

Laboratory Accreditation FAQs

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1. Is our laboratory eligible to apply for EAE Laboratory Accreditation?

Laboratories eligible for the EAE Laboratory Accreditation programme have to meet the following requirements:

- Be based in an ESC member country (see [list](#))
- Be established for at least 3 years
- Have at least the head, lead or a senior member of the laboratory holding an EAE or mutually recognised individual accreditation in the modules applied for (except for stress echo) preferably at the time of applying or at the latest within 2 years after being temporarily granted laboratory accreditation (refer to question 2 for more details)

There is no restriction in the type of centres (private, university laboratories): all centres can apply.

2. Can our laboratory apply if none of our senior members hold an EAE individual accreditation in the relevant module(s)?

YES but only for a limited period of time.

Indeed until end December 2011, a laboratory can apply and be awarded EAE laboratory accreditation even if the head, lead, or a senior member does not hold individual EAE Accreditation.

However, within 2 years of the date of laboratory being awarded EAE Laboratory Accreditation (i.e. at the latest by end December 2013) and in order to maintain lab accreditation the head, lead or a senior member must either

a) obtain EAE individual accreditation
or

b) hold a national accreditation for which a reciprocal agreement with EAE individual accreditation is already in place or will be applied to by the National Society and approved by EAE before end December 2013 (there is a clear method for national societies to seek reciprocity between their national accreditation and the EAE individual accreditation)

3. How long should our laboratory be operational before we can apply for Accreditation?

An echocardiographic laboratory must be running for at least 3 years in order to apply, as data on practice over the previous three years are required. In case the centre is transferred geographically, please refer to question 16 for more details.

4. How do we apply?

- a) Visit www.esccardio.org/EAE/Accreditation section 'Laboratory Accreditation'
- b) Download the registration form and return it by email to accreditationEAE@esccardio.org or fax: +33 (0)4 92 94 86 46.
- c) Within two weeks of sending your registration form, you will receive an e-mail from the EAE Accreditation Office with your login details and access to the EAE Laboratory

Accreditation Online Platform. In case you do not get this email, please contact the EAE Accreditation Office on accreditationEAE@escardio.org.

5. What is the cost?

The application fee is **500€ for the first module** (TTE obligatory, TEE or Stress Echo) and 250€ each additional modules when applying for several modules at the same time. If subsequent modules are applied for separately, the cost is 500€ per module. Application fees are payable online when applying to EAE Laboratory Accreditation and are not refundable.

6. What are the deadlines for submission?

EAE Laboratory applications are submitted online only. The deadlines for submission are **31 August and 28 February** each year. The completed applications should be submitted by the deadline in order to allow the EAE Accreditation Office to review its administrative content. It is EAE policy that absolutely no extensions are given.

If your laboratory misses the deadline for submission, its application(s) will be treated at the next upcoming deadline (leading to a 6 month delay and during which your application won't be reviewed).

7. How long does it take to complete the application form?

Allow yourself an average of 6 to 8 weeks to complete all the forms, as for completion of some forms / certificates you might need assistance from your hospital administration for instance. The sooner you register to receive the form, the longer you have to submit your form on time for the submission deadline.

8. What happens after the application is sent?

- Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an automatic e-mail to confirm reception of your application form. In parallel, the EAE Accreditation Office will be informed automatically. At this stage, your access to the online tool will be changed and you won't be able to upload new documents.
- Upon submission, your application is stored electronically on our system and dealt with after the date of the closest applications submission deadline (28 February or 31 August).
- Your application is reviewed by the EAE Accreditation Office for administrative content. If your application is incomplete, you will be contacted and asked to supply missing information within 1 month.
- If your application is complete, it will be sent to your National Society Representative for review. Your National Society has 2 months to review your application and provide its recommendation on your accreditation request. Again, if information is missing, you will be

contacted by the EAE Accreditation Office and asked to supply relevant information within 1 month.

- Upon review by your National Society Representative, the EAE Laboratory Accreditation Sub-Committee will meet to review all applications, and discuss the recommendation of the National Societies and make its final decision within 2 months (again, 1 month added if more information is required).
- Upon completion of the review process, you will be informed by email of the outcome of your application by the EAE Accreditation Office (within two weeks) and you will be sent an EAE Laboratory Accreditation Diploma if your application has been successful.

9. How long does the process take?

Submission deadlines are on 28 February and 31 August each year. From these dates on, application review will begin and take a minimum of 6 months until you will receive the results of your accreditation (for details of the process, please see question 8). If your laboratory misses the nearest deadline for submission, its application(s) will be treated at the next upcoming deadline (leading to a 6 months delay during which your application won't be reviewed).

To receive EAE Laboratory accreditation, the overall process from the date of the nearest deadline **should not exceed 12 months**: failure to comply with this timeline will result in no accreditation of the laboratory and re-payment of the full accreditation fee.

10. What are the types of laboratory accreditation offered?

Three modules are available:

- **Transthoracic Echocardiography (TTE)**
- **Transesophageal Echocardiography (TEE)**
- **Stress Echo**

For each module, two levels are available:

- **Standard accreditation**: set to provide basic laboratory standards for an optimal clinical service
- **Advanced accreditation**: set to establish a fewer number of advanced laboratories in each country, whereby in addition to standard criteria, they may be providing extensive teaching and research.

The TTE module is mandatory in order to apply for any other modules. You may also apply for TEE and / or Stress Echo at the same time, but TTE is mandatory in any case.

Table 1-4 below summarise the possible accreditation applications and results:

Table 1: Laboratories applying for one module only

TTE module is mandatory

Possible applications				Possible results		
1.	TTE (mandatory)	TEE	Stress Echo	TTE	TEE	Stress Echo
	Standard	-	-	Standard	-	-
	Standard	-	-	Failed	-	-
<p>* This applies if your laboratory only performs TTE or if you decide to apply for TTE only. However, you can not apply for advanced accreditation in TTE in this case since all 3 modules are required for advanced accreditation in TTE.</p>						

Table 2: Laboratories applying for two modules

Possible applications				Possible results		
2.	TTE (mandatory)	TEE	Stress Echo	TTE	TEE	Stress Echo
	Standard	Standard	-	Standard	Standard	-
	Standard	-	Standard	Standard	Failed	-
<p>If your laboratory wishes to apply for two modules, it must be at the standard level</p>						
				Failed	Failed	-
				Standard	-	Standard
				Standard	-	Failed
				Failed	-	Failed

Table 3 and 4: Laboratories applying for three modules

Possible applications				Possible results																											
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<p>**If you want to apply for advanced accreditation in TTE, this has to be done for all three modules. This means that all modules (TTE, TEE Stress Echo) should be applied for at the same time and at the same grade. If your laboratory does not practice in TEE and/or Stress Echo, it is not eligible to apply for advanced accreditation in TTE.</p>																																											

** Please note that applying for "advanced" accreditation doesn't guarantee being granted this grade; your laboratory may indeed receive a "standard" grade if it doesn't meet the requirements for "advanced" accreditation.

11. What is the difference between standard and advanced accreditation?

	Standard	Advanced
TTE	<p>Staff Both clinical and technical heads of echocardiography At least one echocardiographer holding EAE or national individual accreditation Technical head spends six or more session in echocardiography activities (including management or quality control)</p> <p>Organisation/equipment System of review for echocardiograms in place Provision for continuing education Studies archived. Written reports within 24h (see next) Most machines have 2nd harmonic imaging and full quantitation package All machines have colour and stand-alone Doppler No machine in regular use upgraded more that 7 years ago 30-40 min allocated per standard study and up to 1 h for a complex study Compliance with appropriate European and national personal datas protection legislation Rooms uncluttered and of adequate size</p> <p>Appropriate provision of patient facilities and information List of indication for echocardiographic studies Standardised examination protocol</p>	<p>Clinical head performs at least one session including thansthoracic studies each week. Both technical and clinical heads have EAE/National accreditation.</p> <p>Formal and systematic quality control</p> <p>Agreed minimum standards and imaging protocol for studies List of indication for echo published internally</p> <p>System of liaison with other departments to advise about timing of or results of studies At least two EAE/nationally accredited echocardiographers</p> <p>Weekly departmental meeting</p> <p>Report database and digital archiving</p> <p>Available standard operating procedures</p> <p>There should be regular teaching to junior doctors, fellows and sonographers with appropriate provision of teaching material (videos, Cds, books, etc.) Evidence of scientific work produced by the department</p> <p>Advanced quantitation (TDI, contrast regurgitant volumes) when needed History of success in training for EAE/national accreditation</p>

	Standard	Advanced
TEE	<p>Staff Designated as Head of TEE Designated head should be performing or supervising at least 50 TEE annually</p> <p>Organisation/equipment Established protocols Written informed consent Resuscitation equipment Multiplane probe</p> <p>Routine use of: Suction, oxygen and pulse oximeter BP monitor Patient preparation including letter and pre-procedure checklist Provision for continuing education Provision for quality control Sedation used according to published guidelines Lockable drug cupboard Facilities for cleaning/sterilising the probe</p>	<p>Head of TEE performs/supervision >50 studies each year Head of TEE had EAE/national accreditation Designated person, usually a nurse, to manage airway and recover the patient</p> <p>Recovery area Minimum standards for studies established List of indications for TEE agreed internally Quality control of results, e.g. against surgery, pathology, other imaging Room at least 20m² in area Regular audits Written standard operating procedures History of success in training students</p> <p>Digital storage and retrieval Provision of intra-operative service</p>
Stress Echo	<p>Staff Designated Head of Stress Echocardiography Performing a minimum of 100 studies/year per laboratory Studies performed by at least two people, one of whom is a clinician, at least one must have ILS or equivalent Head as a substantial experience of TTE and stress echo</p> <p>Organisation/equipment List of indications</p> <p>ECG and BP monitoring capabilities (see text for details)</p> <p>Established appropriate protocols</p> <p>Machine with 2nd harmonic imaging and TDI software</p> <p>Resuscitation facilities readily available</p> <p>Lockable drug cupboard</p> <p>Blood pool contrast available Provisions for continue educational activities</p>	<p>Head maintains CME for stress echo More than 300 studies/year per laboratory</p> <p>Machine capable of changing MI and have full digital stress echo package Audit of results against angiography or other independent standard Advanced software dedicated to contrast imaging Capabilities for both pharmacological and exercise stress Additional quantification package should be available Standard operating procedures should be available A history of training junior doctors</p>

12. Can we receive accreditation in TEE (or Stress Echo) if we failed the accreditation in TTE?

NO. To receive accreditation in TEE (or Stress Echo), you need to be successful in the accreditation in TTE as it is mandatory. However, you may receive accreditation in TTE but not in TEE (or Stress Echo). Please refer to tables 3 and 4 on page 6/7 for detailed information.

13. If we apply for more than one module at the same time, can we receive accreditation in only one module or do we need to be successful in all modules?

Since the TTE module is mandatory, you have to pass it successfully in order to pass accreditation in the other modules.

However, you may receive accreditation in TTE but not in TEE (or Stress Echo). Please refer to tables 2 and 3 on page 6/7 for detailed information.

14. Can we apply to only one module and ask for advanced accreditation?

NO. All three modules are required to be able to apply for advanced accreditation.

15. If we apply for more than one module at the same time, can we apply for standard accreditation in only one module and advanced for the other modules?

NO. Once you apply for advanced accreditation in one module, this has to be done for all modules at the same time. Please note that applying for "advanced" accreditation doesn't guarantee being granted this grade; your laboratory may indeed receive a "standard" grade if it doesn't meet the requirements for "advanced" accreditation. Please refer to tables 2-3 on page 6/7 for detailed information.

16. Do we need to inform the EAE Accreditation Office when there are changes in our accreditation laboratory structure?

You must notify the EAE within 30 days on a hospital letterhead for all major changes to the organisation of the laboratory. The following are considered as major changes:

- a move into a new building
- Addition or subtraction of a site

In most instances the accreditation status of the laboratory will not be altered but if, for instance, the new Director does not hold individual accreditation then accreditation could be lost.

If you are not sure whether the change is of a major character, please contact us: accreditationEAE@escardio.org. Failure to comply with this notification can result in the loss or revocation of accreditation.

During the 5-year accreditation period, you do not need to notify the EAE of single additions or subtractions in medical or technical staff. These modifications will be noted at the time of reaccreditation.

17. How long is laboratory accreditation valid?

The accreditation is valid for 5 years. Approximately 12 months before your accreditation expires, you will be notified by the EAE Accreditation Office and reminded to download the reaccreditation forms from the EAE website.

More information on re-accreditation will be made available in due course on the EAE Website.

18. Can we request a change of status?

NO. If you feel that your laboratory merits advanced accreditation then you can wait until re-accreditation is due or submit a new application for consideration by the Laboratory Accreditation Committee.

19. Do we need to translate patient information leaflets or standard procedure documents into English?

NO providing that there is at least one National Society Reviewer for your laboratory's country involved in the EAE Laboratory Accreditation process (refer to the list on EAE Website as well as question 20). In this case, they can be submitted in your local language but must be approved by your National Society. If translation is requested by the EAE as part of the review process, you will be contacted and the translation cost will be at the laboratory's own charge.

20. According to the EAE website, our country is not listed as having a National Society reviewer, can we still apply?

YES. In this case, please ensure that all your documents are submitted in English.

21. Our institution covers two sites. Do we need to submit separate applications for them?

A single application is sufficient if both sites:

- are run by the same management
- AND using identical protocols
- AND have the same levels of facilities
- AND all staff performing and/or interpreting any echocardiograms at any of the sites are included in the application forms

In case the two sites have different management and different working practices, separate applications will usually be required and fees as described in question 4 will apply for each application.



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22. There is no clinical head and/or technical head in our department: can we still apply for accreditation?

YES. The forms have been designed to take into account that some laboratories might not have a clinical head or a technical head. In this case, the name of the person administratively in charge of the department or alternatively filling in the application forms and taking responsibility for its content and accuracy should be provided.