



**PREPARING FOR LAB  
ACCREDITATION**



# IACIS 2017

## Preparing for Lab Accreditation Program Description and Syllabus

The course Preparing for Lab Accreditation (PDL) is a 30-hour course of instruction. This course is designed for examiners, supervisors, managers, and executives that have the responsibility to develop and implement policies and procedures within a digital forensic unit or laboratory in their efforts to obtain accreditation.

This course of instruction is designed to provide guidance on how any digital evidence lab can earn accreditation by understanding and implementing the accreditation requirements. Topics include an overview of the accreditation schema and benefits of achieving accreditation, how to implement a Quality Management System that is in compliance with ISO 17025/17020, developing laboratory SOPs and other related documentation, and understanding Validation\Verification for equipment, methods and software as it relates to digital evidence.

### Prerequisites

There are no formal computer forensics credentials required for entry into the PDL program, however, the program is designed for those that are responsible for developing and implementing digital evidence standards within the laboratory.

### Program Outline

#### I. Understanding accreditation

- Certification vs. Accreditation
- Benefits of accreditation
- What standards must be met to earn accreditation

#### II. Understanding ISO 17025/17020

- Uniqueness of Digital Evidence

#### III. Accredited Bodies

- Supplement Requirements

#### IV. Quality Management System

- How all the pieces fit together
  - Policies and Procedures
    - International Standards
    - Supplemental Requirements of Accreditation Bodies
    - Quality Manual Development
    - Technical Manual (i.e., SOPs defining Technical Methods)
    - Operations Manual (e.g., evidence management/equipment management)
    - Training Manual
  - Resources
    - People (Training, mentoring, and establishing technical competency)
    - Training Programs
    - Facility Design and Security
    - Forensic Hardware and Software

- Performance measures
  - Internal Audits and Corrective Action
  - Training Evaluation
  - Outcomes of proficiency testing
  - Customer feedback

#### V. Small Lab Challenges

- Peer Review
- Job Responsibilities

#### VII. Validation\Verification

- Laboratory Methods
- Software
- Hardware

### **Attendance and Program Conduct Requirements**

The PLA program provides thirty-six (36) hours of instruction across various accreditation aspects which impact the management and supervision of digital forensics labs and personnel. The program runs for five (5) consecutive days, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Each day there is a one (1) hour break for lunch from 12:00 noon to 1:00 PM. Courses are timed using the traditional "50-minute hour" to allow for a short break at the top of each hour.

On the first day of the program, the first hour (from 8:00 AM to 9:00 AM) is used for administrative purposes such as staff introductions and providing students information about the course of study to follow. This hour is considered part of the overall program due to the vital information provided.

Students are expected to attend all classroom sessions. Classes begin promptly at 8:00 AM, and students are expected to be prepared to begin the instructional day at that time and classes will continue until 5:00 PM on each class day. On the last day of the program, the students will be dismissed at 12:00 PM and should consider this when budgeting and planning lodging or and travel arrangement.

The International Association of Computer Investigative Specialists (IACIS) understands that unforeseen circumstances and emergency situations may arise, and so students are permitted to briefly leave the classroom to deal with such situations. While students are encouraged to take notes during classes, activities, and laboratory sessions, students are not permitted to use their personal laptop computers or other personal computing devices of any type during any classes. Similarly, students are not permitted to use any audio or video recording devices at any time during any classroom or laboratory session.

Students are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for a "business casual" environment (collared shirt, slacks, etc.). Shorts, tank tops, sandals, flip flops, and similar casual dress are not permitted in the classroom at any time.

Something for students to consider is that classrooms are air conditioned, and the temperature is set lower than what one may typically expect to keep the room comfortable given the heat that can be generated by a 20-25 students and computers. At times, however, the environment can be difficult to control: There may be times when all of the computers are operating and it may get warm in the classroom, however more often the room can become too cold for some students. So one might consider dressing in light weight clothing and bringing a sweater or light jacket to wear, if needed.

Students must be mindful of the fact that the classroom is small, with a class size of 20-25 students. In such an environment, even minor distractions can make it difficult for others to hear or to remain focused on the instructor. So, then, students are asked to be courteous and aware of their fellow students.

During classes, students are expected to be attentive and fully engaged. Cell phones must be put on "vibrate" or "silent" mode, and sending text messages with cell phones and other hand-held devices is prohibited in the classroom.