

**The Quality Policy of the UK NEQAS for Trace Elements  
External Quality Assessment Scheme**

The UK NEQAS for Trace Elements External Quality Assessment Scheme is committed to providing a service of the highest quality and shall be aware and take into consideration the needs and requirements of its users.

In order to ensure that the needs and requirements of users are met, the Scheme will:

- ❖ Operate a quality management system to integrate the organisation, procedures processes and resources so as to achieve and maintain the standards required for the scheme to operate successfully;
- ❖ Set quality objectives and plans in order to implement this quality policy;
- ❖ Ensure that all personnel are familiar with this quality policy and with all quality documentation, and implement the policies and procedures in their work;
- ❖ Commit to the health, safety and welfare of all its staff;
- ❖ Commit to relevant environmental legislation and standards;
- ❖ Ensure that visitors to the department will be treated with respect and that due consideration will be given to their safety while on site;
- ❖ Uphold professional values and be committed to good professional practice and conduct.

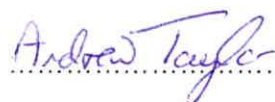
The UK NEQAS for Trace Elements External Quality Assessment Scheme will comply with the requirements of ISO 17043 (Conformity assessment – General requirements for proficiency testing) and is committed to the continuous improvement of all processes involved in the provision of a high quality proficiency testing scheme by ensuring:

- ❖ The quality management systems policies and procedures are being efficiently implemented and maintained to continually improve their effectiveness;
- ❖ The quality management systems continuing suitability and success by continuously reviewing its performance;
- ❖ Staff recruitment, training, development and retention at all levels to provide a full and effective service to our users;
- ❖ The appropriate procurement of all necessary supplies, equipment and consumable materials in such a way as to ensure the quality of the proficiency test items and that they are obtained in accordance with regulatory and ethical requirements;

- ❖ Procedures for the preparation, handling, storage and transport of proficiency test items are carried out in such a way as to ensure the quality and stability of the test items is maintained throughout the proficiency testing rounds;
- ❖ The proficiency test items will match, as closely as practicable, the matrix, measurands and concentrations encountered in routine testing;
- ❖ The evaluation of participant performance is conducted in a way that is timely, confidential, accurate and comprehensive using robust statistical designs and data analysis methods;
- ❖ Participants will have access to the necessary technical expertise and experience when seeking advice or guidance;
- ❖ Effective communication with participants, service users, members of the public, staff, partner organisations and all other internal and external stakeholders that is clear and concise, timely and relevant to the user by adopting a flexible communication approach that ensures prompt replies to enquiries and notification of changes to the service provided by the scheme;
- ❖ Any subcontractors used in the operation of the proficiency testing scheme will have the necessary experience and technical competence to carry out their assigned tasks;
- ❖ The identity of the participants and all information supplied by the participants will remain confidential.

The purpose of the UK NEQAS for Trace Elements External Quality Assessment Scheme's quality management system is to ensure that every operation is of superior value, with an aim to improve product quality, business processes, structures and personnel responsibilities. The system ensures suppliers meet high standards and gives focus to our customers' requirements, perceptions and needs.

Signed on behalf of the  
UK NEQAS for Trace Elements External Quality Assessment Scheme

 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017

Dr Andrew Taylor  
Scheme Director