

## Why choose UK NEQAS?

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

### Professionally lead and educational service

- The service is organised by professional microbiologists all with clinical laboratory experience - Participants receive realistic challenges and relevant advice on problems
- Senior staff of sufficient calibre to recognise opportunities and develop the service
- The service is subject to input from and scrutiny by UK professional associations - Ensures that the service is professionally relevant to participants' laboratories
- The emphasis of the service is on education rather than on accreditation/licensing - Participants receive more interesting and professionally satisfying EQA specimens

### Comprehensive

- A comprehensive service covering the predominant areas of clinical microbiology - Enrolment in UK NEQAS will meet all EQA requirements for 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 - Allows participants to regularly monitor the quality of their procedures
- Micro-organisms distributed include some important pathogens rarely isolated in many countries - thus allowing participants to be confident that they are capable of recognising 'imported' infections
- Wherever possible material used is recently derived from clinical sources- Provides a more realistic and relevant challenge to participants' methods as material reflects recent epidemiology and that strains are not laboratory adapted

### Reliable

- Established for nearly 50 years - Long experience in providing reliable, realistic EQA specimens and useful analysis of participants' results
- Specimens are subjected to extensive characterisation and quality control prior to distribution - Ensures that participants receive reliable, stable and homogeneous material
- UK NEQAS for Microbiology, operated by Public Health England, and Public Health England, operating UK NEQAS for Parasitology, are UKAS accredited Proficiency Testing Providers, No. 4715 and No. 7512 respectively.

### International participant base

- Used worldwide – 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

### Customer focussed

- 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 with historical information 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
- Reports rich in information including clinical aspects.
- The website allows participants to submit their results electronically and to view distribution reports and digital images where relevant.