a hospital laboratory – not research, science, environmental, or veterinary)	Required If evidence of this is only being submitted by the educational institution within the course outline section, please indicate this in the application However, if a Client only has clinical work experience in at least four (4) MLT General disciplines, and can prove this, then clinical education documents are not required. In this case, clinical laboratory experience documentation must be submitted
Work Experience	Required Unless a Client is a new graduate at the technologist level, that has not yet worked in the MLT field
Professional Certification	Not Required These documents may provide a better PLA outcome
Continuing Education	Not Required These documents may provide a better PLA outcome

Submission of Official Supporting Documents

Postal mail or Courier: Official supporting documents are accepted if they are sent directly in an untampered envelope, sealed and stamped envelope by the institution (this can simply consist of the signature or initials of the person responsible). Official supporting documents may not be placed loose inside a courier package/envelope.

If an official document is received without appropriate packaging, the document will not be accepted and the Client must have it resubmitted correctly, delaying the process.

See example in [Figure 3 of Appendix 4](#).

Email/Uploads: When official documents are submitted by this method, they are only accepted if sent directly by the issuing institution with an institutional email address to pla@csmls.org. Documents will not be accepted if they are emailed from/uploaded by a public domain email addresses, such as gmail, yahoo, outlook, etc., regardless if this is all the issuing institution uses. In this case, the documents must be mailed/couriered to the CSMLS office.

Clients must make sure the issuing institutions include their full name and/or CSMLS ID number on the official documents when they are sent to CSMLS. Also, all official documents must bear the official organizational letterhead and/or stamp and be signed by an official representative of the organization.

File Updates – Processing of Received Supporting Documents

File updates may include:

- Processing PLA applications
- Processing of submitted active Client supporting documents
- Assigning a Client file to an assessor
- PLA Technical Report completion
- Learning plan updates, if assigned

The CSMLS office does not confirm receipt of documents due to the volume we receive, but every time we process a document into your file you will be notified via email.

We strive to process all documents into Client files within four (4) weeks once they have arrived at the office, regardless of the mode of delivery, i.e., postal mail, courier, or email, but depending on volume this may take longer than four (4) weeks.

We ask that clients refrain from repeatedly requesting file updates as this delays the office's processing times due to the additional work required to respond to these requests.

If a Client has proof (tracking information or an email address of the sender) that an official document has been **delivered to the CSMLS office but has not been processed for more than six (6) weeks**, please share it with us at pla@csmls.org.

If a document arrives at the office that is NOT listed on the application, it will not be considered for the PLA.

Credential Evaluation, official document only

A credential evaluation is required for all foreign MLT education. The purpose of the credential evaluation is to confirm authenticity of foreign education and to determine the language of instruction.

Only credential evaluations that are sent to the CSMLS directly from World Education Services-Canada (WES) or International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES), will be accepted.

CSMLS ID numbers do not need to be provided to WES or ICES as they do not include these on their reports.

WES Canada Report

- Request the language(s) of instruction be included on the report.
- Request the report to be sent to the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science. **Do not use CSMLS.**

- Only the **WES Course-by-course** (detailed) or the **WES ICAP** evaluation is accepted.
- If verified copies of course transcripts are received with the WES ICAP report, a second set of transcripts does not need to be requested from the educational institution.

World Education Services, Canada (WES)

2 Carlton Street, Suite 1400

Toronto, ON M5B1J3

Website: www.wes.org/ca

Telephone: 1-800-361-6106

Fax: (416) 972-9004

ICES Report

- Request the ICES “**comprehensive**” evaluation, which includes the **language(s) of instruction**.

International Credential Evaluation Service (ICES)

3700 Willingdon Ave

Burnaby, BC, Canada, V5G3H2

Website: www.bcit.ca/ices

Telephone: (604) 432-8800; Toll Free: (866)-434-9197

Fax: (604) 435 7033; Email: icesinfo@bcit.ca

Language Proficiency, official document only

To have language of instruction included in a credential evaluation, Clients must ask the educational institutions to send a separate letter confirming the language of MLT educational instruction when official transcripts and course outlines are sent **to the credential evaluation service**.

Clients must make sure the credential evaluation service adds this information to the credential report.

Was the applicable MLT education only in English or French?

YES If the credential evaluation states the language of Laboratory Medicine instruction was only in English or French, a language test will not be required for the CSMLS Exam (but it may be required for a regulatory agency or employer).

NO If language of instruction was **not** in English or French only, Clients must take a language test to prove they meet the required language proficiency level.

If a language proficiency test is required, the approved language testing vendor (see [Approved Language Proficiency Testing Vendors](#) section) must issue the test results directly to the CSMLS. Faxed or emailed results are not accepted.

Language Proficiency Evaluations:

- Will not be accepted if any test section has not been evaluated
- Must meet the minimum requirements in each stage of listening, reading, writing and speaking (see [Language Proficiency Policy section](#))
- Will not have any exceptions made
- Two or more test results cannot be combined to pass the requirements

Approved Language Proficiency Testing Vendors

Only the following English language proficiency testing vendors are accepted:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) GT
- Michener English Language Assessment (MELA)
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) AC
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) iBT

Only the following French language proficiency testing vendors are accepted:

- Test de connaissance du français pour le Canada (TCF Canada)
- Test d'évaluation de français pour le Canada (TEF Canada)

Medical Laboratory Technology Education, official documents only

Clients must contact their educational institutions to ask that official transcripts and detailed course outlines be submitted directly to CSMLS by the issuing organization.

The issuing organization can do this by:

- uploading the documents to a Client's online PLA account,
 - only official company email accepted; or
- submitting the documents to the CSMLS office by:
 - official company email, or
 - postal mail/ courier in untampered company envelopes (see [Appendix 4: Example of Official Envelope Requirements](#)).

Official MLT Educational Transcripts

These documents list all the MLT courses taken at a college or university, the dates attended, and show the final grade received for each course. These must:

- be printed on official letterhead;
- include individual courses for at least four (4) of the five (5) MLT General disciplines; and
- have approximately three (3) courses per discipline that build on each other.

If verified transcript copies are received with the WES ICAP report, a second set of transcripts does not have to be requested from the educational institution.

Official Course Outlines/Syllabus of Studies

This is used to thoroughly evaluate MLT education, the PLA assessor needs to see course outlines for the MLT courses listed in the official transcripts.

Course outlines must include a detailed description of the content of each course relating to MLT education and must:

- be printed on official letterhead;
- include individual courses for at least four (4) of the five (5) MLT General disciplines;
- have approximately three (3) courses per discipline that build on each other; and
- must include clinical internship/practicum/placement details as outlined in the Official Letter of Clinical MLT Education below, if an Official Letter from the laboratory placement will not be submitted to the CSMLS Office.

Official Letter of Clinical MLT Education

An official representative from the laboratory must send a letter describing the structured clinical education on official letterhead and the dates attended.

Official letters must include:

- a detailed outline of the topics covered, and tests completed in training;
- the dates and amount of time spent in training;
- the methods used to monitor clinical progress;
- an explanation of how clinical progress was evaluated (graded); and
- a complete list of all tests performed.

Additionally, they must:

- be signed by the official representative of the laboratory.

Clinical MLT Work Experience, official documents only

Clients must contact their employer(s) to ask that an official laboratory representative create and submit a letter outlining the work performed by the Client and the dates of employment.

The issuing organization can do this by:

- uploading the documents to a Client's online PLA account,
 - only official company email accepted; or
- submitting the documents to the CSMLS office by:
 - official company email, or
 - postal mail/ courier in untampered company envelopes (see [Appendix 4: Example of Official Envelope Requirements](#)).

The last five years of work experience are the most important for the PLA.

Official letters must include:

- dates of MLT employment;
- MLT department rotation if Client worked in more than one department;
- the list of laboratory tests performed directly by the Client;
- the equipment/methods the Client used to perform these tests;
- the frequency of testing (for example, daily or weekly) performed by the Client; and
- the number of samples the Client processed on a weekly basis.

Additionally, they must:

- be printed on official letterhead and
- be signed by the official representative of the laboratory

Professional Certification, official documents only

If a Client has professional MLT certification/licensure from another country, ask them to send proof of this directly to CSMLS.

The issuing organization can do this by:

- uploading the documents to a Client's online PLA account,
 - only official company email accepted; or

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- submitting the documents to the CSMLS office by:
 - official company email, or
 - postal mail/ courier in untampered company envelopes (see [Appendix 4: Example of Official Envelope Requirements](#)).

Continuing Education, official documents only

If a Client has taken continuing MLT education within the **past five years**, ask the educational institution to send **official** transcripts with dates attended, directly to CSMLS.

If currently enrolled, send proof of enrolment and the expected date of completion.

The issuing organization can do this by:

- uploading the documents to a Client's online PLA account,
 - only official company email accepted; or
- submitting the documents to the CSMLS office by:
 - official company email, or
 - postal mail/ courier in untampered company envelopes (see [Appendix 4: Example of Official Envelope Requirements](#)).

Professional Development, self-submitted

Submit a list of professional development using the template available in the application section of the PLA online portal, following the instructions provided to complete the list. Incorrectly submitted lists and documents will not be accepted. Once completed, the Client can upload copies of their certificates of completion for MLT seminars and/or workshops taken within the **past five years only**.

This **MUST NOT** include course work with a graded component from an educational institution, see the [Continuing Education](#) section for more information.

DOCUMENT TRANSLATION POLICY

Documents received in a language other than English or French must be translated into one of these two languages. If the MLT General documents received by CSMLS are not in either French or English, a copy of the documents will be emailed to the Client to be submitted to a Canadian certified translator.

The CSMLS only accepts official translations that are:

- **Performed by a Canadian-certified translator**

The translated documents must be submitted directly to the CSMLS by the Canadian-certified translator (the full document copy that was sent for translation must be included with the official translation submission). This translation must be:

- Stamped with the Canadian-certified translator's seal

All costs associated with official translation are the Client's responsibility.

ALTERNATE DOCUMENTS POLICY

In the event the Client is unable to provide official documents as required by the PLA policy, the CSMLS may allow the submission of alternate documents. These situations will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

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The following alternate documents may be considered for the PLA:

- Client submitted original documents (these will not be returned)
- Canadian notarized copies of original documents sent directly from a registered Public Notary to the CSMLS office, stamped with their official seal
- Sworn affidavit for cases where there are no, or insufficient, documents to proceed with an evaluation or verification, sent directly from the law official signing the affidavit to the CSMLS office, stamped with their official seal

The CSMLS must balance the duty to provide a fair and transparent process with its obligation to ensure that the integrity of the Exam is protected.

DOCUMENT RECEIPT AND RETENTION POLICY

Only those who have applied and paid for a PLA will be updated on their file.

Clients will be notified by email when:

- their application and payment have been processed
- their documents have been processed, **NOT** when documents are received

Documents received at the CSMLS for individuals who have not applied for a PLA will be destroyed after twelve (12) months.

Documents received at the CSMLS without identifiers (applicant name or CSMLS identification number) **are destroyed after six (6) months.**

Information about receipt or destruction of these documents is not provided. The CSMLS is not responsible for any costs associated with the receipt or destruction of documents.

Documents from a completed PLA Document Submission File are scanned and saved digitally. Physical copies are saved for a period of three (3) months after the first PLA Technical Report is issued, stating a Client has been found equivalent to the CSMLS Competency Profile or has been found not equivalent and is either issued a TRLP or told they must attend a full EQual accredited Canadian Medical Laboratory educational program.

FILE PREPARATION FOR STAGE 2 ASSESSMENT

When CSMLS has received all required documentation, a Client's PLA file is prepared for assessment through scanning and sorting all documents. Once completed, the PLA Team will let the Client know what their next steps are.

Client PLA files are assigned to our assessors in chronological order.

As our assessors may be completing other files, this process may take up to three (3) months, depending of the volume of Clients files in queue.

Stage 2: Assessment

CSMLS will be discontinuing all MLT PLA services beginning January 1, 2029.

The [PLA Stage 2 fee](#) must be paid before a Client's file is sent for assessment ([see Table 3](#)). Clients will be contacted when this payment is due.

When the CSMLS office has received full payment and all supporting documents are processed, the Client's file will be sent for assessment.

The Client's documents are thoroughly reviewed to compare didactic (theory and practical

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labs) education, and clinical (practicum/internship) education and/or clinical, and work experience, to the applicable MLT Competency Profile.

Eligibility to the MLT Exam will be determined on equivalence to the CSMLS General MLT Competency Profile©.

Assessments usually take four to six (4-6) weeks to complete once assigned, but may take up to three (3) months, depending of the volume of Clients files in queue.

Stage 3: Post-Assessment

CSMLS will be discontinuing all MLT PLA services beginning January 1, 2029.

TECHNICAL REPORT

Technical Reports are not to be shared digitally, by any means, unencrypted email, online platforms, social media, etc., as these are sensitive documents and are subject to fraudulent activity.

All MLT PLA Clients will receive two (2) copies of their Technical Report, allowing them to submit a copy to CMLTA, if required. To request and pay for additional copies, or copies of other Client document submissions, where allowed, contact pla@csmls.org for more information.

The PLA technical report lists a Client's experience found in their submitted documentation and will result in one of three outcomes ([see Outcomes Chart, Appendix 1](#)):

1. **Recognition as equivalent** to the MLT General Competency Profile.
Eligible to write both the MLT and MLA Exams.
2. **Partial recognition as not equivalent** to the MLT General Competency Profile, **with an assigned Technical Report Learning Plan (TRLP).**

A Technical Report Learning Plan (TRLP) must be successfully completed within two (2) years to be eligible to write the MLT Exam, and **no later than August 15, 2028, if a Client would like to attend the final CSMLS General MLT exam in October 2028**, as all CSMLS MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued after December 31, 2028.

Clients who do not agree with this outcome may appeal or apply to submit supplemental documents for further review (see the [Supplemental Documentation Review, Appeal, and PLA Stage 2 Reassessment Policies section](#)) depending on when their Technical Report has been issued as all PLA services end on December 31, 2028.

An MLT General Client may be granted eligibility to the MLA Exam if they are assigned a TRLP with Refresher or Subject Specific course requirements.

MLA Exam eligibility will not be granted to individuals who have Comprehensive course requirements.

All TRLPs must be successfully completed by July 31, 2028 for Clients to be eligible for the October 2028 exam session as all CSMLS MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued after December 31, 2028.

3. **No recognition and is not equivalent** to the MLT General Competency Profile.

A Client with a significant gap in more than one discipline of medical laboratory technology/science, e.g., missing full education or partial education (no didactic at the technologist level* but clinical work experience at the technologist level and/or

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didactic at the technologist level but no clinical placement or clinical work experience), will be directed to complete a full EQual™ accredited Alberta (or Canadian) General MLT educational program. A full EQual™ accredited Alberta (or Canadian) MLT General educational program must be successfully completed to be eligible to write the Exam.

Clients who fall into this outcome may appeal or apply to submit supplemental documents for further review (see the [Supplemental Documentation Review, Appeal, and PLA Stage 2 Reassessment Policies section](#)).

MLA Exam eligibility will not be granted to individuals who have been given this outcome.

*People with education in other health professions (physicians included) rarely have the required didactic education at the medical laboratory technologist level. Often, they may only have one course per discipline, only have one or two courses that combine disciplines, and/or their documentation uses language like “basic laboratory tests performed at the bedside.” This type of education does not provide the depth of knowledge required to practice as a General MLT in Canada.

LEARNING PLAN POLICY

A Technical Report Learning Plan (TRLP) addresses the gaps in MLT General knowledge/experience as identified in the PLA Technical Report.

If a TRLP is assigned, it must be **successfully completed by July 31, 2028 to be eligible for the October 2028 exam session as all CSMLS General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued after December 31, 2028.**

Courses or Medical Laboratory Technologist programs taken **prior to receiving a TRLP, CANNOT be counted** towards fulfilling any requirement identified in a TRLP.

Clients **are not allowed to re-register for or retake course(s) or program(s)**, to complete a current TRLP, or to reassess an expired TRLP or expired Eligibility Statement. A different course/program, from a different educational institution must be taken. This includes courses failed during the TRLP completion time. If a client fails a course while trying to complete their TRLP, they must choose a different course option from the pre-approved list.

A TRLP must be successfully completed to fulfill the gaps identified at the medical laboratory technologist level as assigned in the Client's PLA Technical Report before they can be deemed eligible to write the CSMLS Exam.

All TRLP course work covering the gaps assigned in a PLA Technical Report must include an evaluation method and must be shown to be successfully completed before any Client will become eligible to write the Exam. Clients must submit official transcripts showing successful completion and are not allowed to repeat any course previously taken for any reason.

Pre-approved lists for the various types of assigned course work for all General disciplines will be included with the PLA Technical Report package mailed to the Client. If a Client enrolls in a pre-approved option that has multiple courses indicated under that option, all listed courses must be successfully completed.

A learning plan may also include a language proficiency testing requirement.

Learning Plan Course Work

A TRLP can consist of any of the following types of course work for General MLT disciplines.

Refresher: A TRLP with assigned Refresher course work is required when a Client's documentation shows gaps in recency or education (didactic and clinical) and/or clinical work experience as compared to the CSMLS General MLT Competency Profile in a discipline (i.e., clinical chemistry, clinical microbiology, hematology, histotechnology, and/or transfusion science).

Subject Specific: A TRLP with assigned Subject Specific course work is required when a Client's documentation shows a gap in recency or education (didactic and clinical) and/or clinical work experience as compared to the CSMLS General MLT Competency Profile for a specific subject within a discipline. This is only assigned if CSMLS has pre-approved courses available for that specific subject within a discipline, if there are no subject specific pre-approved courses for a specific gap, a refresher course will be assigned.

Comprehensive: Clients are allowed to have **only** one significant discipline gap. A TRLP with assigned Comprehensive course work is required when a Client's documentation shows a significant gap in didactic education and/or clinical education/clinical work experience in one discipline as compared to the CSMLS General MLT Competency Profile. Client's will have to successfully complete more than one approved course of instruction to make up for the significant gap identified.

MLA Exam eligibility is available for Canadian-based, General MLT Clients with an assigned TRLP for refresher or subject specific course requirements only.

MLA Exam eligibility will not be granted to General MLT Clients with comprehensive course requirements until they have successfully completed one of the required comprehensive courses for their TRLP or are eligible for the General MLT Exam.

Learning Plan Courses not on the Approved Lists

If a Client has found a course that is not on the pre-approved list, they must ask the CSMLS to approve it before it can be taken.

To be accepted, the submitted courses must be at the MLT level and have an evaluated component with an assigned grade or score proving successful completion.

The assessment team will review the course and decide whether it is approved to fulfill TRLP requirements. The following information must be provided to the CSMLS:

- Course name, course number and name of school
- Course description or course outline

Courses recently taken off the approved refresher course list cannot be approved to fulfill learning plan requirements unless they have been recently revised.

Learning Plan Extension

If the TRLP cannot be completed in the two (2) year expiry timeframe listed on their PLA Technical Report, Clients may be able to apply and pay for a **ONE TIME Learning Plan Extension** BEFORE their TRLP expires.

Applications for a Learning Plan Extension will only be accepted until May 31, 2028.

On June 1, 2028, this service will be discontinued and the CSMLS PLA Team will no

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longer be accepting Learning Plan Extension applications.

Extension will only be granted **until July 31, 2028.**

Clients who have an expired TRLP will be required to apply and pay for a [PLA Stage 2 Reassessment](#) **no later than December 31, 2026.** The outcome of a reassessment may result in additional course work requirements.

Please contact pla@csmls.org if you require an application for this service.

After Successful Completion of a Learning Plan

When courses are successfully completed, an official transcript from the educational institution must be submitted directly to the CSMLS from the issuing institution.

Clients with assigned course work cannot retake the same courses they may have taken before, whether successful or not.

All TRLP requirements must be successfully completed before Clients can become eligible to write the Exam.

After the CSMLS receives proof of successful completion of the TRLP, an Eligibility Statement will be sent to the Client (see [Eligibility Statement section](#)).

TRLPs must be successfully completed by July 31, 2028 for Clients to be eligible for the October 2028 exam session as all CSMLS General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued after December 31, 2028.

PLA Clients are not to apply for an Exam until the CSMLS PLA Team contacts them about the successful completion of their TRLP.

Policies to Challenge a PLA Outcome

If a Client disagrees with the outcome of their PLA Technical Report, they have the option to challenge their outcome by applying for a Supplemental Documentation Review (SDR), a Technical Report Appeal (TRA), or a Stage 2 Reassessment (S2R).

These processes may or may not change the PLA outcome. If an outcome does change, it may not be favourable to the Client and the new outcome may be worse.

SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTATION REVIEW POLICY

This process only available until April 30, 2028.

Clients must have all supplemental documents submitted to the CSMLS no later than July 31, 2028, if they hope to attend the October 2028 General MLT exam session, as the CSMLS General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued after December 31, 2028.

If a Client believes additional documents from the employer or educational institution(s) listed on their **original PLA application** may change their PLA outcome, they must apply and pay (non-refundable fee) for a Supplemental Documentation Review (SDR) **within ninety (90) days** of the date on the PLA Technical Report (until April 30, 2028).

Only documents from employers or institutions that were listed on their original PLA application will be accepted for SDR. Once all required documents are received, a revised assessment report will be sent to the requesting Client within forty-five (45) days of the last document receipt.

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The application form for the SDR can be found on the CSMLS [PLA webpage](#) under the Stage 3 – Post Assessment tab.

This process may or may not change the PLA outcome. If an outcome does change, it may not be favourable to the Client and may be worse.

TECHNICAL REPORT APPEAL POLICY

This is process is only available until July 1, 2028, if the Client hopes to attend the October 2028 General MLT exam session, as the CSMLS General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued after December 31, 2028.

If a Client feels having their Document Submission File reviewed by another assessor may change their PLA outcome, they must apply and pay (non-refundable fee) for a Technical Report Appeal (TRA) **within forty-five (45) days** if the date on their PLA Technical Report is on or before November 15, 2028. **As of November 16, 2028, this service will not be available.**

Clients who are seeking a TRA cannot submit additional documentation.

Another PLA assessor will perform another assessment (blinded from the first one) and an updated PLA Technical Report will be sent to the Client within forty-five (45) days of payment processing.

The application form for the TRA can be found on the CSMLS [PLA webpage](#) under the Stage 3 – Post Assessment tab.

This process may or may not change the PLA outcome. If an outcome does change, it may not be favourable to the Client and may be worse.

PLA STAGE 2 REASSESSMENT POLICY

This option is only available until December 31, 2026, and will be discontinued as of January 1, 2027.

If a Client believes additional documentation from employer(s) or educational institution(s) not listed on their original application may change their PLA outcome, they may apply and pay (non-refundable fee) for a PLA Stage 2 Reassessment (S2R) at any point after receiving their original PLA outcome. Contact pla@csmls.org for more information.

If a Client has been assigned a TRLP, but has let it expire they must apply and pay (non-refundable fee) for a PLA S2R if they wish to continue with the PLA process to gain eligibility to the Exam. Additional and/or updated documentation may be required to be submitted. Please contact pla@csmls.org for more information.

If a Client has received an Eligibility Statement, but has let it expire before attending an Exam session, they must apply and pay (non-refundable fee) for a PLA S2R, if they wish to become eligible to the Exam again. Additional and/or updated documentation may be required to be submitted. Please contact pla@csmls.org for more information.

This process may or may not change the PLA outcome. If an outcome does change, it may not be favourable to the Client and may be worse.

Eligibility Statements

Eligibility Statements are not to be shared digitally, by any means, unencrypted email, online platforms, social media, etc., as these are sensitive documents and are subject to fraudulent activity.

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An Eligibility Statement will be issued once a Client has been found “Equivalent” to the CSMLS Competency Profile and the PLA language proficiency requirement (either from their initial PLA or after a TRLP has been successfully completed).

Eligibility Statements will indicate initial eligibility Exam status and are valid for twelve (12) months after the date of issue. This allows two (2) attempts at the Exam within twelve (12) months to pass the Exam, if required.

For more information on the Exam, see the [Exam Handbook](#), the [CSMLS website](#), or contact exam@csmls.org.

Clients ARE NOT TO apply for a General MLT Exam session until they have received an Eligibility Statement from the CSMLS office.

Appendix 1: General MLT PLA Outcomes

This chart is to be used as a **guideline** for determining equivalency to a Canadian trained General Medical Laboratory Technologist. (“≤” means less than or equal to; “>” means greater than)

Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) theoretical education, clinical education, and clinical work experience includes the following five (5) disciplines (see the CSMLS Competency Profile), as they relate to humans: **Clinical Chemistry, Clinical Microbiology, Hematology, Histology, and Immunohematology (Transfusion Science/Blood Bank).**

Canadian MLS Regulatory bodies recognize recency as being 0-5 years and require proficiency in English, Canadian Language Benchmark 8, for admittance to the CSMLS National Certification Examination.

Canadian Equivalence in Medical Laboratory Science (MLS)				
Theoretical Education Recency	Clinical Education Recency	Clinical Work Experience Recency	Outcome	Learning Plan
CSMLS RECOGNIZED (five (5) MLS disciplines)				
≤ 5 years MLS	≤ 5 years	≤ 5 years	Equivalent	N/A
≤ 5 years MLS	≤ 5 years	None		
≤ 5 years MLS	None	≤ 5 years		
> 5 years MLS	> 5 years	≤ 5 years		
> 5 years MLS	None	≤ 5 years		
CSMLS PARTIALLY RECOGNIZED*				
Five (5) disciplines:				
> 5 years MLS	> 5 years	> 5 years	Not Equivalent	• Refresher or Subject specific Course required
> 5 years MLS	> 5 years	None		• Refresher or Subject Specific Course required
> 5 years MLS	None	> 5 years		• Refresher required • Clinical training recommended
Four (4) disciplines:				
Recency: any of the above			Not Equivalent 1 comprehensive gap	• 2 theory courses required (one from 2 different institutions) • Clinical training recommended
CSMLS NOT RECOGNIZED				
≤ 5 years MLS	None	None	Not Equivalent – more than 1 comprehensive gap	Full EQual™ accredited Canadian program (bridging programs are NOT acceptable for this requirement)
Other: No MLS or 1-3 disciplines	Other: No MLS or 1-3 disciplines	None		
Other: No MLS or 1-3 Disciplines	Other: No MLS or 1-3 disciplines	≥ 5 years		

*Certification obtained by AMT or ASCP (within the last 5 years) will be considered.

Appendix 2: Using the CSMLS PLA Portal

CSMLS has a PLA Portal for where potential Clients can open a PLA account and submit their application online. Instructions for accessing the PLA Portal are below.

Please contact pla@csmls.org if problems are encountered when following these instructions.

The PLA Portal allows Clients to have their supporting documents submitted directly by uploading them to their PLA account. Official documents must be uploaded directly into a PLA Client's file by the submitting institution. Unofficial documents can be uploaded in their PLA account by the Client.

CSMLS will continue to accept PLA documents that are emailed/mailed to the office, but the processing time for these submission methods may be longer than the online method.

Go to the [Supporting Documents section](#) for more information on submitting supporting documents.

Step 1 – Create a CSMLS Account

PLA Clients must have an active CSMLS account in order to apply for the PLA process.

Go to www.csmls.org and select “Login” at the top of the page.

The screenshot shows the CSMLS website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a search box, a 'Login' button (circled in red), and a 'Language' dropdown. Below the navigation bar is the CSMLS logo and the text 'Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science' and 'Société canadienne de science de laboratoire médical'. A horizontal menu contains links: 'About Us', 'Medical Laboratory Professionals', 'Membership', 'Certification', 'Professional Development', 'Advocacy', 'Research', and 'Career Centre'. The main content area is titled 'CSMLS Login'. It features a 'Username' field, a 'Password' field, and a 'Remember me on this computer' checkbox. A 'Log On' button is positioned below the password field. Below the 'Log On' button are two links: 'Forgot my username or password' and 'Forgot my password'. A red text block states: 'If you are or have ever been a CSMLS member please do not create a new account. Use the "Forgot my username or password" link to reset your password instead.' At the bottom of the login section, the link 'Create a new account' is circled in red.

If you already have a CSMLS account, log in.

If you do not have a CSMLS account yet, select “Create a new account”

Step 2 – Find your CSMLS ID number

Everyone who has a CSMLS account is assigned a CSMLS ID.

PLA Applicants must take note of their CSMLS ID as they will need it to apply for PLA, CSMLS membership, and for any other CSMLS inquiries.

Clients may decide if they wish to purchase membership to take advantage of PLA fee discounts, among other benefits of [CSMLS membership](#). See the CSMLS Membership section in the PLA Handbook for more information.

Step 3 – Set up an Online PLA Account

Go to the login page at <https://csmls.secure-platform.com/site/>.

For an initial online application submission, click on Start Application, fill out the fields as prompted, and select Register.

Program	Status	Deadline	Action
Prior Learning Assessment	Now Open	11/1/2025 11:59 PM	Start Application

Step 4 – Begin the Online PLA application

Verify the applicant information and select Save and Next.

Clients may now select the PLA designation they would like to apply for. If a Client wishes to apply for more than one (1) designation, they may submit an additional application once they have completed the first one. Fees are paid by PLA application type, that is, MLT General or MLA.

Complete the application based on the following details and actions.

Only sections that will have documentation being sent for PLA are required to be reported on this part of the application.

Select **Save** if the application is not yet completed and being finalized at a later time or **Save and Finalize** if the application is ready for submission to CSMLS.

Table 5. Application form details and actions

Details	Actions
Application Type	Select the designation being applying to PLA for
Digital Signature	Sign with a mouse or touchscreen
Date	Select the date the application is being submitted
MLT Fee Selection	Choose whether fees are being paid by credit card online (a link will be emailed within 4 weeks of application being submitted) or by mailing a cheque or money order.
PCRB Upload	Complete the PCRB and upload the completed file as a PDF
Credential Evaluation	Select the credential evaluation organization and include the client number so CSMLS can upload the report to the file once received.
Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) Education	Select the Add MLT Education button to add experience to this section of the application. Clients may add more than 1.
Clinical MLT Education (Practicum/Internship)	Select the Add MLT Internship button to add experience to this section of the application. Clients may add more than 1.
Other Relevant Education, MLT related	Select the Add Other MLT Education button to add experience to this section of the application. Clients may add more than 1. Experiences listed under MLT Education do not need to be repeated here. MLT files also do not require any MLA level education.
Continuing Education, MLT Related	Select the Add Continuing Education button to add experience to this section of the application. Clients may add more than 1.
Professional MLT Certification	Select this if you have proof of professional certification/licensure in medical laboratory technology from another country.
Professional Development, MLT Related	Download, fill out and upload the provided continuing professional development list.
Clinical Work Experience, MLT ONLY	Select the Add MLT Work Experience button to add experience to this section of the application. Clients may add more than 1.

Step 5 – Updating or Complete the PLA Application

If a PLA applicant already has an online PLA account with an application started, and they want to update something or continue with the application submission, they may log into their account using the credentials created in Step 3.

Program	Status	Deadline	Action
Prior Learning Assessment	Now Open	11/1/2025 11:59 PM	Start Application
Current Timezone: Eastern Time (US & Canada)			

Follow the instructions in Step 4 for continuing and completing the application submission.

Step 6 – CSMLS Office Review of a Completed PLA Application

The office will review all completed PLA application submissions and within 3 weeks will send an email asking applicants to either edit their details or submit their PLA fee.

Step 7 – PLA Fee Payment

PLA applicants who have indicated they would like to pay online will be sent a link to this payment method for PLA Stage 1. **DO NOT SHARE** this link as it has been generated for your specific file.

PLA applicants/Clients paying fees online will need their application number from their online PLA account to complete payment.

PLA Application fees being paid by Canadian money order or Canadian cheque will receive an update by email once this payment has been manually processed by the office.

Once PLA payments have been completely processed, the PLA file will be moved to the document submission stage, and a confirmation email will be sent to the applicant/Client.

Step 8 – Continuing the PLA Application – Document Submission

PLA applicants who have had their payment processed and confirmed will have a confirmation email sent with a link to log in and continue with their application for the document submission section.

In this section, PLA clients are required to indicate if they have documentation to submit for each section from the Application. Example:

I have MLT Education documents I need to submit *

☒ Yes

☐ No

If the client has indicated experience in the application form previously submitted for a

January 1, 2027: CSMLS MLT PLA Stage 1 Applications will be discontinued.
January 1, 2029: General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued.

section, then “Yes” must be selected. If there was nothing added to a section in the application form, then “No” is to be selected.

You will need to indicate in your application on the PLA Platform how these documents are being sent to CSMLS. There are three options for document submission.

Upload: If selected, this allows the PLA Client to input the name and email of the person who will upload the official supporting documents directly to the PLA Platform. Submissions must be from an institutional email address (public use addresses such as gmail and yahoo are not accepted for any official supporting document submission for PLA). The email entered will receive a direct request and link to upload the documents. This is the quickest form of submission.

Email: If selected, this indicates that an official representative from the institution will email the official supporting documents to pla@csmls.org according to the policies outlined in this handbook. NOTE: Emailed submissions must be from an institutional email address (public use addresses such as gmail and yahoo are not accepted for any official supporting document submission for PLA).

Mail: If selected, this indicates the documents will be sent directly to CSMLS according to the policies outlined in this handbook.

MLT Education 1

- ☐ Mail in
☐ Email
☒ Upload

Document Upload

Use the submission request below to have the institution submitting your official documents emailed a link where they can upload your documents directly to CSMLS.

Ensure you include the correct name and email of the staff or department submitting your documents on your behalf.

If you select this option, do not have these documents emailed or mailed to our office, we will not process or expect them.

Please note we do not accept emailed documents from non-institutional email addresses (gmail, yahoo, outlook, etc.).

Full Name

Email

If a PLA client listed more than 1 experience for any section, they can repeat the steps from above up to 5 times per section.

January 1, 2027: CSMLS MLT PLA Stage 1 Applications will be discontinued.
January 1, 2029: General MLT PLA and Exam services will be discontinued.

Step 9 – File and Document Status Updates

PLA Clients who have documents being mailed or emailed will receive an email alert when a document has been added to their PLA Platform by CSMLS. The email will have a link to log in and clients may scroll to the appropriate section to see what the CSMLS office has processed:

CSMLS Office Use: Documents Received
☐ MLT Education 1
☐ MLT Education 2
☐ MLT Education 3
☐ MLT Education 4
☐ MLT Education 5

Documents directly uploaded by the institution will have red front showing the document was uploaded by the institution.

MLT Education 1
☐ Mail in
☐ Email
☒ Upload
Document Upload
(Received)

Step 10 – Stage 2 Fee Payment

Once all documentation has been uploaded to the PLA Platform, another email will be sent with the payment link for the Stage 2 Payment. If a PLA Client selected to pay by money order or cheque, then they will be notified by the CSMLS office via email to mail the second payment.

Step 11 – Assessment and Unofficial Report Decision

PLA Clients will be sent an email confirming their assessment has been completed and their unofficial report is ready to be reviewed. Clients are asked to log in, review their unofficial copy and choose one of 3 options:

Assessment Decision Options

Based on your results outlined in the document above, how would you like to proceed?

- ☐ I accept my technical report outcome
- ☐ I would like to appeal the assessment decision
- ☐ I would like to request a supplemental document review
- ☐ I would like to request a full re-assessment

If a PLA client selects they accept the outcome, CSMLS will assume they are proceeding with the instructions provided in their report and will prepare the official copy for mailing.

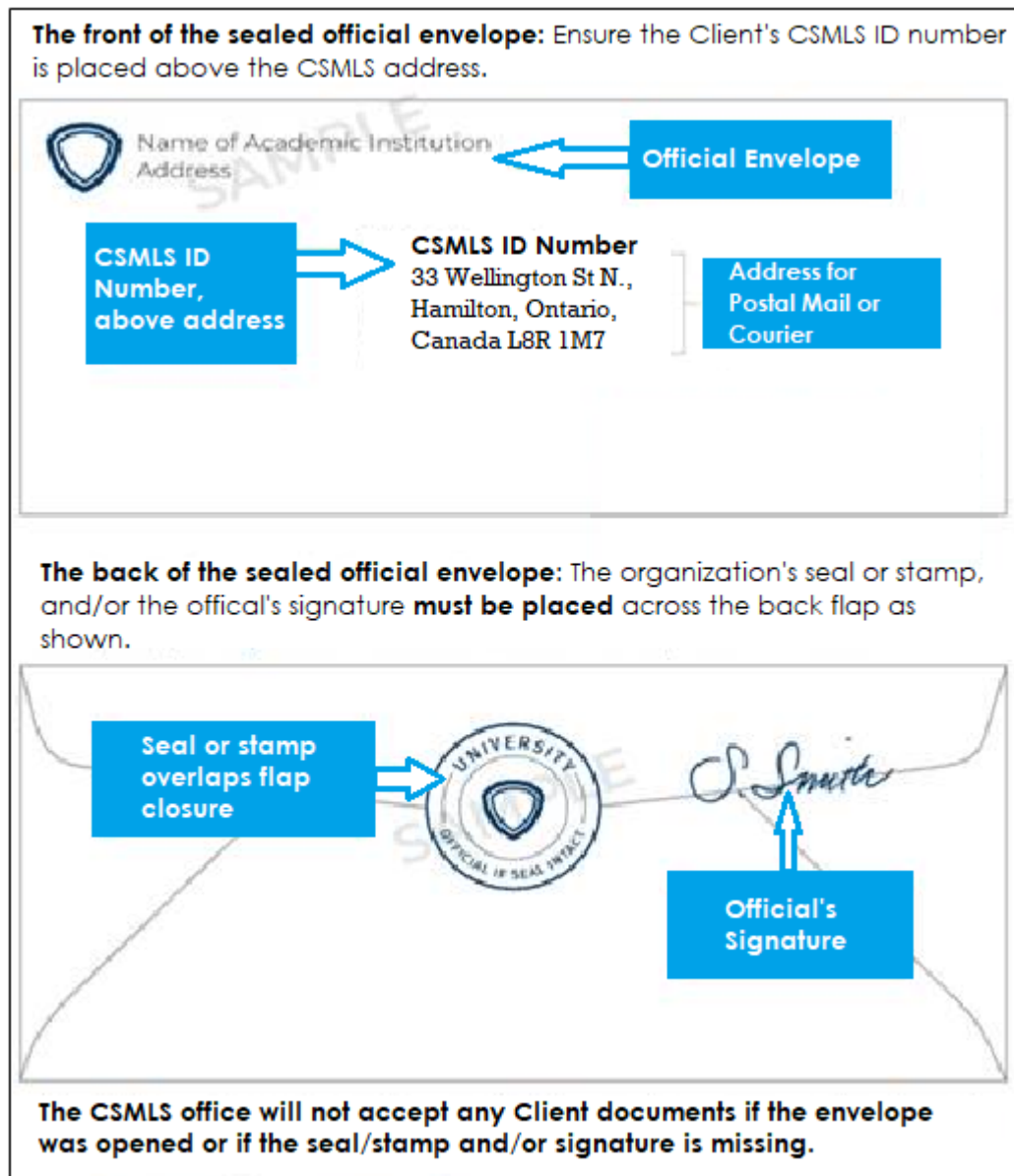
Please refer to the sections in this handbook for information on appeal, supplemental or stage 2 assessments.

Appendix 3: CSMLS Required PLA Documentation Checklist

- ☐ **Personal Competency Rating Booklet:** Fill this as accurately and honestly as possible and add information that corresponds to clinical MLT work experience or MLT education, including instrument/equipment experience.
- ☐ **Credential Evaluation:** The issuing credential evaluation service must send the evaluation directly to the CSMLS (WES or ICES).
- ☐ **Language Proficiency (if required):** The issuing institution must send the test results directly to the CSMLS. CLB 6 to begin the PLA process, CLB 8 to complete.
- ☐ **MLT Didactic Education:** Educational institution(s) must send these documents directly to the CSMLS.
 - ☐ Official Educational Transcripts
 - ☐ Course Outlines/Syllabus of Studies
- ☐ **MLT Clinical Education** (practicum/internship): An official representative from the educational institution or laboratory must send documentation directly to the CSMLS.
- ☐ **MLT Clinical Work Experience:** Each employing institution must send a detailed letter describing the Client's clinical work experience directly to the CSMLS.
- ☐ **Other Academic Education, MLT related only (if applicable):** Educational institutions must send official transcripts and course outlines directly to the CSMLS.
- ☐ **Continuing Education, MLT related only (if applicable):** Educational institutions must send official transcripts and course outlines directly to the CSMLS.
- ☐ **Professional Development, MLT related only (if applicable):** For seminars and workshops, Clients may submit copies of their certificates.
- ☐ **Professional MLT Certification only (if applicable):** The professional certification association must send proof of professional certification and status, directly to the CSMLS.

Appendix 4: Example of Official Envelope Requirements

Figure 3. Sealed Official Envelope Requirements



Appendix 5: Micro Loans for Internationally Educated Applicants

Various provincial governments offer bursaries and grants to internationally educated health professionals living in their province. An internet search for the various provinces will come up with a list of provincially funded programs; alternatively, you can contact any of the [Canadian provincial regulatory bodies](#) to ask if there is a grant or bursary program that you can take advantage of in their province.

Immigrants to Canada may be eligible to get a loan to help pay for the costs of Canadian certification or required training/education to be able to work in an individual's pre-immigration career. Please contact the program listed for more information.

NATIONAL

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