



Why choose UK NEQAS?

The UK NEQAS for Microbiology offers a number of features and benefits:

- A comprehensive service covering most areas of clinical microbiology - Enrolment in UK NEQAS will satisfy all EQA requirements of most participants
- Each area of microbiology is covered by individual schemes - Participants can enrol in any combination of schemes and thus pay only for what they wish to receive
- High frequency of distributions (especially in general bacteriology and parasitology) - Allows participants to regularly monitor the quality of their procedures
- Microorganisms distributed include some important pathogens infrequently isolated in many countries - Allows participants to be sure that they are capable of recognising 'imported' infections
- Established for more than 30 years - Long experience in providing reliable, realistic EQA specimens and useful analysis of participants' results
- Widely used in Europe - Participation demonstrates an internationally recognised commitment to quality
- Country specific performance is provided when more than 10 laboratories participate - Allows participants to compare their individual results with the national consensus
- The emphasis of the service is on education rather than on licensing - Participants receive more interesting and professionally satisfying EQA specimens
- The service is organised by professional microbiologists all with clinical laboratory experience - Participants receive realistic challenges and relevant advice on problems
- The service is subject to input from and scrutiny by UK professional associations - Ensures that the service is professionally relevant to participants' clinical laboratories
- Specimens are subjected to extensive characterisation and quality control before release to participants - Ensures that participants receive reliable, homogeneous material
- Free repeat specimens available on request together with previously distributed specimens and strains - Allows participants to investigate and resolve problems revealed by the scheme
- Individual performance data provided after each distribution and up to 10 years retrospectively on request - Allows participants to monitor current and recurring problems
- Minimum delay between the close of distributions and issue of reports (intended results displayed on the internet from the day after distribution closing dates) - Allows participants to investigate problems soon after discovery
- The internet site allows participants to submit their results electronically and to view distribution reports and digital images where relevant
- Wherever possible material used is recently derived from clinical material - Provides a more realistic and relevant challenge to participants' methods as material reflects recent epidemiology and that strains are not laboratory adapted
- All of the schemes are accredited by Clinical Pathology Accreditation UK Ltd (CPA) under Centre Reference Number 0001