

**UNBS LABORATORY RECOGNITION SCHEME A FREQUENTLY ASKED  
QUESTIONS (FAQs)**

**1. What is Laboratory recognition?**

Laboratory recognition is a formal acknowledgment by an authoritative third party that a laboratory is competent to provide specified technical tests or measurements following ISO/IEC 17025. UNBS operates a laboratory recognition scheme based on requirements of ISO/IEC 17025 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*, mainly to support the product certification scheme, which requires a product testing process before a product certification decision is taken.

**2. What is the scope of UNBS Laboratory recognition scheme? Which kind of laboratory testing services does UNBS recognize?**

UNBS laboratory recognition scheme applies to both testing and calibration laboratories (private and government) in a wide range of testing and calibration for example chemical analysis labs, microbiological analysis labs, hydro biological and toxicity labs, civil engineering testing labs, electrical and electronics testing labs, mechanical testing labs, environmental testing labs, heat and temperature testing labs, Calibration laboratories covering measurement fields such as Mass and Volume, Force, Temperature, Humidity, Dimensional, Electrical RF, Flow, Fiber Optics, Viscosity, Time and frequency, wind, photometry etc.

**3. What is the validity period granted for laboratory recognition?**

The laboratory recognition is valid for a period of 3 years from the time the recognition decision is taken by the UNBS Executive director.

**4. The laboratory recognition once attained, is there follow up made to ascertain effective implementation? Or is it a deal closed once obtained?**

Grant of recognition is followed by two surveillance audits during the 3-year recognition cycle to verify continued effective implementation and maintenance of the laboratory quality management system. Under special circumstances, surveillance audits may be increased. The first surveillance shall be conducted within 12 months from the date of the recognition decision, the second surveillance audit within 12 months from the first surveillance as per the Audit Programme CERT/SC/F07, (12:12 Rule).

**5. If a laboratory is recognised, is it still necessary for the laboratory to acquire accreditation?**

Yes, a recognised laboratory that is not yet accredited may still need to acquire accreditation. Laboratory Accreditation is a process by which an authoritative body (accreditation body) gives formal recognition of technical competence for specific tests/ measurements, based on third party assessment following ISO/IEC 17025 *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*.

UNBS is not an accreditation body but rather provides Laboratory recognition services to both public and private laboratories for purposes of primarily supporting the UNBS product certification scheme. UNBS laboratory recognition prepares laboratories for accreditation since the core criteria (ISO/IEC 17025) for both recognition and accreditation is the same. Both accredited and unaccredited laboratories are eligible for laboratory recognition by UNBS.

**6. Where can we find the list of recognised laboratories and their detailed scope of recognition?**

To access the list of recognised laboratories follow this link <https://unbs.go.ug/e-services/certified-systems/>.

and access the detailed scope of recognition for each recognised laboratory follow link <https://unbs.go.ug//content.php?src=scope-of-unbs-recognised-laboratories&pg=content>

**7. Will tests from accredited labs be recognised in the East African Community (EAC) partner states?**

Yes, it is possible if Uganda National Bureau of Standards recognises the accredited laboratory through the Laboratory recognition scheme. UNBS is the national body responsible for coordinating the EAC designation of testing and calibration laboratories in Uganda. Only designated laboratories can be used for testing of products and the test results are recognized as legitimate and authentic through the East African Community Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (Designation of Testing Laboratories) Regulations, 2013.

**8. Does the Laboratory recognition scheme also apply to laboratories within factory premises?**

Yes, the UNBS laboratory recognition scheme is open to all private and government laboratories in Uganda including laboratories in factory premises, manufacturing industries, research and development institutions, educational institutions etc.

**9. Once the Lab is recognized, is there any more need to continue submitting samples to UNBS for testing or the lab internal results are sufficient and can be used for certification?**

As per the UNBS product certification requirements, at least 2 passing product test results from UNBS or a UNBS Recognised laboratory is required to inform a certification decision. This means that a manufacturing facility with a recognised laboratory will submit its own test results for a certification decision as long the required product parameters are part of its recognition scope.

**10. Once a Lab is recognised, do they base on ISO, EAC or Ugandan standards testing methods?**

It is acceptable for a recognised laboratory to use internationally, regionally, nationally recognised/validated test methods as well as laboratory developed test methods provided that the requirements of ISO/IEC 17025:2017 are fulfilled in regards to validity of test methods.

**11. How can we start the laboratory recognition process?**

To start the laboratory recognition process, visit our website at [www.unbs.go.ug](http://www.unbs.go.ug) or Click on the link below and access the Laboratory Recognition Scheme (LRS) application forms <https://www.unbs.go.ug//content.php?src=certification-public-information&content>. After the application form has been fully filled, send to [systemscertification@unbs.go.ug](mailto:systemscertification@unbs.go.ug).

**12. What is the cost of acquiring UNBS Laboratory recognition?**

Currently, the average cost of acquiring UNBS laboratory recognition is 4,500,000UGX covering application fees, assessment fees and recognition certificate fees. The fees are payable to UNBS through the URA e- platform for payment of Non Tax Revenue (NTR).

**13. Benefits of Laboratory Recognition:**

**To the Laboratory**

1. Demonstrates good performance and competence of the laboratories, which puts the laboratory at an advantage to acquire and maintain recognition nationally, regionally and internationally.
2. It enhances the reliability of test results generated by the laboratory.
3. Business opportunity to invest in product testing.
4. The efficiency of the laboratory increases, customer complaints are reduced, the laboratory gains a strong competitive edge, and the operational expenditure is reduced.
5. Implementation and recognition of a laboratory based on ISO/IEC 17025 facilitates traceability of measurements and calibrations to optimum standards, establishes technical competency of staff, maintains a record of test equipment, ensures the accuracy of test results, validity and correctness of test and calibration methods, appropriate handling and movement of test items, and the quality of the testing environment and sampling
6. Creates a level playing ground for all laboratories in the same testing capacity.
7. Risks and opportunities identification and management.
8. Aids in failure investigation and resolution of complaints and disputes

**To the Manufacturers seeking certification**

1. Reduces turnaround time in acquiring credible test results by having a number of laboratories that are recognized by UNBS to provide credible results that can inform a certification decision.
2. Laboratory recognition provides options of laboratories for manufacturers to choose from taking into consideration costs of testing involved.

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- 3.** Quality control of manufactured goods during the manufacturing process and along the supply chain.