The Royal College of Pathologists
Pathology: the science behind the cure

NATIONAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT ADVISORY PANEL (NQAAP)
Haematology

Terms of Reference

1. Remit

The Haematology NQAAP oversees is responsible for monitoring participant performance in UK External Quality Assessment Schemes in Haematology and Blood Transfusion. This remit is based on the Joint Working Group for Quality Assessment in Pathology terms of reference and conditions of participation for EQA Schemes and should be read in conjunction with those documents.

The NQAAP is responsible for promoting, coordinating and protecting high professional standards in EQA and encouraging the development of clinically relevant and appropriate EQA schemes.

The panel fulfils its remit by:

(i) Reviewing and approving all UK EQA Schemes relating to the practice of Haematology and Blood Transfusion. This will include agreeing criteria for performance standards and the management of persistent substandard performance in these schemes.
(ii) Receiving information on persistent poor performing laboratories from EQA Scheme organisers (within two weeks of a laboratory being identified as a persistent poor performer) and managing the referrals within an appropriate time scale.
(iii) Agreeing with scheme organisers' mechanisms for resolution of persistent poor performance. Generally the scheme organiser will make contact with the laboratory in accordance with the scheme standard operating procedure and inform the Chair of the panel with the proposed remedial action to be taken including the timescale. If this does not lead to a resolution the Chair of the panel will offer advice to the laboratory and, if appropriate, will arrange a visit to the laboratory by a panel member or an agreed expert. If persistent poor performance remains unresolved the panel Chair will submit a report to the Chair of the Joint Working Group for Quality Assessment in Pathology
(iv) Receiving and resolving complaints from scheme participants where these have not been resolved by scheme organisers or steering committees.
(v) To oversee the satisfactory operation of EQA schemes in laboratory haematology and transfusion medicine which perform analyses for healthcare in the UK.
(vi) Producing an annual report of its activities for the Royal College of Pathologists and the Joint Working Group for Quality Assessment in Pathology.

2. Accountability

The panel is accountable to the Joint Working Group for Quality Assessment in Pathology, which in turn is accountable to The Royal College of Pathologists, Professional Performance Panel.

3. Membership

The membership comprises:

- a Chair appointed by the Royal College of Pathologists
- a nominee of the British Society for Haematology
- a nominee of the Association of Clinical Pathologists
- a nominee of the British Society for Haemostasis and Thrombosis
- a nominee of the British Blood Transfusion Society
- a nominee of the Institute of Biomedical Science.

One of the nominated members of the panel will be designated as Deputy Chair.

All members normally serve a three-year term of office and are eligible for one further term (with the exception of the Chair and Deputy Chair who may serve a maximum of three terms on the panel).

4. Operation

The panel will convene an annual meeting to receive and discuss annual reports from EQA schemes. This is normally held in mid-March at a location to be arranged by the panel Chair.

Meetings of the panel will be quorate when more than 30% of the nominated members are present. The Chair will produce written minutes of these meetings, which will be distributed to panel members and scheme organisers.

The panel will produce an annual report, which will be submitted to the Royal College of Pathologists.

Expenses of the panel will be claimed from the Royal College of Pathologists (from a fund created by a levy on EQA providers).