

Dear Applicant:

The Substantial Equivalency (SE) route to Medical Laboratory Technologist (MLT) registration is used only in unique circumstances, as determined through communication with Alberta Health and clinical laboratory employers. The SE process was developed to allow qualified individuals, typically in research positions, to transition into niche and esoteric clinical diagnostic areas of the laboratory where mandatory MLT registration applies. The CMLTA mandate is *patient safety and public protection*; therefore all applicants are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

It is important to understand the College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Alberta (CMLTA) does not have the resources to undertake Prior Learning Assessments nor is the CMLTA a certifying body – this is the work of the national professional association – the Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS). Since individuals who have not been educated or trained in a clinical laboratory do not qualify for assessment by CSMLS, the CMLTA has developed the SE route to MLT registration in keeping with provisions of the *Health Professions Act* (HPA). Internationally educated MLTs do not qualify for the SE process and must proceed through the CSMLS Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) process (www.csmls.org) to establish eligibility to challenge the CSMLS certification examination.

A number of pieces of documentation and an administration fee are required before the CMLTA can proceed with consideration of an applicant for MLT registration under the SE process. All applicants under the SE process must proceed in conjunction/collaboration with a current or prospective clinical laboratory employer. Specifically the employer must support the applicant with a signed letter of endorsement specifying the applicant's unique knowledge, training, skills, and abilities that are required in the laboratory and for the job for which the applicant is being hired. As per section 46 the HPA, mandatory registration and an MLT Practice Permit with the CMLTA are required if a person intends to provide one or more of the following:

- (i) professional services directly to the public;
- (ii) the manufacture of dental appliances or conducting of laboratory tests that are used by other regulated members to provide professional services directly to the public;
- (iii) food and nutrition professional services that are used by other regulated members and individuals to provide services directly to the public;
- (iv) the teaching of the practice of a regulated profession to regulated members or students of the regulated profession;
- (v) the supervision of regulated members who provide professional services to the public.

Since applicants under the SE route to MLT registration do not have clinical laboratory education and training, there may be significant liability issues of which the employer must also be aware. Employers have a legislated obligation (section 47 of the HPA) to ensure employees

who come under the MLT mandatory registration provisions, are in possession of a valid registration and MLT Practice Permit prior to assuming their duties and responsibilities. Section 48 of the HPA outlines the consequences of non-compliance with mandatory registration.

The CMLTA has partnered with SAIT for the development of a general knowledge examination. This examination is available and mandatory for all SE applicants. All applicants under the SE process who have not had formal MLT education or clinical training will be required to demonstrate “general knowledge” and understanding of clinical laboratory practice by successfully completing this examination. The examination focuses on topics related to the areas of specimen collection and handling, infection control and safety, and quality management – core components of an MLT’s formal post-secondary education.

Applicants approved for MLT registration under the SE process are subject to conditions and restrictions as determined by the CMLTA. Unlike CSMLS certified registrants, applicants approved under the SE process for MLT registration are restricted to employer, job description, and area of practice. Successful applicants granted MLT registration under the SE provision do not have employment portability.

The three step SE process is outlined below and is in compliance with current legislation and CMLTA policy:

Step 1:

- Complete SE Application Form and payment of a \$1000.00 Administration fee.
- Evidence of a Canadian post-secondary degree with appropriate specialization in a course/program of studies related to the clinical laboratory environment, relevant techniques/technologies/methodologies, and intended area of professional practice.
- Original transcripts sent directly from all educational institutions.
- Current curriculum vitae, which includes a minimum of two years post-graduate work experience which developed a specific skill set related to the position for which SE MLT registration is required.
- Copy of a current or proposed job description where the defined duties and responsibilities are consistent with the duties of a regulated MLT coming under the provisions of mandatory registration/regulation.
- Employer letter of support and endorsement for the applicant being considered for MLT registration under the SE process (this letter must verify the employer is in support of the application going forward for review, assessment, and decision under current legislation, and must outline how credentials, knowledge, skills, expertise, and abilities are required in the laboratory and where mandatory MLT registration applies).

Step 2:

- If the applicant has successfully fulfilled all the above requirements in Step 1, a letter will be sent requesting specific information/documentation (on a case-by-case basis) with a specified deadline date for returning the balance of supporting documentation to the office to ensure a timely review by the CMLTA.
- Additional documentation may include:
 - Detailed course/practicum outlines including the course objectives to be achieved in each and that pertain to the degree program generally, specialty area and area of practice in the clinical laboratory, and/or laboratory general knowledge areas specifically quality assurance (statistics, method validation, establishing control ranges, etc), specimen collection and handling (verification of sample integrity and

- recognizing how an unacceptable sample may affect test results), and infection control and safety (generally in the clinical laboratory).
- Evidence of other post-secondary courses or training completed related to the profession of medical laboratory technology or to a current job description including detailed course/practicum/objective outlines.
 - Previous job descriptions in a medical or comparable laboratory such as research and development, highlighting major areas of responsibility/accountability which may support skills sets required of a MLT.
 - Completed Employer Training Checklists.
 - Completion of the CMLTA MLT Competency Profile Self Assessment.
 - Successful completion of SAIT's General Knowledge Exam MEDL-120.
- The initial completed application form and appropriate fees must be received by the CMLTA within **two** weeks of commencement of employment. All other required documentation must be received by the CMLTA within **four** months from the date of the initial application form. Failure to meet this deadline will result in closure of the application.

Step 3:

- If the applicant has successfully fulfilled all the above requirements in Step 2, the application will be sent for final review and decision.
- Step 3 does not guarantee approval and MLT registration.
- The CMLTA reserves the right to request additional information and clarification as deemed necessary.
- The CMLTA reserves the right to request successful completion of additional course work to address knowledge gaps in specific areas.

All applicants are notified in writing of the decision within a reasonable timeframe after the review. The decision will be either to approve the application for registration with or without restriction and/or conditions, defer the application, or refuse the application.

All applicants are encouraged to share this document with their current or prospective employer.

Sincerely,



Lori Kmet, MLT, BSc (MLS), MBA
Executive Director/Registrar/Complaints Director