

General Terms and Conditions of Scheme Participation

This is a summary of participants' responsibilities which are detailed throughout the Schemes' Manuals. Separate terms and conditions covering NEQAS Haematology and Transfusion Digital Services can be found at: <https://www.ukneqasbtlp.org> or <https://www.ukneqash.org>.

Particular attention is drawn to the following:

1. Registration

Participation in the UK NEQAS Schemes for Haematology and Blood Transfusion Laboratory Practice (BTLP) may begin at any time during the year with pro rata charges being made. Subscription charges include postage within the UK although additional carriage will be charged by arrangement where applicable and for laboratories outside of the UK.

Participation will commence following the return of completed registration documents, and a participation reference number (PRN) will be issued on completion of registration. If the participant's finance department require a purchase order to be stated on the invoice document, a purchase order number must be forwarded to UK NEQAS. The Scheme reserves the right to delay participation until payment has been made.

Participation will commence with the next scheduled distribution provided that documents are received at least three weeks prior to the date of the next distribution, subject to the availability of survey material.

Annual re-registration takes place within the first 3 months of the calendar year. Participants are required to confirm their registration details promptly and to provide a purchase order number for the following year. Where re-registration forms are not completed, this will be taken as an indication that registration should continue unchanged, unless a request to deregister is received in writing*. Any material sent in the meantime will be charged for.

Requests for changes in participation and test methodology should be notified to the Scheme in writing as required. Changes will commence with the next scheduled distribution provided that documents are received at least three weeks prior to the date of the next distribution. It is the participant's responsibility to maintain accurate contact detail on the UK NEQAS Haematology and Blood Transfusion website, www.ukneqash.org

The Scheme operates a website data entry facility. Once registration is complete, identity codes (IDs) and passwords will be issued to participants via a system generated email. It is participants' responsibility to maintain internal security of login details.

E-mail addresses supplied by the participating laboratories will be used for contacting the participants about matters relating to the operations of UK NEQAS, UK NEQAS related questionnaires and annual meetings or training courses.

Email addresses may also be used for contacting participants on national pathology or blood transfusion related matters. If you do not wish for your e-mail address to be used for these purposes, please uncheck the opt-in box on the registration form.

Contact details supplied to the scheme may be passed onto other registered participants for the purposes of sharing information relating to the use of techniques or equipment. If you do not wish this data to be shared with other registered participants, please uncheck the opt-in box on the registration form.

2. Payment

Participation in UK NEQAS Haematology and BTLP Schemes is deemed to be continuous for each NHS financial year (1st April to 31st March). Cancellation is required in writing and annual subscription fees will only be refunded pro rata if the participation period is less than nine months. Failure to pay the subscription charge may result in suspension of all services for the hospital/ organisation, although access to previous results entered via the Scheme website will be available. Subsequent re-instatement will incur a £50.00 fee. Any amendments made to invoices after they have been issued will also incur a £50.00 administration fee unless the amendment is the result of a fault of the Schemes. Any requests for refunds due to a payment made in error will have £20 deducted to cover administration and bank charges for international payments.

For non-UK participants, invoicing and administration is undertaken by QED Haematology Ltd and QED Blood Transfusion Ltd on behalf of UK NEQAS, Haematology and Transfusion.

3. Return of results

The Scheme will despatch the exercise material on the date published in the annual schedule, unless unforeseen circumstances require a change to the date; in this case, participants will be notified by email and/or by a message posted on the website. If material is not received within the timeframe specified in the Participants' Manual, it is the responsibility of the participant to contact the Scheme so that repeat material can be despatched. UK NEQAS does not take any responsibility for delays or losses due to the postal service.

Results saved to the website but not submitted, will be gathered by the scheme on the closing date, and analysed as if they had been submitted by the participant.

4. Oversight of the scheme and performance monitoring of unsatisfactory performance (applicable to UK participants only)

In registering for participation in UK NEQAS, a UK participating laboratory providing a direct or indirect clinical service agrees to abide by/uphold the conditions of EQA scheme participation of the RCPATH Joint Working Group (JWG) on Quality Assurance. These can be found at:

<https://www.rcpath.org/resourceLibrary/joint-working-group-on-quality-assurance-conditions-of-eqa-scheme-participation.html> – 'Conditions of EQA Scheme Participation' accessed as a pdf from this page.

The Scheme Organiser will only identify laboratories to the Chair and members of the appropriate National Quality Assurance Advisory Panel when there are unresolved performance concerns. In this event we will inform you of our intent to do so.

***Note: For clarity, "in writing" includes email, fax or letter throughout the document**