

1st November, 2017

Dear Participant,

We are delighted to inform you of the new developments in the field of External Quality Assessment.

To provide a seamless quality assurance service for genomics, Cytogenomics External Quality Assessment Service (CEQAS) and UK National External Quality Assessment Service (UK NEQAS) for Molecular Genetics are partnering to become **Genomics Quality Assessment (GenQA)** from 1st January, 2018. GenQA is part of the UK NEQAS Consortium.

Background

Both CEQAS and UK NEQAS for Molecular Genetics are part of the UK NEQAS Consortium and therefore have identical structure and governance. Both EQA providers have ISO17043 accredited EQAs. Originally, both schemes provided EQAs for the traditional laboratory genetic disciplines, respectively cytogenetics and molecular genetics. However, the blurring of traditional boundaries led to the development of joint EQAs and eventually to joint Specialist Advisory Groups. It is recognised that there is an increasing need for future genomic EQAs which require both cytogenetic and molecular genetics expertise.

By combining the expertise of the two Schemes, GenQA will enable provision of accredited genomic EQAs and competency based programmes for the entire genomic service provided by laboratories and clinics across the world as well as through the organisation of Best Practice meetings and educational/training meetings.

Q: What does this mean for my laboratory?

- Access to participate in all EQA schemes provided by both CEQAS and UK NEQAS for Molecular Genetics. Covering the end to end processes for Genomic Medicine, from DNA extraction, Molecular testing and reporting, Cytogenomic testing and reporting, Variant interpretation in the fields of: Genetic Diagnosis, Haematological neoplasms, Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis, Molecular Pathology Non-invasive prenatal testing and Prenatal diagnosis. In addition, there are EQAs covering Educational Clinical Genetics, Histopathology tumour assessment and Individual Competency Assessments.
- Opportunity to merge separate EQA website accounts to streamline EQA management for centres.
- Reduction in participation fees as only one annual registration fee will be applied.
- Major development of the IT systems is underway and this will continue during 2018 to provide a single login to GenQA and streamlined access to registration, management of EQAs, report submission, and records of participation and performance for all schemes.

Q: What do I need to do?

You do not need to do anything. You will be contacted by the EQA providers to ask if you would like to retain your current EQA provider accounts (if you have more than one) or wish to merge into one active account. Online registration for all EQA schemes will open on the 1st January, 2018.

We look forward to delivering EQA to your laboratory and Clinical service during 2018 and beyond.
With kind regards,

Ros and Sandi, On behalf of CEQAS and UK NEQAS for Molecular Genetics