



Aria Support Tool version 1.1

Troubleshooting tool for the AriaMx and AriaDx Real-Time PCR Systems

User Guide

Version A0, March 2023

NOTE

The Aria Support Tool is used for troubleshooting and diagnosing issues on an AriaMx or AriaDx instrument. The tool cannot execute actions on the instrument or clear instrument errors, but it can provide feedback on the cause of an issue. When possible, this user guide includes follow-up recommendations and instructions for issue resolution.

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Agilent Technologies, Inc.
5301 Stevens Creek Blvd
Santa Clara, CA 95051 USA

Technical Support

For US and Canada

Call 800-227-9770 (option 3, 4, 3).

Or send an email to

qpcr.support@agilent.com

For all other regions

Agilent's world-wide Sales and Support Center contact details for your location can be obtained at

www.agilent.com/en/contact-us/page

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1 Before You Begin

- Overview of the Aria Support Tool [5](#)
- Minimum requirements for running the Aria Support Tool [5](#)
- Aria Support Tool interface [5](#)

This chapter contains information for you to read and understand before you start using the Aria Support Tool.

Overview of the Aria Support Tool

The Aria Support Tool is an external application that can provide you or the Agilent support team with additional information to troubleshoot your AriaMx or AriaDx instrument. The Support Tool is a separate software utility from the Aria Real-Time PCR software, requiring its own download and installation.

The Aria Support Tool is not a repair utility and cannot clear instrument errors or alter instrument performance. It does, however, provide critical information needed to navigate the troubleshooting process or to assess the condition of the instrument. Where appropriate, this user guide includes guidance on the next steps you need to take to resolve issues identified using the Aria Support Tool.

If you need help troubleshooting your instrument, contact Agilent [Technical Support](#).

Minimum requirements for running the Aria Support Tool

Install and run the Aria Support Tool on a PC that is connected to the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument that requires troubleshooting. The instrument can either be connected to the PC directly or through a network.

Before installing the Aria Support Tool, see [Table 1](#) for the minimum PC requirements needed to run the application.

Table 1 Minimum requirements for running the Aria software

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Operating system | Windows 10 |
| Processor | 8th Generation Intel Core i5 or later |
| Working memory (RAM) | 8 GB or higher |

Aria Support Tool interface

The application is divided into two tabs: Motor Calibration and Block Contamination (see [Figure 1](#) and [Figure 2](#) on page 6). Each tab walks you through the steps for generating a set of output files that detail either the status of the instrument motor calibration or the findings of the block contamination diagnostic test.

For instructions on using the tools on each tab, see [Chapter 2](#), “Motor Calibration,” starting on page 7 and [Chapter 3](#), “Block Contamination,” starting on page 14.

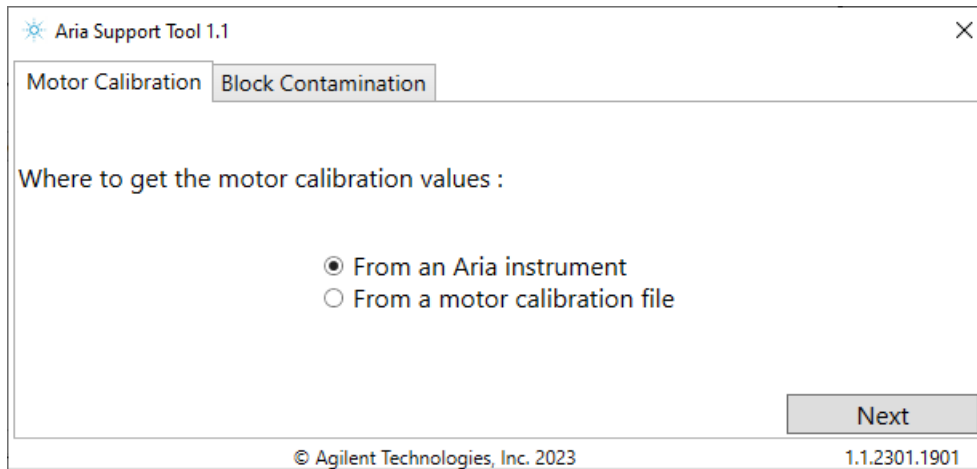


Figure 1 Motor Calibration tab – used for analyzing the motor calibration status

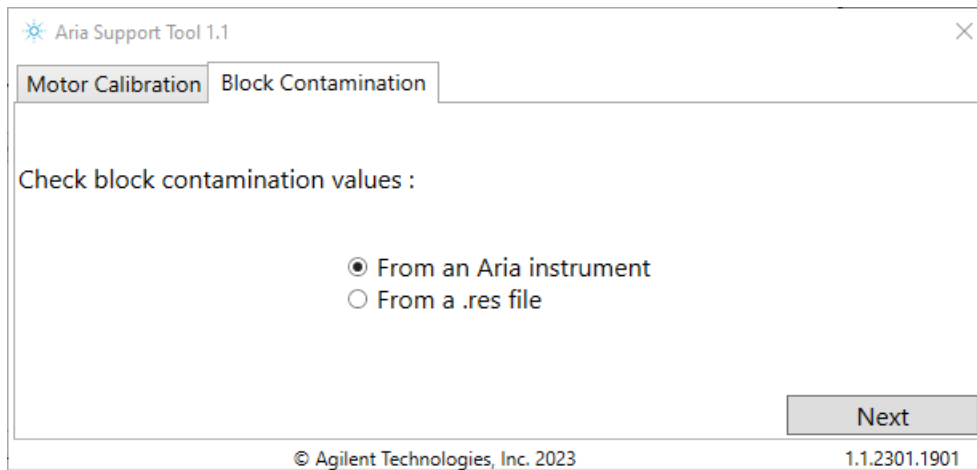


Figure 2 Block Contamination tab – used for locating contaminated wells

2 Motor Calibration

- About Motor Calibration [8](#)
- Verifying Motor Calibration Values Using the Aria Support Tool [9](#)
 - Verify MC values on a connected instrument [9](#)
 - Verify MC values in a motor calibration file [11](#)

This chapter contains instructions for using the Aria Support Tool to verify that the motor calibration values for your AriaMx or AriaDx instrument are within Agilent specifications. Using the Aria Support Tool for this purpose is necessary after a motor calibration is performed on the instrument.

About Motor Calibration

A motor calibration (MC) is a procedure performed on an AriaMx or AriaDx instrument that designates the location of each well that is scanned by the optical modules for each individual slot. The output of the MC is a *filter.txt* file that contains the MC values and is stored within the instrument. During an experiment run, the Aria system uses the MC values in this file to position the optical modules so that they can optimally excite and capture the dye fluorescence within each well.

Agilent performs a MC and verifies the MC values on each instrument in the factory prior to shipment. Your instrument may require a post-factory MC if you encounter any of the following scenarios.

- The instrument touchscreen opens a prompt instructing you to perform a MC
- An Agilent technical support specialist or service engineer instructs you to perform a MC
- You are upgrading the instrument firmware from version 1.5 (or earlier) to the latest version.

Instructions for performing a MC are provided in ["Performing Motor Calibration"](#) on page 23. After the MC is complete, use the Aria Support Tool to verify that the MC values in the *filter.txt* file are within Agilent's internal specifications. This verification step ensures that calibrated well locations were not mis-assigned.

Verifying Motor Calibration Values Using the Aria Support Tool

After completion of a MC, verify that the MC values in the *filter.txt* file are within specifications using one of the methods described below.

- “Verify MC values on a connected instrument” on page 9 – This method obtains the MC values by copying the *filter.txt* file directly from the connected AriaMx or AriaDx instrument and then analyzes the MC values in the copied file.
- “Verify MC values in a motor calibration file” on page 11 – This method analyzes the MC values in a *filter.txt* file that you upload to the Aria Support Tool.

NOTE

The Aria Support Tool analyzes the MC values in the *filter.txt* file and does not modify the MC values in the file.

Verify MC values on a connected instrument

- 1 Launch the Aria Support Tool on a PC that is connected to the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument.
- 2 Click the Motor Calibration tab. Select **From an Aria instrument**. (See [Figure 3](#).)

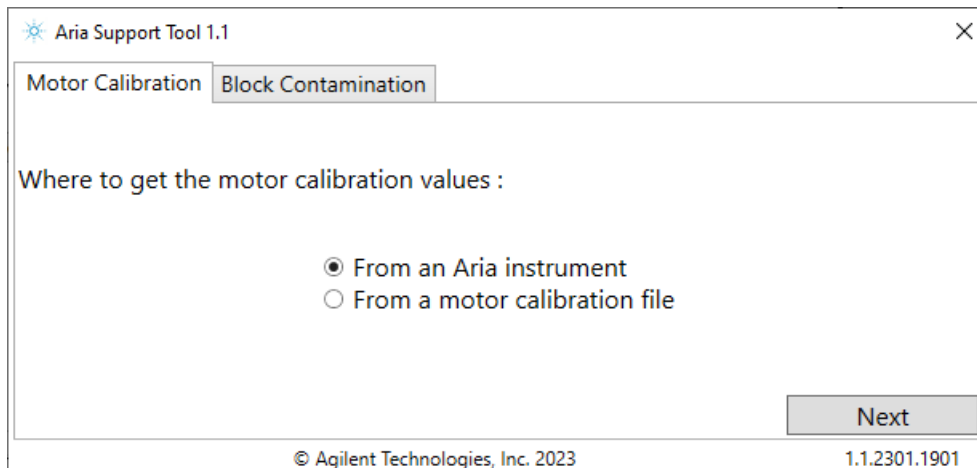



Figure 3 Motor Calibration tab – select **From an Aria instrument**

- 3 Click **Next**.
The Aria Support Tool advances to the next screen. (See [Figure 4](#).)



Figure 4 Motor Calibration tab – Enter IP address and select destination folder

- 4 In the field under **Please enter IP Address**, enter the IP address of the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument. (See [Figure 5](#).)

To find the IP address for your instrument, press the Connection Settings icon  at the bottom of the instrument's touchscreen display.

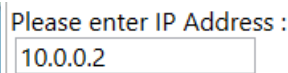


Figure 5 Entering the instrument IP address

- 5 Click the folder icon next to **Please select download destination folder**.
The Browse For Folder dialog box opens.
- 6 Browse to the folder where you want to save the downloaded and output files from the verification process. Select the folder and click **OK**.
The Browse For Folder dialog box closes and the file path for the selected folder appears in the Aria Support Tool. (See [Figure 6](#).)
The files that are saved to the destination folder are the *filter.txt* file (copied from the instrument) and the verification result files generated by the Aria Support Tool.

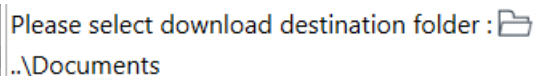


Figure 6 Selecting the destination folder for output

- 7 Click **Next**.
The Aria Support Tool verifies the MC values by comparing the MC values contained in the *filter.txt* file to the specifications set by Agilent.
When verification is complete, the Aria Support Tool screen displays the result (*passed* or *failed*) for each of the 6 optical module slots as well as the overall motor calibration result. (See [Figure 7](#).) You can click directly on the [+] icon next to the file name to copy the file path and file name of the *filter.txt* file that was used for verification.

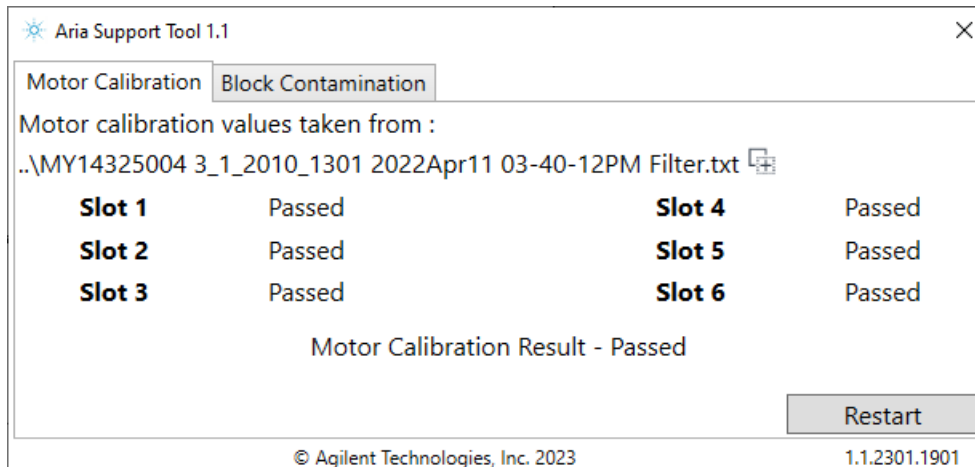


Figure 7 Motor Calibration tab – Results screen

- 8 Refer to [Table 2](#) for results interpretation and recommended actions. Result files are saved to a sub-folder within the destination folder selected in [step 6](#). The naming convention for the sub-folder is: *instrument serial number_firmware version_timestamp*. Each file name includes a prefix that follows this same convention.
- 9 Click **Restart** to return to the starting screen of the Aria Support Tool.

Table 2 MC verification results and recommended actions

| Results of the slots | Overall result | Interpretation and action |
|------------------------|----------------|---|
| All passed | Passed | The MC values of the instrument are within specifications. No further action required. |
| 1 or more slots failed | Failed | Well location(s) may be mis-assigned. Perform another motor calibration on the instrument (see “Performing Motor Calibration” on page 23) then repeat verification of the MC values using the Aria Support Tool. If the verification fails a second time, contact Technical Support for further guidance. |

Verify MC values in a motor calibration file

- 1 Launch the Aria Support Tool.
- 2 Click the Motor Calibration tab. Select **From a motor calibration file**. (See [Figure 8](#).)

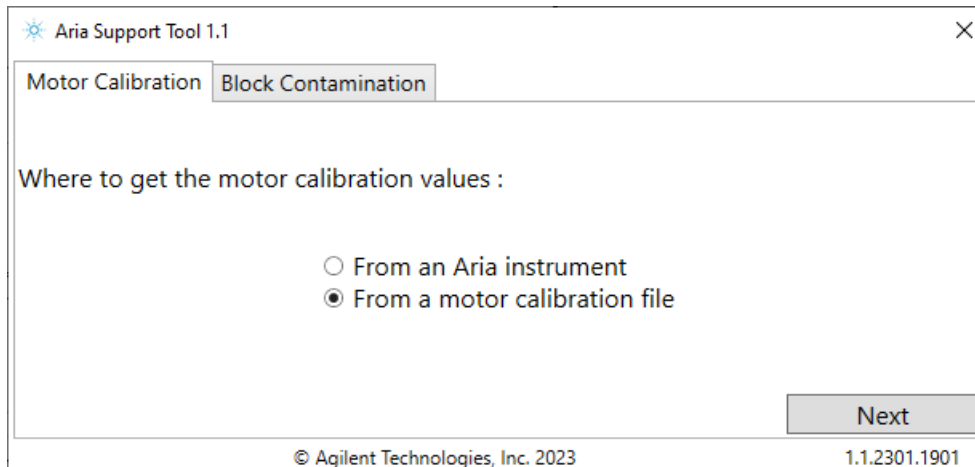


Figure 8 Motor Calibration tab – select **From a motor calibration file**

- 3 Click **Next**.

The Aria Support Tool advances to the next screen. (See [Figure 9](#).)



Figure 9 Motor Calibration tab – Select motor calibration file

- 4 Click the folder icon next to **Please select motor calibration file**.

The Open dialog box opens.

- 5 Browse to the folder where the motor calibration file is saved. Click the file to select it. The motor calibration file is the *filter.txt* file generated on the instrument during motor calibration.

The *filter.txt* file name may include a prefix with the naming convention: *instrument serial number_firmware version_timestamp*. This prefix is added to *filter.txt* files that are copied from an instrument during the process described in [“Verify MC values on a connected instrument.”](#)

- 6 With the motor calibration file selected, click **Open** in the Open dialog box.

The dialog box closes and the selected file name appears in the Aria Support Tool. (See [Figure 10](#).)


Please select motor calibration file : 
..\filter.txt

Figure 10 Selecting the MC file

7 Click **Next**.

The Aria Support Tool verifies the MC values by comparing the MC values contained in the *filter.txt* file to the specifications set by Agilent.

When verification is complete, the Aria Support Tool screen displays the result (*passed* or *failed*) for each of the 6 optical module slots as well as the overall motor calibration result. (See [Figure 11](#).) You can click directly on the [+] icon next to the file name to copy the file path and file name of the *filter.txt* file that was used for verification.

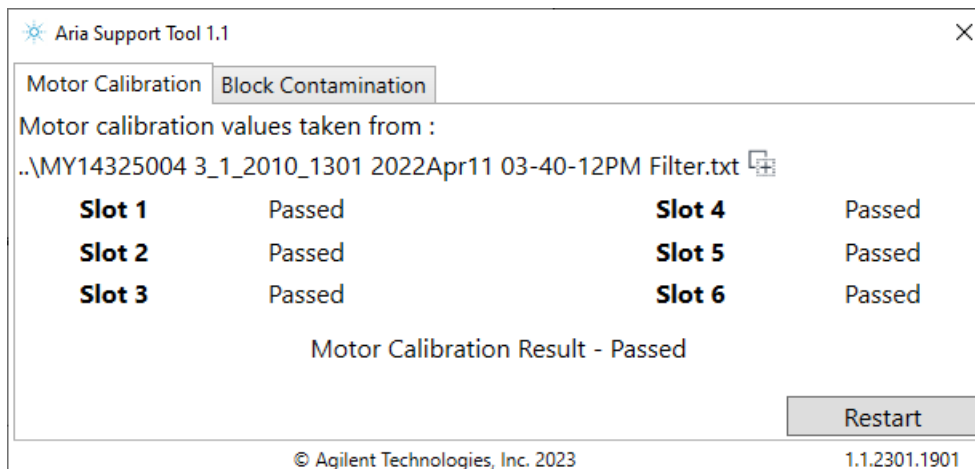


Figure 11 Motor Calibration tab – Results screen

8 Refer to [Table 2](#) on page 11 for results interpretation and recommended actions.

A text file summarizing the results is saved to the same folder as the *filter.txt* file that was selected in [step 5](#). The file name includes a prefix with the naming convention: *instrument serial number_firmware version_timestamp*.

9 Click **Restart** to return to the starting screen of the Aria Support Tool.

3 Block Contamination

- About Block Contamination [15](#)
- Finding Block Contamination Using the Aria Support Tool [16](#)
 - Locate block contamination on a connected instrument [16](#)
 - Locate block contamination using the diagnostic file [20](#)

This chapter contains instructions for using the Aria Support Tool to find the location or cause of block contamination on your AriaMx or AriaDx instrument. Using the Aria Support Tool is helpful if you receive block contamination errors on the instrument.

About Block Contamination

The set of diagnostic tests available on the AriaMx and AriaDx instruments includes a block contamination test, which scans the thermal block for signs of contaminants. If the instrument fails the test, the system displays a set of error messages (warning ID number 92 and error ID number 311). The details of the test are recorded in the instrument diagnostic file (*.res) that is saved to the instrument upon completion of the test.

Block contamination is often due to the presence of dust, residue, or other contaminants in one or more wells of the AriaMx or AriaDx thermal block. These contaminants may reflect light, resulting in an artificially elevated fluorescence reading. A failed block contamination test may also be the result of surface scratches, anodizing discoloration, or staining on the thermal block or heated lid. Additionally, particles on the window of an optical module, or other causes of stray light emitting from an optical module, may also result in a failed block contamination test.

In some cases, the block contamination test may fail due to a failure in a prerequisite diagnostic test. These prerequisite diagnostic tests are performed in conjunction with the block contamination test, and they test various aspects of instrument function that could impact the fluorescence readings measured during diagnostics. The outcomes of the prerequisite tests are displayed on the reports screen ([Figure 16](#) on page 18).

In the event of a failed block contamination test, you can use the tools on the Block Contamination tab of the Aria Support Tool to help troubleshoot the cause by, 1) determining if a prerequisite test is failing, and 2) identifying the contaminated wells in the thermal block. You can then take the appropriate action to clear the error.

Finding Block Contamination Using the Aria Support Tool

After a failed block contamination diagnostic test, find the cause of the failure in the instrument diagnostic file (*.res) using one of the methods described below.

- “Locate block contamination on a connected instrument” on page 16 – This method obtains the diagnostic file by copying it directly from the connected AriaMx or AriaDx instrument and then analyzes the contents of the file.
- “Locate block contamination using the diagnostic file” on page 20 – This method analyzes the contents of a diagnostic file that you upload to the Aria Support Tool.

The Aria Support Tool can determine from the diagnostic file which wells of the thermal block were found to have contamination. The Aria Support Tool can also determine if the failed test was due to a failed prerequisite test.

NOTE

The Aria Support Tool cannot clear the block contamination errors on your instrument.

Locate block contamination on a connected instrument

- 1 Launch the Aria Support Tool on a PC that is connected to the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument.
- 2 Click the Block Contamination tab. Select **From an Aria instrument**. (See [Figure 12](#).)

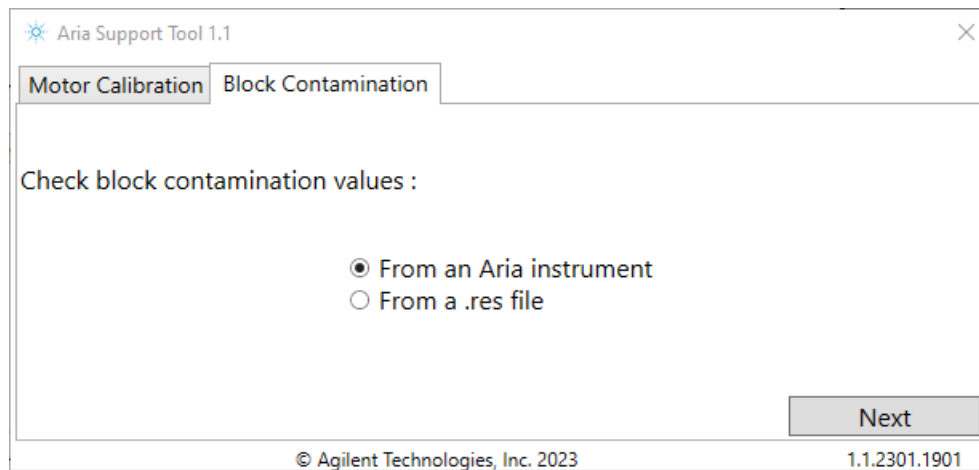



Figure 12 Block Contamination tab – select **From an Aria instrument**

- 3 Click **Next**.
The Aria Support Tool advances to the next screen. (See [Figure 13](#).)



Figure 13 Block Contamination tab – Enter IP address and select destination folder

- 4 In the field under **Please enter IP Address**, enter the IP address of the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument. (See [Figure 14](#).)

To find the IP address for your instrument, press the Connection Settings icon  at the bottom of the instrument's touchscreen display.

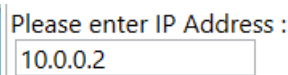


Figure 14 Entering the instrument IP address

- 5 Click the folder icon next to **Please select download destination folder**.
The Browse For Folder dialog box opens.
- 6 Browse to the folder where you want to save the downloaded and output files from the troubleshooting process. Select the folder and click **OK**.
The Browse For Folder dialog box closes and the file path for the selected folder appears in the Aria Support Tool. (See [Figure 15](#).)
The files that are saved to the destination folder are the instrument diagnostic file (i.e., the *.res file copied from the instrument) and the block contamination report generated by the Aria Support Tool.

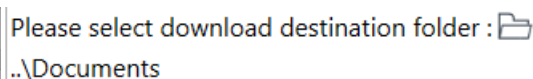


Figure 15 Selecting the destination folder for output

- 7 Click **Next**.
The Aria Support Tool analyzes the contents of the instrument diagnostic file to identify the cause and location of the block contamination failure.
When the review is complete, the Aria Support Tool screen displays the block contamination report. See [Figure 16](#) for an example report in which one of the prerequisite test failed. See [Figure 17](#) for an example report in which all prerequisite tests passed and contamination was detected in some of the wells for the some of the optical modules.

- 8 Refer to **Table 3** on page 20 for results interpretation and recommended actions.
- 9 (Optional) Click **Generate Report** to open a PDF of the report. Once open, you can save the PDF to a desired location.

A PDF of the report and a copy of the diagnostic file copied from the instrument are automatically saved to a sub-folder within the destination folder selected in **step 6**. The PDF file name includes a prefix with the naming convention: *instrument serial number_firmware version_timestamp*.

Click **Restart** to return to the starting screen of the Aria Support Tool.

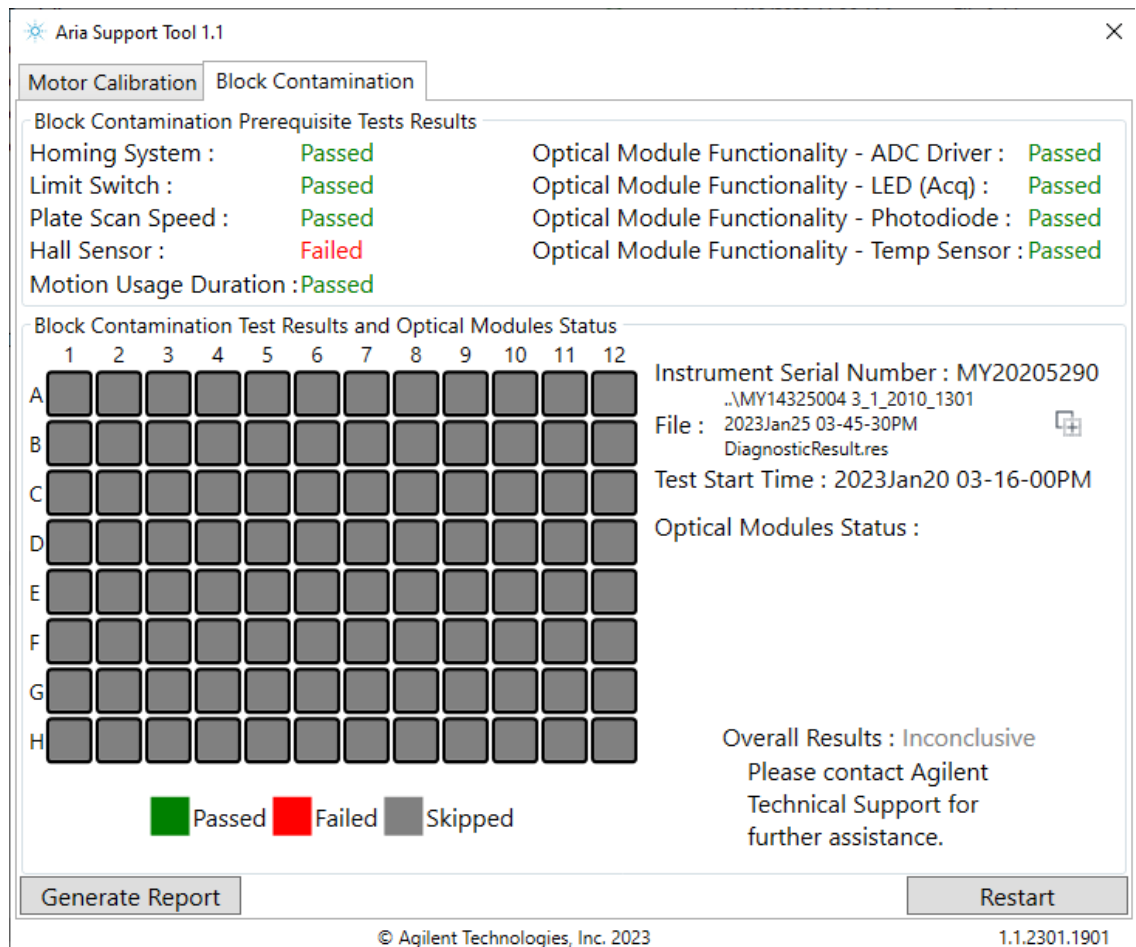


Figure 16 Block Contamination Report screen with a failed prerequisite test

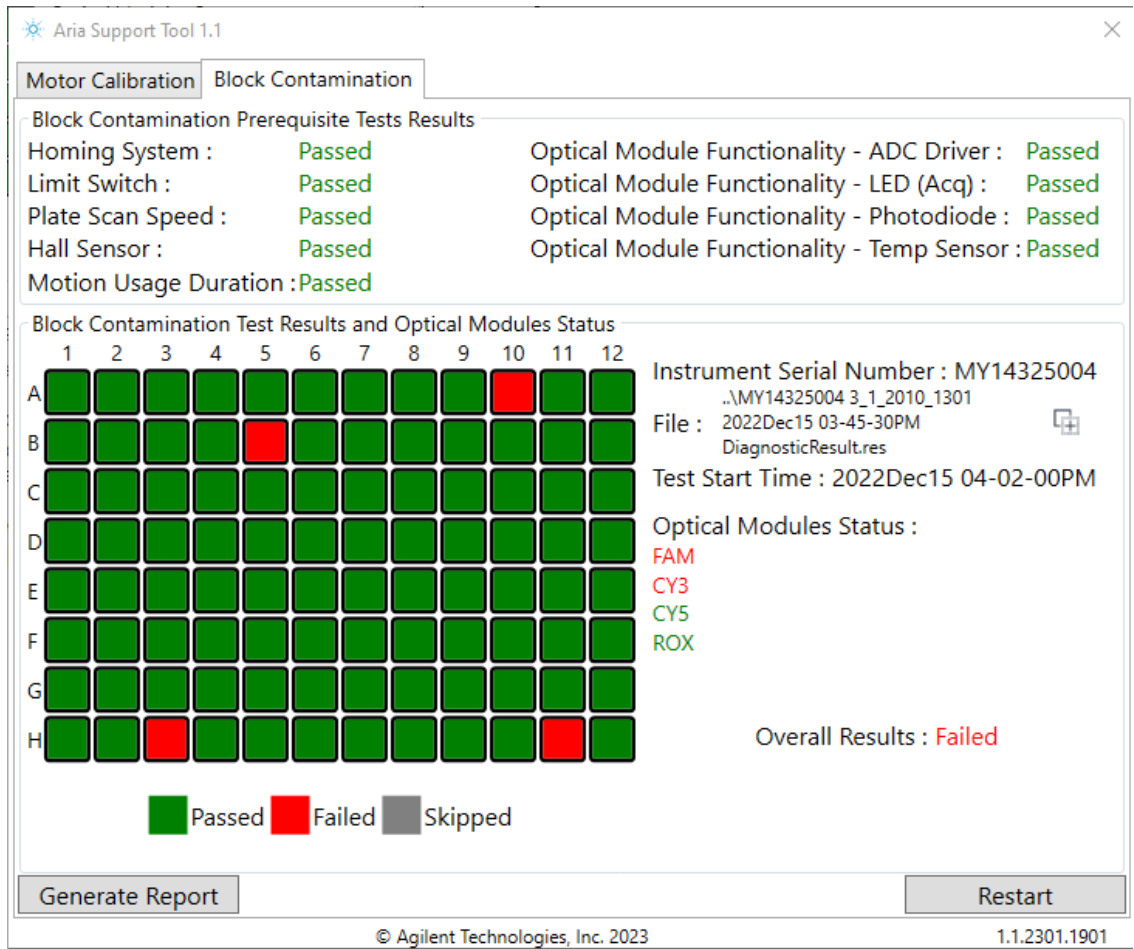


Figure 17 Block Contamination Report screen with all prerequisite tests passed

Table 3 Block contamination report results and recommended actions

| Result | Interpretation and action |
|---|--|
| Thermal block diagram is grayed out and optical module status information is not provided. Example: Figure 16 . | This result has 2 possible causes. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 One or more of the prerequisite tests failed (see the Block Contamination Prerequisite Tests Results section of the report). Contact Agilent Technical Support for further assistance. 2 The instrument diagnostic file did not include a block contamination test. Perform a block contamination test on the instrument to generate a new file and repeat. |
| One or more of the wells was found to have contamination. The contaminated wells are colored in red in the thermal block diagram. Detected optical modules are listed under Optical Modules Status . Optical modules listed in red identified contamination. Optical modules listed in green did not identify contamination. Example: Figure 17 . | Clean the contaminated wells using the instructions in “Cleaning the Thermal Block Wells” on page 25. Then, repeat the block contamination diagnostic test on the instrument as instructed in “Running the Block Contamination Test” on page 26. If the instrument fails again, re-run the Aria Support Tool to analyze diagnostic test results. If an entire row of wells failed, or if the same wells continue to exhibit contamination even after cleaning, the contamination may be on the window of the optical module(s) that identified contamination. For detailed optical module cleaning procedures, see the <i>Set Up and User Guide</i> , available on www.agilent.com , for the AriaMx or AriaDx system. Clean the optical module(s), then repeat the block contamination diagnostic test as instructed in “Running the Block Contamination Test” on page 26. |

Locate block contamination using the diagnostic file

- 1 Launch the Aria Support Tool.
- 2 Click the Block Contamination tab. Select **From a .res file**. (See [Figure 18](#).)

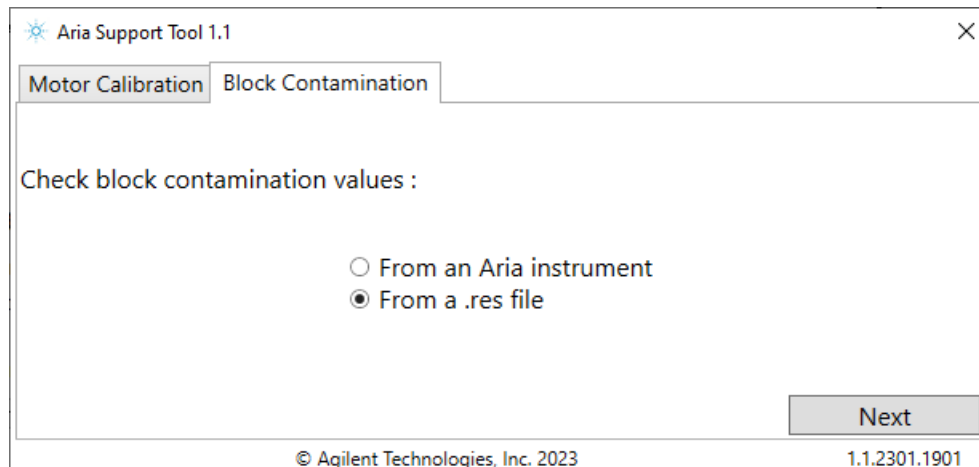


Figure 18 Block Contamination tab – select **From a .res file**

- 3 Click **Next**.
The Aria Support Tool advances to the next screen. (See [Figure 19](#).)

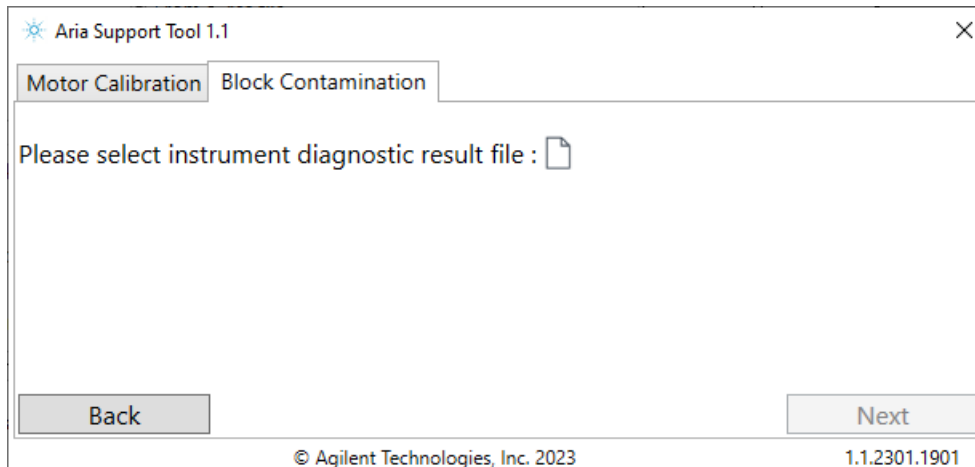


Figure 19 Block Contamination tab – Select instrument diagnostic file

- 4 Click the folder icon next to **Please select instrument diagnostic file**.
The Open dialog box opens.
- 5 Browse to the folder where the instrument diagnostic file is saved. Click the file to select it.
The instrument diagnostic file is the *.res file generated on the instrument after completing a set of diagnostic tests. The *.res file name may include a prefix with the naming convention: *instrument serial number_firmware version_timestamp*.
- 6 With the instrument diagnostic file selected, click **Open** in the Open dialog box.
The dialog box closes and the selected file name appears in the Aria Support Tool. (See [Figure 20](#).)

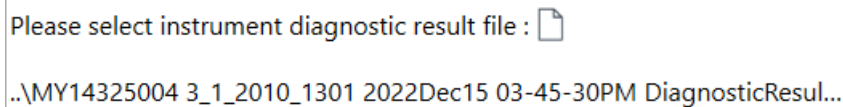


Figure 20 Selecting the instrument diagnostic file

- 7 Click **Next**.
The Aria Support Tool analyzes the contents of the instrument diagnostic file to identify the cause and location of the block contamination failure.
When the review is complete, the Aria Support Tool screen displays the block contamination report. See [Figure 16](#) for an example report in which one of the prerequisite test failed. See [Figure 17](#) for an example report in which all prerequisite tests passed and contamination was detected in some of the wells for the some of the optical modules.
- 8 Refer to [Table 3](#) on page 20 for results interpretation and recommended actions.
- 9 (Optional) Click **Generate Report** to open a PDF of the report. Once open, you can save the PDF to a desired location. The default PDF file name includes a prefix with the naming convention: *instrument serial number_firmware version_timestamp*.
Click **Restart** to return to the starting screen of the Aria Support Tool.

4 Reference

- Performing Motor Calibration [23](#)
- Cleaning the Thermal Block Wells [25](#)
- Running the Block Contamination Test [26](#)

This chapter contains instructions for performing actions on the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument that may be needed to help troubleshoot motor calibration and block contamination issues.

Performing Motor Calibration

NOTE

Running a motor calibration (MC) is not part of the normal operation of an AriaMx or AriaDx instrument. Do not perform a MC unless you have cause to do so. See [“About Motor Calibration”](#) on page 8 for information on the instances in which a MC is necessary.

The MC procedure is performed through the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument touchscreen (not through the Aria Support Tool). Follow the instructions below if you need to perform a MC. If a post-factory MC has already been performed, use the Aria Support Tool to verify the MC values.

- 1 From the Home screen of the instrument touchscreen, press **Settings > System Settings > Motor Calibration**.

The Motor Calibration screen opens. (See [Figure 21](#)).

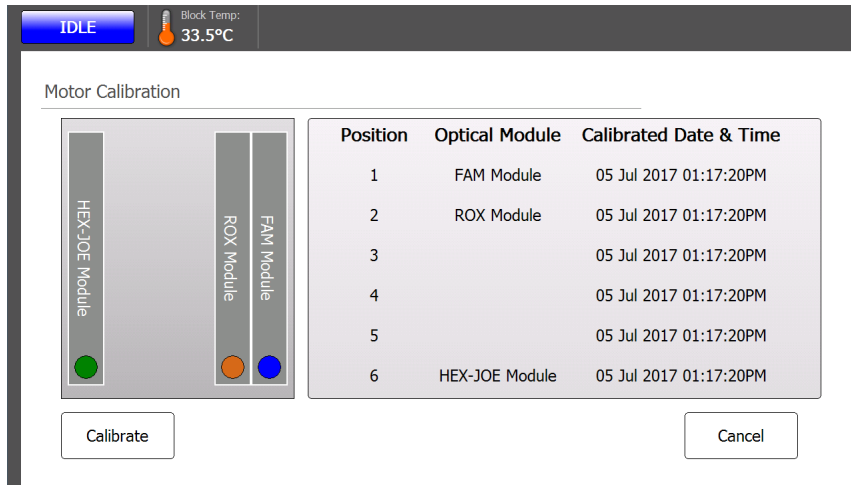


Figure 21 Aria touchscreen – Motor Calibration screen

- 2 Press **Calibrate**.

The screen opens a prompt with the next step for setting up motor calibration. (See [Figure 22](#).)

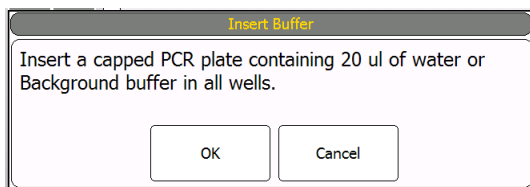


Figure 22 Insert Buffer prompt

- 3 Prepare the PCR plate described in the prompt.
 - a Add 20 μ L of water or TE buffer (10 mM Tris/1 mM EDTA) into all 96 wells of a PCR plate. Cap the wells or seal with film.
 - b Spin the plate briefly to collect the fluid at the bottom of the wells.

- c Insert the plate in the thermal block, close the hot top.
- 4 Press **OK** in the Insert Buffer prompt.
The screen opens a new prompt with the next step for setting up motor calibration. (See [Figure 23](#).)

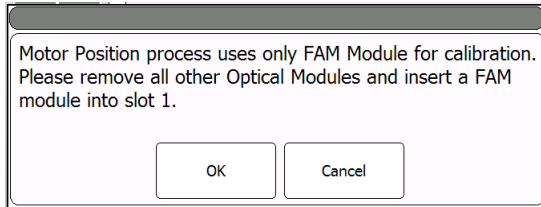


Figure 23 FAM module prompt

- 5 Adjust the arrangement of the optical modules as described in the prompt.
 - a Open the lid on the optical module housing carrier.
 - b Move the FAM optical module to slot 1 of the optical module housing. Slot 1 is the right-most slot in the housing.

To remove an optical module from its slot, lift the hinged tab on the top of the optical module, then use the tab to lift the optical module out of its slot. To re-install an optical module into the housing, lower the hinged tab until it snaps into place.
 - c Remove all other optical modules from the housing so that slots 2 through 6 are empty.
 - d Close the lid on the housing carrier.
- 6 Press **OK** in the FAM module prompt.
The motor calibration begins.
- 7 Follow the prompts on the screen to move the FAM optical module to each slot as instructed. (See for example.)

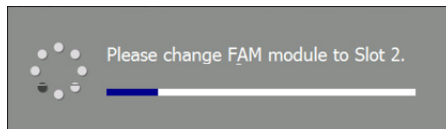


Figure 24 Change FAM module slot prompt

- 8 When the Motor Calibration Completed message opens, click **OK** to close the message and complete the process.
A *filter.txt* file is saved to the instrument containing the MC values.

Cleaning the Thermal Block Wells

If running the Aria Support Tool report for block contamination identified contaminated wells, then the recommended action is to clean the thermal block wells and then repeat the block contamination diagnostic test on the instrument. Use the instructions below to clean the thermal block wells. Then, see ["Running the Block Contamination Test"](#) on page 26 for instructions on running the block contamination diagnostic test.

- 1 Turn off instrument. Remove the power cable from the rear of the instrument.
- 2 Open the instrument door. Carefully slide the optical module housing carrier as far to the left as possible, until it comes to a stop.
- 3 Open the lid of the thermal block. Remove any plasticware that may be in the thermal block. Use compressed air to remove dust from the inside surface of the lid and the thermal block wells.
- 4 Wipe down the inside surface of the lid and surface of the thermal block with a dry, lint-free cloth.
- 5 Clean the wells that were identified as contaminated using a V-shaped cotton swab (e.g., Agilent p/n 9300-2574 or similar) moistened with 70% isopropyl alcohol. Make sure to fully wipe the interior of the wells with the swab. Allow wells to dry completely.
- 6 Reconnect the power cable and turn on the instrument.
- 7 Perform Background Calibration and reboot the Instrument.

Running the Block Contamination Test

Diagnostic tests, including the block contamination test, are performed through the AriaMx or AriaDx instrument touchscreen (not through the Aria Support Tool). Follow the instructions below to perform a block contamination test.

- 1 From the Home screen of the instrument touchscreen, press **Settings > Instrument Diagnostic > Run Diagnostics**.

The Select Diagnostic Test screen opens. (See [Figure 25](#)).

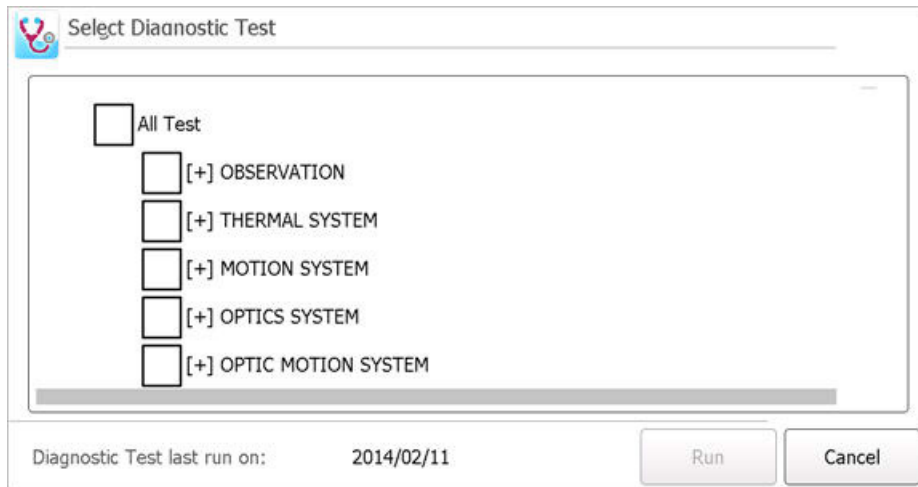


Figure 25 Aria touchscreen – Select Diagnostic Test screen

- 2 Select **All Test** and press **Run**.

The instrument performs all diagnostic tests, including the block contamination test.

Once the instrument has finished running the tests, you can display the results by pressing **View Result**. A new instrument diagnostic file (*.res) is generated.

If the test yields block contamination errors, run the Aria Support Tool using the latest instrument diagnostic file. See ["Finding Block Contamination Using the Aria Support Tool"](#) on page 16.

In This Book

This document describes how to use the Agilent Support Tool application.

