This handbook contains information required to apply for the entry level CSMLS National Certification Examination

CEXM-048-H1 2020-JAN
The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is the national certifying body for Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT) and Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLA), and the national professional association for Canada's Medical Laboratory Professionals (MLPs).

As such, to maintain fairness to all candidates and clients, CSMLS does not allow visitors at the CSMLS office, documents are not accepted at the door.

The CSMLS is not a regulatory body nor does it provide licensure to practice in Canada.

Before applying for the CSMLS National Certification Examination (Exam), the candidate must read and understand all the policies and regulations outlined in this handbook.

By signing the paper application or completing the online application form, the candidate agrees to all of these policies and regulations.

Failure to do so may result in a loss of eligibility to write the Exam or may result in the candidate’s Exam not being marked.

Candidates are responsible for making sure the current version(s) of documents and application form(s) are used.

Updates can be found on the CSMLS website (www.csmls.org).

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General Information

Carefully Read the Entire Handbook Before Applying.

The Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is the national certifying body for Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT) and Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLA), and the national professional association for Canada’s Medical Laboratory Professionals (MLPs).

Mission

To advance the medical laboratory profession through certification, education, and advocacy.

CSMLS promotes and maintains a nationally accepted standard of the Medical Laboratory profession by which other health professionals and the public are assured of effective laboratory services. CSMLS promotes, maintains and protects the professional identity and interests of MLPs and of their profession.

The CSMLS is committed to continuing to build a clearly focused and proactive advocacy strategy. MLPs deserve a voice that recognizes our profession’s strong contribution to the core of Canadian health care. Our advocacy efforts are focused on two main audiences: the government and the public.

Reciprocity

The CSMLS does not offer reciprocity with any university or college, or with any other country. The candidate’s education and experience in another country do not automatically make them eligible to write the CSMLS National Certification Examination (referred to as “Exam” herein).

CSMLS and the Canadian Provincial Medical Laboratory Technologist Regulatory Authorities

The CSMLS provides the competency-based Exam for the medical laboratory profession in Canada on behalf of the Canadian provincial Medical Laboratory Technologist (MLT) regulatory authorities and for those regions of the country that are not currently regulated.

In provinces with an MLT regulatory authority, the MLT regulatory authority registers applicants who meet provincial registration requirements and regulates the practice of the profession, as delegated.

The CSMLS has Exam and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) service agreements with each MLT regulatory authority (with the exception of Quebec) which recognizes this Exam as an entry-to-practice requirement into the Canadian medical laboratory profession.

All Canadian provincial MLT regulatory authorities are members of the Canadian Alliance of Medical Laboratory Professionals Regulators (CAMLPR) and any non-regulated provincial medical laboratory technology associations are invited to participate as CAMLPR observers.

CAMLPR and CSMLS Certification Forum

The CAMLPR and CSMLS Certification Forum (Certification Forum) is responsible for all matters relating to national MLT certification and PLA standards and policies. Further, the Certification Forum discusses matters related to MLT certification to ensure national consistency in MLT entry-to-practice competencies and nationally consistent application of PLA standards and policies.
Exam Attempt Policy

The Exam policy determines when a candidate must attempt the Exam and the number of times any candidate can attempt it.

A candidate is expected to attempt the first Exam during the session closest to their eligibility date, for which registration is not yet open. If they do not attempt that Exam session, it may be considered a failed attempt.

If the candidate is not successful on their first attempt, they must complete their second attempt within twelve (12) months of their initial eligibility. If they do not, they will be placed into a Learning Plan as they will have lost their second attempt.

Example: A candidate became eligible to challenge the Exam on October 15, 2020. That candidate is expected to attend their first attempt at the February 2021 Exam session, registering before the deadline and paying all registration fees.

If that candidate’s first attempt was unsuccessful, they must register for their second attempt by October 15, 2021 or forfeit their second attempt, which will be counted as a second failed attempt, and they will be placed in a Learning Plan.

Candidates have three (3) attempts at the Exam. The first Exam cycle allows two (2) attempts to challenge the Exam. After two (2) unsuccessful attempts, the Exam candidate enters the second Exam cycle where they must re-establish their eligibility to take the Exam. An Exam candidate must successfully complete a Learning Plan before they will be allowed to challenge their third and final Exam attempt.

Candidates cannot exceed three (3) Exam attempts. If a candidate is unsuccessful in their third Exam attempt, they can no longer gain eligibility to take the Exam.

To become eligible to take the Exam again, a candidate must successfully complete a different, full EQual™ accredited Medical Laboratory educational program than the last one they attended.

If the candidate successfully completes this additional Educational Program, they will become eligible to challenge the Exam again within two (2) exam cycles for a total of three (3) attempts.

Certification Time and Attempt Limits

Candidates cannot write the Exam more than two (2) times within twelve (12) months after receiving initial eligibility (see Eligibility Requirements). After two (2) unsuccessful attempts, candidates will need to complete a Learning Plan in order to re-establish eligibility to write the third and final Exam attempt.

If candidates fail their second Exam attempt, a Learning Plan will be sent to the candidate, which must be completed by the date indicated in the Learning Plan.

If a candidate misses their second attempt, it will be considered a failed attempt and they will no longer be eligible to challenge the Exam. They will be automatically placed into a Learning Plan.

Once the candidate completes their Learning Plan there will be one (1) additional attempt at the Exam, for a total of three (3) eligible Exam attempts.
If the candidate does not complete their Learning Plan before it expires, the candidate will no longer be eligible to challenge the Exam, they will have forfeited their third and final Exam attempt.

Manitoba MLT Exam Candidates

Effective January 1, 2018, the College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Manitoba (CMLTM), the provincial regulator, has final authority on the eligibility of all MLT Exam candidates writing in Manitoba.

This affects all MLT Exam candidates writing in the province of Manitoba. CSMLS recommends that Manitoba candidates contact CMLTM to ensure they are able to write the MLT Exam in Manitoba.

Even though a candidate has met the CSMLS eligibility requirements, the CMLTM also requires candidates to meet language proficiency requirements.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the CMLTM office, phone: 204-231-0311 or: 877-331-0311, fax: 204-489-7300, email: adam@cmltm.ca, tricia@cmltm.ca, or janelle@cmltm.ca.

Eligibility Requirements

First Exam Cycle

The first Exam cycle is made up of two Exam attempts. If a candidate was not successful in their first attempt, they may have a second attempt without having to re-establish eligibility, within the set time frame.

Initial Eligibility

There are two ways to become initially eligible to write the Exam:

1. **EQual™ Accredited* Canadian Medical Laboratory Educational Program Candidate**

   To be eligible to write the Exam, candidates must have successfully completed all EQual™ accredited Canadian medical laboratory educational program (referred to as “Educational Program” herein) requirements:
   
   - a minimum of two (2) weeks before the Exam date; or
   - within the past twelve (12) months of graduation, never having previously registered for the same Exam.

   *This includes educational programs that are listed as “Accredited”, “Accredited with Condition”, or “Registered” on the Accreditation Canada website.

2. **Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) Candidate**

   To be eligible to write the Exam, candidates must have successfully completed the CSMLS Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process.
They must have received an “Eligibility Statement to the CSMLS Certification Examination”. This statement must be valid (not expired) for the Exam date to which they are applying.

The PLA process is intended for:

- those who have successfully completed an Educational Program that has not been EQual™ accredited; or
- successful completion of an Educational Program more than twelve (12) months prior to the Exam date, never having registered for an Exam; or
- Internationally Educated Medical Laboratory Technologists (IEMLT); or
- those currently working as non-CSMLS certified MLAs in Canada.

The PLA process is not available for internationally educated/trained MLAs.

Candidates wishing to apply for a PLA should read the PLA Handbook for the steps to follow.

**First Attempt**

A candidate’s first attempt at the Exam is granted depending on their recency to receiving eligibility as stated below.

**Recency** – registration for a candidate’s first Exam attempt must be within twelve (12) months of a candidate’s Initial Eligibility. All provincial regulators (with the exception of Quebec) will be looking for this when they review a client’s Technical Report.

Recency requirements are as follows:

**Successful Completion of an EQual™ Accredited Canadian Medical Laboratory Educational Program**

If the candidate has successfully completed an Education Program within the last twelve (12) months prior to Exam registration, they will be eligible to challenge their first attempt at the Exam.

If the candidate has successfully completed an Educational Program more than twelve (12) months ago, then they are not eligible to apply for or challenge the Exam; the candidate will need to apply for a Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) first. The PLA will determine if they are eligible to challenge the Exam based on their education, clinical training, and experience.

Candidates wishing to apply for a PLA should read the PLA Handbook for the steps to follow.

**Successful completion of the PLA process**

If the candidate has successfully completed a PLA and their Eligibility Statement has not expired prior to Exam registration, they will be eligible to challenge their first attempt at the Exam.

If the candidate’s Eligibility Statement has expired before they register for their first Exam attempt, they may have to apply for Stage 2 PLA again. Please see the PLA Handbook for more information.
Second Attempt

If the candidate was not successful on their first Exam attempt, they are eligible to write the Exam a second time within their eligible time frame (see ‘Exam Attempt Policy’ section). Candidates will be required to apply and pay for the next Exam by registering online or by sending in a paper application with the correct fee.

If the candidate does not apply for their second attempt within this time frame, this Exam attempt will be lost and it will be considered a fail.

After two (2) unsuccessful attempts (whether attended or not) the candidate is placed into the Second Exam Cycle. They must re-establish eligibility by successfully completing a Learning Plan, as outlined below, in order to write a third and final Exam attempt.

Re-Establishing Eligibility to the Exam

The CSMLS will review the candidate’s past Exam performance to identify areas of weakness. Once these have been identified, the candidate will be issued a Learning Plan. The candidate will be required to successfully complete this Learning Plan if they want to challenge the Exam again.

Learning Plans

Learning Plans are issued after two (2) unsuccessful Exam attempts and are based on a review of all available Exam attempts. The candidate will receive their Learning Plan by email and will have to complete their Learning Plan if they want to write the Exam again. Once the candidate completes their Learning Plan and CSMLS receives all the required documents proving successful completion, it is reviewed; if deemed complete, the candidate will be issued an Eligibility Statement.

This Eligibility Statement will grant the candidate one (1) final attempt to the next available Exam session. Candidates will be given one (1) year to complete the Learning Plan.

NOTE: If the candidate does not complete the Learning Plan by the time it expires, they will no longer be eligible to challenge the Exam.

Second Exam Cycle

Third and Final Attempt

After the Learning Plan is complete and all transcripts and documents, showing successful completion of this plan, have been received by the CSMLS, the candidate's file will be reviewed for Exam eligibility. The candidate's file review can take four (4) to six (6) weeks.

If the Learning Plan has been deemed complete, an Eligibility Statement for the next available Exam session will be issued to the candidate. This Exam session will be a date where registration has not yet opened to provide the candidate with time to prepare for the Exam.

Candidates are NOT TO APPLY for a third Exam attempt until they have received their Eligibility Statement.
Applied for Exam but Not Eligible

Candidates who have not successfully completed an Educational Program will have their Exam registration cancelled (see ‘Verification of Eligibility’ section below and ‘Cancellation Policy’ section).

If candidates in a Learning Plan apply for the Exam without waiting for their Eligibility Statement, and are deemed Not Eligible (see ‘Second Exam Cycle’ section above), their Exam registration will be cancelled and they may lose this attempt (see ‘Cancellation Policy’ section).

Verification of Eligibility for All Candidates

The eligibility of ALL Exam candidates is verified before the Exam takes place.

If candidates do not meet eligibility requirements, their Exam registration will be cancelled, they may lose the full registration fee and they may lose one Exam attempt (see ‘Cancellation Policy’ section).

Loss of Exam Attempts

If candidates who have had their eligibility requirements verified as successfully completed or have a valid Eligibility Statement, register for an Exam and cancel it, OR they do not show up for their Exam, it may be considered a loss of an eligible attempt.

Eligible Non-Residents of Canada (MLT only)

Non-residents of Canada who have been declared eligible for the Exam through the CSMLS PLA process will need to:

1. Send in a completed Exam Application by email, mail, or fax (do not apply online).
2. Pay the non-resident Exam fee.

A non-resident of Canada is someone who:

- normally, customarily, or routinely lives in another country and is not considered a resident of Canada; or
- does not have significant residential ties in Canada and lives outside Canada throughout the tax year; or
- stays in Canada for less than 183 days in the tax year.

These candidates will not be allowed to write the Exam if false information is included on the Exam Application form. This includes providing a false address to avoid paying non-resident Exam fees.

Proof of residency, a copy of a current tax form, or alternative documents may be required to prove Canadian residency.
Special Circumstances for Non-Residents of Canada

An eligible MLT Exam candidate who is a non-resident of Canada and is unable to obtain a Visa to come to Canada to write their Exam is asked not to register for the Exam.

Candidates MUST NOT register for the Exam if they HAVE NOT obtained a Visa to Canada.

If the candidate cannot make it to Canada to write their first Exam attempt within twelve (12) months after receiving initial eligibility to the Exam (the date is indicated on the Eligibility Statement) they may be eligible for a ONE TIME, Exam deferral. The candidate must contact the CSMLS office within this time frame at exam@csmls.org, to request a deferral form. When the completed form is received with the applicable fees, the office will determine whether a deferral will be granted. Current and appropriate documented proof will be required.

If granted, deferrals may vary from one Exam session to an additional twelve (12) months, from the date of expiry listed on the Eligibility Statement, depending on the circumstances.

If non-resident candidates cannot attend the Exam within the required time frame, they will be required re-establish their Exam eligibility by applying for Stage 2 PLA. This will only be considered if they have never challenged the Exam previously. If they meet all the Stage 2 criteria, they may be granted a new eligibility statement, under the same policies as above.

Please see the PLA Handbook for more information.

Exam Information

Exam Application Requirements

Exam candidates are required to submit a completed application form online, by email, fax, or mail. Exam candidates are responsible for ensuring that their Exam application is received by the CSMLS office on time.

Paper applications must be postmarked or received in our office prior to the registration deadline.

Paper applications received with a postmark after the application deadline will not be processed; however, applications postmarked prior to the registration deadline will be accepted.

CSMLS is not responsible for lost or misdirected mail. It is recommended that paper applications be sent via courier service for proper tracking.

Paper applications must be filled out completely and include the correct Exam fee or the application will not be processed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing/Courier Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 Wellington Street North, Hamilton, ON L8R 1M7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The current Exam fees* and dates* can be found at:


*All Exam fees and dates are subject to change without notice.

**Applicant’s Statement**

Candidates must read and complete this section of the Exam application; otherwise, their application will not be accepted.

By signing the paper application or completing the online application, candidates agree to abide by the following statements:

- I declare that the above information is true and hereby apply to write the CSMLS National Certification Examination;
- I understand that final acceptance to the CSMLS National Certification Examination depends on successfully meeting all eligibility requirements;
- I understand there is a non-refundable administration fee;
- I understand the registration fee does not include a certificate copy.

**Exam Registration Payments**

Exam candidates must submit their full Exam fees in Canadian funds with their Exam application. Exam fees must be paid by **Canadian cheque, Visa, MasterCard or by American Express**. Other methods of payment are not accepted. Allow five (5) business days for fee processing.

Make cheques payable to the “Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science” or “CSMLS”. Payments returned for insufficient funds will be charged an NSF fee; candidates will be notified of NSF and their full payment must be received within fifteen (15) days of this notification.

**Testing Centres – Seat Scheduling**

Once candidates have successfully registered for the Exam, they will be provided with an eligibility ID number and a link with instructions to schedule their Exam seat time and location. This link will bring candidates to our Exam provider’s website where they will be able to log in with their eligibility ID number to schedule Exam time and location.

Candidates will be able to schedule their seat on the day that is indicated on their registration confirmation form.

Candidates are responsible for scheduling their Exam site and time at various Testing Centre locations across Canada. Space is limited at some Exam sites and **preferred Exam sites and times cannot be guaranteed**; registering early will help candidates choose their best seat location and time.

Go to the CSMLS-Prometric webpage at https://www.prometric.com/test-takers/search/csmls, click ‘Schedule’ on the left-hand ribbon and proceed to enter the correct information.
Candidates are responsible for finding their own way to the correct Testing Centre location and are responsible for parking. CSMLS is not responsible for any travel/accommodation arrangements made by candidates.

The CSMLS reserves the right to:

- Cancel or not open an Exam site if there are fewer than five (5) candidates
- Assign Exam site
- Monitor Exam sites

**What to Bring to the Testing Centre**

Candidates must bring current, valid, government-issued photo identification (ID), such as a driver’s license or passport. The first and last names on their Exam registration must match their government ID. Candidates will NOT be admitted to the Exam without presenting this government ID.

**What Time to Arrive at the Testing Centre**

Arrive at least thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled appointment to allow time for check-in procedures.

**Rescheduling Exam Time or Testing Centre Location**

Eligible candidates who want to reschedule the time or Testing Centre location of their Exam appointment may do so while locations and times are available.

Go to the CSMLS-Prometric webpage, click ‘Reschedule’ on the left-hand ribbon and proceed to enter the correct information.

There are various limitations to rescheduling an Exam location/time. Please see the CSMLS ‘Service Fees’ found at the bottom of the CSMLS Dates and Fees webpage for the current Rescheduling fees.

**NOTE:** CSMLS only allows the rescheduling of Exam locations and times on the CSMLS-Prometric website. Exams cannot be cancelled on this website. Candidates wishing to cancel their exam should refer to the section titled ‘Cancellation Policy’ in this handbook.

**Late Arrival or Missed Appointment**

Candidates who arrive late, **less than thirty (30) minutes after** the scheduled Exam start time, will NOT be given extra time to finish the Exam.

Those who arrive **more than thirty (30) minutes after** the scheduled Exam start time or who miss their scheduled appointment, for any reason, will be considered a “no-show”; they will forfeit their entire Exam fee and lose one (1) Exam attempt, which will be considered a failed Exam attempt.

No-show candidates must reapply with the CSMLS office for a future Exam attempt. Candidates cannot reschedule a missed appointment for another Exam date.

Considerations for partial refunds are made for severe illness or extraordinary circumstances. **Proof must be submitted to the CSMLS office within seven (7) calendar days of the Exam date.**
Cancellation Policy

If registered candidates want to cancel their registration, they must cancel at least fourteen (14) days before the Exam date, in writing, to receive a partial refund of the Exam fee.

Canceling an Exam attempt may result in the loss of that attempt (considered a failed Exam attempt).

Candidates must complete and submit the Request for Exam Cancellation form to the CSMLS office at exam@csmls.org.

This form can be downloaded from the CSMLS website under ‘Exam Forms’.

For the current Cancellation fees, please check the CSMLS ‘Service Fees’ found at the bottom of the CSMLS Dates and Fees webpage.

NOTE: Candidates are NOT ALLOWED to cancel their Exam on the Prometric website. Cancelling an Exam can only be done by completing the CSMLS ‘Request for Exam Cancellation’ form and returning it to the office as stated above.

Unforeseen Circumstances

If an Exam is disrupted through circumstances beyond the control of the Exam Testing Centre, such as power failure or extreme weather, the Exam Testing Centre will contact the CSMLS about adjusting the timing of the Exam.

Illness or Other Extraordinary Circumstances Before or on Exam Day

On the Exam day, if candidates cannot reach the Testing Centre because of circumstances beyond their control or they are ill, they must contact the CSMLS office immediately, BEFORE the Exam begins, if possible. The CSMLS office can be contacted at exam@csmls.org or 1-800-263-8277.

Exam candidates who are ill or have extraordinary circumstances (including bereavement but excluding routine pregnancy) before the Exam day must contact the Certification office as soon as possible, BEFORE the Exam at exam@csmls.org or 1-800-263-8277.

The CSMLS will require official supporting documentation within seven (7) calendar days after notification. Supporting documentation may include doctor’s notes, the CSMLS Medical Form, death certificates and/or other documents, as applicable.

Medical documentation must be current and include a formal diagnosis of the specific illness/disability made by a qualified physician/psychologist.

If candidates provide notification by this deadline, their situation will be reviewed, they may be refunded a portion of the Exam fee and/or have their Exam attempt reinstated. Exam fee refunds and Exam attempt reinstatements will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Change of Information

If candidates change their name or contact information (address, telephone number or email), notification must be sent in writing as soon as possible using the Change of Information Request form. The form can be found online at csmls.org. Official supporting documentation must be provided with your form.

**Unless the Change of Information Request form is sent, all Exam correspondence, including Exam results, will be sent to the address written on the Exam application.**

Choice of Language

Candidates can take the Exam in English or French (Clinical Genetics available only in English).

- The Exam will be in the language indicated on the application;
- The candidate will not have access to the alternative language, ONLY the language indicated on their application form.

If a change of language is required, the candidate must contact the Certification department (exam@csmls.org or 1-800-263-8277) before Exam registration closes. A change of language preference **will not be considered after Exam registration closes.**

Exam Service Fees

The CSMLS has several non-refundable service fees that may apply to candidates.

‘Service Fees’ are found at the bottom of the [CSMLS Dates and Fees](#) webpage.

Request for Special Accommodation (Disability, Religious)

The CSMLS is committed to providing accessible and equitable services to all Exam candidates, including administering the Exam in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities and/or religious observations. The CSMLS will make the Exam accessible to every extent possible, this includes making special accommodations for candidates who have provided evidence of these needs.

In reviewing accommodation requests, the CSMLS must balance the rights of the individual Exam candidate with its mandate to protect the public interest through a fair, secure, valid and reliable Exam.

The CSMLS has the right to approve or deny requests for special accommodation. If a request is approved, candidates may be required to take the Exam at a location determined by the CSMLS.

**Requests must be received before the desired Exam registration opens, they will not be considered after this date.**
Special Accommodation Requirements

If a candidate has a request for special accommodation, they must contact the Certification Department at exam@csmls.org before registering for the Exam in order for the request to be considered.

Requests received after registration opens will not be considered.

Candidates must complete the CSMLS Exam Accommodation Request form and include official supporting documentation (medical or religious) with their application.

Medical documents must be current (see below) and include a formal diagnosis of the specific disability formulated by an authorized physician/psychologist. Additionally, the CSMLS Medical Verification - Exam Accommodation form must be completed and sent in to the Certification Department at exam@csmls.org.

Official supporting documentation (which may include records, reports, evaluations, etc.) must be submitted to verify the candidate’s disability and any accommodation history for review. The documentation must include a specific diagnosis.

Official supporting documentation must not be more than six (6) months old for psychiatric and recent physical disabilities, five (5) years for long-term disabilities and three (3) years for all other disabilities.

The application must be submitted, by email at exam@csmls.org or through the post or courier, as soon as possible, to ensure the CSMLS office can select the best location for the accommodation, if approved.

Requests received after Exam registration opens will not be considered.

Discrimination Policy

The CSMLS is committed to providing an Exam process that is free from any type of discrimination*, which supports the productivity and dignity of Exam candidates.

*Discrimination is unequal treatment on the basis of prohibited grounds, which may include age, race, sex, religion/creed, sexual orientation, physical or mental handicap, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, marital or family status, and record of offences.

Exam Conduct

Candidate behaviour before, during and after the Exam cannot disturb other candidates or cause them anxiety.

Candidates are not to make disruptive comments about the Exam, unnecessarily question Exam policies and procedures, or engage in other behaviour that could disturb other candidates at the Exam session.

Poor or disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the Exam. If a candidate is removed from the Exam, they will lose that Exam attempt and will not receive a refund.
Cheating

Cheating will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the Exam. If a candidate is removed from the Exam, that Exam attempt will be lost and there will not be a refund or credit.

It is assumed that candidates are writing the Exam in good faith and in an honest attempt to pass the Exam. Any actions or behaviours violating this assumption will be considered “cheating”. This includes anything that could affect any current or future candidate results. It also includes but is not limited to the following examples:

- Non-registered individuals posing as registered Exam candidates;
- Bringing study materials to the Exam room(s), or any other material that has not been expressly permitted;
- Giving or receiving help during the Exam;
- Engaging in any conduct during the Exam that disturbs or is disrespectful towards other candidates or Exam invigilators or Testing Centre staff;
- Removing or trying to remove Exam materials from the Exam site;
- Modification of documents in order to give the false impression of having passed the Exam;
- Any activity that would be considered illegal, such as assault, harassment, or theft.

Actions in the Event of Suspected Cheating

If the staff at the Testing Centre suspect that a candidate is cheating, the staff may remove them from the Exam room and may make them leave the Exam site. Suspected cheating will be reported to the CSMLS Certification Department by the Testing Centre.

The CSMLS Certification Department conducts investigations into all suspected cheating incidents. The candidate will have the opportunity to submit a written response to the suspicion of cheating via regular post or by email.

A formal investigation and review process will take place. The candidate may be required to provide additional information during the investigation and review process.

Once a decision has been made, the candidate will be informed by email. The decision may include, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- Exam is marked as usual;
- Exam candidate receives eligibility to challenge the next Exam without charge;
- Exam is not marked and the candidate loses this Exam attempt;
- Exam candidate is permanently banned from writing the Exam;
- Exam candidate faces legal action.

The CSMLS reserves the right to begin an investigation into suspected cheating at any time before, during, or after the Exam is administered.
After the Exam

There are hundreds of MLT and MLA candidates writing the Exam at each Exam session. Any discrepancies or invigilator/Training Centre concerns in this process must be investigated before any Exam is marked.

CSMLS performs numerous quality assurance measures and analyzes statistics based on each answered Exam question. Quality control checks are performed during and after marking to ensure accuracy. Finally, when quality assurance is complete, Exam results will be released to the candidates.

Exam Results

Results will be released within five to seven weeks of the Exam date. A statement of results will be sent to the address provided on the candidate’s application form, unless they send a Name and/or Address Change form.

If a candidate does not receive their result within sixty (60) days of the Exam, they MUST contact the CSMLS Certification office, at exam@csmls.org or 1-800-263-8277. Candidates will be required to pay a service fee for duplicate copies.

Under no circumstances will Exam results be given or discussed over the phone.

Exam results are reported as a “pass” or “fail”. Candidates who have passed the Exam will only receive the Exam pass mark. Unsuccessful candidates will receive both their Exam score and the Exam pass mark.

CSMLS establishes the pass mark for each Exam; therefore, the success criteria are different for each Exam.

All MLT Exam results are shared with the provincial MLT Regulator Colleges in Canada (with the exception of Quebec); this includes the number of Exam attempts.

Scoring the Exam

Every Exam has a “pass mark”, which is the total percentage score each candidate must reach to pass. Anyone who achieves this mark passes the Exam, and there is no limit to the number of candidates who can pass.

The pass mark, which is set by the Angoff method, varies from Exam to Exam depending on the difficulty of that particular Exam. The CSMLS uses a Double Modified Angoff Process that requires demographically-selected expert judges to discuss the issues involved in determining a pass mark and to evaluate the Exam by using a well-defined and rational procedure.

The purpose of this process is to determine the cut score (pass rate) required to identify a minimally competent MLP for each Exam. In this process, the Exams have been reviewed and accepted by the Exam Panel (a voluntary panel of industry experts with geographical representation from across Canada, selected and approved by Canadian MLT regulators) prior to this process.

Health related agencies require registration/licensure for their professionals as one means of assuring the quality of practice. Currently, the Exam is the national requirement for entry to practice for all MLTs across Canada (with the exception of Quebec) and is also a requirement in some provinces for MLAs.
Setting the pass mark for an Exam is setting a standard of performance on which decisions will be made about an individual’s level of competence in a given field of practice. Determination of an appropriate pass mark is essential to the effectiveness of the process. The pass mark determination is a judgment made by informed individuals (i.e., experts in the field of practice), arrived at through a rational discussion of the field of practice and an awareness of the consequences involved when making a decision that affects individuals.

Additional Exam structure information can be found here: https://www.csmls.org/Certification/Certification-Exam/Exam-Structure.aspx.

If candidates pass the Exam, they will receive a “Statement of Examination Results” (either through the mail or the online dashboard) and an invitation to become a certified member of the CSMLS.

**CSMLS Certificate**

CSMLS Certificates are **only** available to full members in good standing only. The Application for Certificate and Membership can be completed online or sent via mail/courier to the office.

The CSMLS certificate will be sent **after** full membership with CSMLS is processed.

**Holding a certificate is a privilege of CSMLS membership. If membership is not renewed, the CSMLS certificate must be returned to the CSMLS, as written in the CSMLS bylaws.**

For any questions about membership, candidates may contact us by phone (905-528-8642 or 1-800-263-8277), email (info@csmls.org), or visit our website (www.csmls.org).
## Appendix I: Exam Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Exam</th>
<th>Number of Questions</th>
<th>Type of Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2.5 hours      | 150 questions including validation questions | • Multiple-choice questions  
• ONE answer is acceptable – choose the BEST one  
• ONE mark will be allotted for each correct answer  
• NO case studies  
• NO multiple-choice questions with – a & b, c & d, all of the above or none of the above |
| General MLT    |                     |                   |
| 3.5 hours      | 210 multiple-choice questions including validation questions | • Multiple-choice questions  
• ONE answer is acceptable – choose the BEST one  
• ONE mark will be allotted for each correct answer  
• NO case studies  
• NO multiple-choice questions with – a & b, c & d, all of the above or none of the above |
| Diagnostic Cytology |                   |                   |
| 3.5 hours      | 210 multiple-choice questions including validation questions | • Multiple-choice questions  
• ONE answer is acceptable – choose the BEST one  
• ONE mark will be allotted for each correct answer  
• NO multiple-choice questions with – a & b, c & d, all of the above or none of the above  
• NO case studies  
• Up to 60 images |
| Clinical Genetics |                 |                   |
| 3.5 hours      | Around 180 (±10) multiple-choice questions, approximately three (3) images for karyotyping, and includes validation questions.  
NOTE: Number of questions may vary depending upon image analysis charts and objective test. | • Section 1 contains 100 multiple choice questions, some with images.  
• Section 2 contains several case studies, some associated with images, with multiple choice questions.  
• Section 3 consists of three (3) case studies for chromosome analysis and karyotype reporting. They include multiple-choice questions to be answered on the computer platform, and paper-based images for analysis (labelling). |
Appendix II: CSMLS Testing Centre Rules

By participating in the CSMLS competency-based Exam, the candidate agrees to the following rules:

- The Exam and its contents are the exclusive property of the CSMLS;
- The candidate will not be allowed entry to the Exam without valid, government-issued photo ID;
- The candidate must arrive early sign into the Exam session at the Test Centre;
- The candidate must not bring in items, such as pens, pencils, highlighters, pencil cases, food, beverages (including water), notes, textbooks, cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers, watches or earplugs, into the Exam area. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Exam and an Exam attempt loss;
- The candidate will not be allowed to wear a watch, earplugs, hat or coat during the Exam, but can wear a sweater or hoodie without pockets. The candidate may be subject to a search;
- All items, including purses and backpacks, must be left at the locker provided by the Testing Centre. The CSMLS is not responsible for personal items;
- Both the candidate and their personal items may be subject to a search by staff at the Testing Centre;
- The candidate must accept the Exam Security Agreement before beginning the Exam on the computer at the Testing Centre. The candidate will NOT be able to begin the Exam if they do not accept it;
- The content of the Exam is confidential between the candidate and the CSMLS. It is not to be discussed or shared with anyone. The candidate cannot memorize or record any Exam questions for distribution;
- Once in the Exam room, talking is not permitted;
- If the candidate is found using notes or reference material of any kind, they will be sent out of the Exam immediately and their Exam will not be marked;
- The candidate will be constantly supervised at each Exam session and will be subject to video surveillance;
- If the candidate arrives less than 30 minutes late, they will not be given extra time to finish the Exam;
- If the candidate arrives more than 30 minutes late, they will not be allowed into the Exam which will result in a loss of an Exam attempt;
- Use the washroom before beginning the Exam, as candidates will have to sign out and back into the Exam room, and they may be subject to a search by staff at the Testing Centre. Candidates will not be given any extra time for this;
- The candidate’s computer will lock when the time is up.
1. Only a certain number of candidates can pass the Exam at any given session.

Every Exam has a “pass mark”, which is the total percentage score candidates must reach to pass. Anyone who achieves this mark passes the Exam, and there is no limit to the number of candidates who can pass. If everyone who writes the Exam achieves the pass mark, then everyone would pass!

The pass mark, which is set by the Angoff method, varies from Exam to Exam depending on the difficulty of that particular Exam. Candidates can find a detailed explanation of the Angoff method on the CSMLS website.

2. The Exam is easier in some provinces/cities than in others.

Exam candidates from each discipline, write the same Exam, on the same day, from Newfoundland and Labrador to British Columbia.

3. If I pass the MLA Exam, this automatically makes me eligible to write the MLT Exam.

No, there are only two ways to be eligible to challenge the MLT Exam:

- The first is to have successfully completed a full-time accredited* Canadian Medical Laboratory Technologist program (not an MLA program).
- The second is through successful completion of our Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process (based on previous MLT education and work experience).

4. The CSMLS Certification and PLA team writes the Exam questions.

CSMLS employees do not write Exam questions. We only provide administrative support to item writing workshops. A professional panel of knowledgeable and unbiased experts writes the Exam.

The CSMLS facilitates item writing workshops, ensuring the workshop trains volunteers on how to write and critique Exam questions. The panel is comprised of members who:

- are MLPs currently practicing in a clinical setting, both private and public, and have subject matter expertise in each discipline;
- reside across Canada to avoid regional bias;
- have French representation to ensure questions can be translated.

5. The Exam is harder for internationally-educated MLTs than Canadian educated.

Everyone writing an Exam at a particular session is writing the exact same Exam, no matter where they were educated or where in the country they are writing.

6. If I am unsuccessful on my Exam, I can wait to rewrite and skip the next available Exam.

If candidates are unsuccessful in passing the first Exam attempt, they are expected to re-apply and write one of the next two (2) available Exams.

The MLT regulators have allowed an Exam candidate to miss one Exam between attempts, without being penalized. The candidate MUST challenge their second attempt within twelve (12) months of initial eligibility; otherwise, they will lose their second attempt and it will be considered a fail.

7. There is no need to study for the first attempt.

It is in the candidate’s best interest to study for each Exam attempt. Remember, there are a limited number of attempts, three (3) in total. It is also important to use the competency profile, blueprint, and reference textbook list to help organize studying efforts.

8. There are six (6) people writing the Exam at my location so it should only take a week or so to get my results.

The marking process is much longer than most think, and as a result it could take over two months for receipt of results.

There are hundreds of MLT and MLA candidates writing the Exam. CSMLS, in tandem with our computer based vendor, perform numerous quality assurance measures and analyze statistics based on each Exam question.

When our quality assurance is complete, we will mail the results out. Our process can take up to forty-five (45) days to complete.

9. I must be a member of CSMLS to write the Exam.

Candidates don’t have to be a member to write the Exam, but there are several benefits of membership. One of them is receiving a discounted rate to write the Exam. Candidates can save on Exam fees with a CSMLS student membership.

10. There is a discount on the Exam fee for rewrites.

No, Exam fees are based solely on membership status.