

Approved Chemists (Criteria)

DEFINITION The AOCS Examination Board Approved Chemist is a chemist recognized as proficient in the use of AOCS methodologies utilized in the Laboratory Proficiency Program. The chemist must participate in the Program series in which approval is requested. Approval entitles the chemist to act as a referee for those analyses consistent with the Laboratory Proficiency Program series for which Approved Chemist status is granted.

SCOPE All chemists/technicians employed by independent and industrial laboratories (there must be no conflict of interest when analyses are performed at industrial laboratories) may elect to pursue initial and continued Approved Chemist status. Approval is granted for one year and the chemist/technician must both apply for approval and demonstrate satisfactory performance on a yearly basis.

PROCEDURE

1. Application—
 - (a) Any chemist wishing to be considered for Approved Chemist status must first be able to demonstrate the ability to perform the required analyses. This includes:
 - Having an existing facility in which to perform the appropriate analyses *at the time of application*.
 - Having all apparatus and reagents required by AOCS methodology *at the time of application*.
 - Being willing to allow members of the AOCS Examination Board (or designated representatives) to inspect the laboratory facilities.
 - (b) Completion of the application form and submission of the application and administrative fees.¹
 - Application available at www.aocs.org/attain-lab-services/laboratory-proficiency-program.
 - Applications must be received at AOCS Headquarters by the final date.
2. Categories of approval, required analyses and number of samples
Applicants may request approval in any of the Laboratory Proficiency Program series. The required analyses on each sample in each series must be completed.
3. Criteria for approval—
 - (a) Successful completion of the proficiency series in which approval is sought is determined by meeting the following criteria:
 - A score on an individual series must be less than 1.4.
 - Absolutely no missing results for samples or required constituents. If there are mitigating circumstances surrounding missing samples and results, it will be necessary to send a letter to the AOCS Lab Proficiency Program Manager, indicating the circumstances so that special consideration may be given.
 - (b) The initial failure to meet the criteria will result in a probationary period of one year. If the problem is not resolved during that year, approval will not be granted the following year.
4. Approval is granted *only* to the individual named in the application, who must also be the same individual who participates in the Laboratory Proficiency Program series in which approval is requested. Approved Chemist status is not transferable from one individual to another. Approval does not necessarily imply automatic transfer when an Approved Chemist moves from one facility to another either within the same organization or with a new organization.
5. Transfers—If the Approved Chemist transfers before the end of a certification period, the approved status changes to approved on probation. In these cases, the AOCS Examination Board chairman must be notified, in writing, regarding the following:
 - Name and address of new location.
 - Explanation of reason for change of location.
 - That the new location has the necessary facilities, apparatus, and reagents to perform the analyses for which the chemist is approved.

If there are concerns about the new facility to which the Approved Chemist has transferred, it will be necessary for members of the AOCS Examination Board (or designated representatives) to inspect the laboratory facilities before continued approval can be granted.

6. Foreign approval—Individuals in foreign countries wanting to become Approved Chemists must comply with the criteria outlined in this procedure. However, if circumstances warrant special consideration, the need for special consideration will be determined by consensus of the AOCS Examination Board. Special consideration will be given only by consensus of the AOCS Examination Board and only to the extent that the integrity of the Program is not compromised.
7. Participant results will be made available by June 1 of each year. After June 1, those chemists on probation or disapproved may appeal to the AOCS Examination Board between June 1 and July 1, but no later than July 1 (or four weeks from the date of notification, whichever is later). The finalized listing of Approved Chemists will be made public by August 1.²
8. Appeal procedures—Appeals will be considered for the following issues:

- (a) Errors in LPP sample instructions.

Appeals will not be considered for the following issues:

- (b) Participant data reporting errors.
- (c) Statistical methods used for data analysis.
- (d) Failure of participant to adhere to posted deadlines.
- (e) The Examination Board shall, in its sole discretion, determine whether or not any other circumstance or grounds for appeal shall be considered if not specified above.

Approved Chemist Appeals:

- (f) Appeal proceedings and the identities of appellants are strictly confidential.
- (g) Participants that have failed to qualify for Approved Chemist status may appeal to the Examination Board.
- (h) A written appeal is due four weeks from the date of notification or July 1, whichever is later. The Appellant should mail their appeal to the Director of Technical Services and the AOCS Technical Services Manager responsible for administration of the Approved Chemists program. The appeal must include the basis for the appeal and all supporting documentation necessary to conduct a thorough review. There is no standard appeal form.
- (i) The written appeal is forwarded to the full Examination Board, who vote on each appeal. Any member of the examining Board having a direct economic or personal interest in the outcome of the proceedings shall be recused. The Chair of the Examination Board tallies the votes and notifies the Director of Technical Services and the AOCS Technical Services Manager responsible for administration of the Approved Chemists program of the outcome. A simple majority is required. The Appellant is then notified by email from AOCS of the decision.
- (j) In the event the Appellant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Examination Board's vote, they may request an oral hearing before the Examination Board to appeal the finding of failure to qualify for certification.
- (k) If the Appellant elects for an oral hearing, AOCS will schedule a call or online appeal meeting.
- (l) The following further conditions apply if the Appellant elects for an oral hearing:
 - i. The Appellant has the right to be represented at the hearing by another person, including an attorney.
 - ii. The Appellant has the right to submit evidence and arguments relevant to the decision.
 - iii. The Appellant has the right to call and cross-examine witnesses (if applicable).
- (m) At the conclusion of the hearing, the Examination Board will consider all testimony and evidence offered and make its final determination. A simple majority is required. The Appellant will be provided a written decision identifying the Examination Board's reasoning for its decision. The Appellant has the right to appeal an adverse decision in writing to the AOCS Governing Board within ten (10) days of receiving the Examination Board's decision. The decision of the AOCS Governing Board is final and may not be appealed.

NOTES

¹ The application and administrative fees are subject to change at the discretion of the AOCS Examination Board.

² Approved Chemist listings are published yearly on www.aocs.org/approved-chemists and in *INFORM* magazine.