



OPCW

Technical Secretariat

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ENGLISH and SPANISH only

NOTE BY THE TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

**ANALYTICAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT COURSE FOR OPCW MEMBER STATES
IN THE LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGION IN COLLABORATION WITH
LABORATORIO DE VERIFICACIÓN DE ARMAS QUÍMICAS
MADRID, SPAIN
25 MAY – 5 JUNE 2026**

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

1. The Technical Secretariat of the OPCW (the Secretariat) wishes to invite applicants who are representatives of laboratories in OPCW Member States in the Latin America and Caribbean region to attend an analytical chemistry course focusing on the analysis of chemicals and related compounds relevant to the Chemical Weapons Convention (the Convention). The course will be held at the Laboratorio de Verificación de Armas Químicas (LAVEMA) of the Instituto Nacional de Técnica Aeroespacial (INTA) in Madrid, Spain, from 25 May to 5 June 2026.
2. The goal of the course is to improve participants' practical skills in the analysis of chemicals related to the Convention and in using gas chromatography (GC) and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS). Participants will first be given an introduction to the chemicals related to the Convention, sample preparation techniques, and the theoretical aspects of GC, GC-MS, and high-performance liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry (HPLC-MS). This will be followed by a presentation on sample analysis using GC and HPLC equipment with different types of detectors, as well as GC-MS equipment. A discussion will then take place on how to interpret the mass spectra that have emerged as a result of the analyses. The participants will also familiarise themselves with how to maintain these instruments in a manner that ensures a high standard of performance. Finally, they will be instructed on how to report these results, including the requirements of the OPCW in this regard. The skills developed in the course may be used to analyse different types of environmental samples containing various types of chemicals.

CONTENT

3. The course will consist of the following elements:
 - (a) the preparation of environmental samples;
 - (b) the properties of chemicals related to the Convention;
 - (c) an introduction to GC, GC-MS, and HPLC-MS equipment;



- (d) the interpretation of mass spectra;
 - (e) exercises on sample preparation;
 - (f) the use of GC, GC-MS, and HPLC-MS equipment;
 - (g) an introduction to the Convention and related compound synthesis;
 - (h) an introduction to the Automated Mass Spectral Deconvolution and Identification Software;
 - (i) an introduction to the Quality Assurance System according to Standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017;¹ and
 - (j) the reporting of results during OPCW proficiency tests.
4. The course will accommodate a maximum of 20 participants from Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Secretariat will select participants in consultation with LAVEMA and will notify the successful candidates, who will then receive an official invitation to participate from the Secretariat.
5. For all participants, the Secretariat will cover the costs of tuition, international travel, medical insurance, accommodation, and meals, and will provide a terminal allowance, as well as a daily allowance to cover incidental expenses, in accordance with OPCW rules. Tickets will be purchased directly by the Secretariat. When making international travel arrangements, the Secretariat will seek the most economical options. The Secretariat will not cover expenses unrelated to the course or those resulting from unauthorised changes to travel arrangements.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

6. It is important to reiterate that analytical skills development courses offered by the OPCW are aimed at building analytical skills specific to chemicals relevant to the Convention. Consequently, to ensure productive participation in the course, participants should:
- (a) hold a degree or diploma in chemistry or analytical chemistry from a recognised university or institution;
 - (b) have at least three years of relevant practical and theoretical experience in analytical chemistry;
 - (c) currently use GC and/or GC-MS equipment (or expect to do so in future); and
 - (d) be citizens of Member States of the Latin America and the Caribbean region.

¹

International Organization for Standardization/International Electrotechnical Commission Standard ISO/IEC 17025:2017 – General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.

7. The course will be conducted in Spanish and no interpretation will be provided. Participants are therefore expected to have a good command of both written and spoken Spanish.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

8. Applications will be carefully screened on the basis of the criteria specified in paragraphs 6 and 7. The Secretariat may decide to interview applicants. Applicants who have already participated in similar OPCW courses will not be considered for this course.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

9. Interested candidates are invited to submit their applications through Eventus—the OPCW event management system (<https://eventus.opcw.org/>). Applicants must first create an account and then register for the event. Each application must be endorsed digitally in the Eventus platform by the respective National Authority or Permanent Representation of the applicant's country to the OPCW. Only nominations endorsed by the National Authority or Permanent Representation may be considered. Member States and National Authorities are strongly encouraged to seek, support, and endorse applications from qualified women candidates.
10. Applications must be accompanied by the following:
 - (a) a curriculum vitae;
 - (b) a photocopy of the personal identification pages of the candidate's passport;
 - (c) a one-page description of the candidate's practical experience; and
 - (d) a letter of recommendation from the supervisor of the candidate at his or her institution addressing the candidate's qualifications in line with paragraphs 6 and 7 above and attesting to the relevance of the course to the work of the institution.
11. Applications must be submitted to the Secretariat **no later than 6 March 2026**. Incomplete or improperly completed applications cannot be considered. Applications missing any of the items listed in paragraph 10 will not be considered.
12. Personal information provided in the application must match the details as shown in the passport, as this information will be used for the issuance of flight tickets should an application be successful. Participants are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of their personal information. Any inaccuracies may result in exclusion from the course or additional charges that will need to be borne by the participants.
13. Additional information may be obtained from the International Cooperation Branch of the International Cooperation and Assistance Division of the OPCW via email (icb@opcw.org).