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Re-registration 2025/26

It's time to re-register so that we can make sure you receive the EQA services you require without interruption and that the invoice for our services is accurate.

All documents relating to re-registration have been distributed electronically, so the only notification you will receive is the email with instructions for logging-in and details for re-registering.

The webpages allow you to create, deactivate, or change details for key contacts. It is essential that we have a single main contact and an invoice contact; a consultant contact is also required for clinical laboratories in the UK. The main contact address is used for delivery of samples so please ensure the address provided matches the delivery address. You can also add other contacts so that lab staff receive notification emails when samples are despatched (trial contact) or when reports are issued (report contact). Please ensure you inactivate contacts who no longer work for your organisation, otherwise they may still be able to enter data and access your reports.

Even if there are no changes, please take a few moments to check that your details are correct. A change to the delivery (main contact) address will be applied from the first distribution of the 2025/26 schedule, but all other contact detail changes will take effect immediately. Please note UK labs cannot deregister from full (scored) programmes without contacting us first.

You can register on the same page for all BTLP programmes for which you are the main contact, including Pre-transfusion Testing (PTT) (E and R exercises), Fetomaternal Haemorrhage (FMH), ABO Titration (ABOT), Direct Antiglobulin Testing (DAT), Red Cell Genotyping (RCG), Extended Red Cell Phenotyping (ERP) and Antenatal Titration (ANT), and also for TACT (see page 3). This will give you a single quote and a single invoice. Refer to page 4 for further information regarding annual meeting pre-paid places.

There has been an increase to the prices (around 3.5%) for 2025/26 for most programmes to cover inflation.

We appreciate your participation in our programmes, and if you need any assistance with the re-registration process or information on our services, please contact our Administration Team by phone on +44 (0)1923 587 111 or email using btlpadmin@ukneqas.org.uk.

Update on the BTLP Team

In 2024 UK NEQAS BTLP said farewell to two members of our team, Arnold Mavurayi and Esperanza Haynes. Dipika (Dee) Shah moved from a position as Senior EQA Scientist to a role as our Extended Phenotyping Lead Scientist. We are currently recruiting to our vacant EQA Scientist position.

Our full team:

Director: Richard Haggas

Operations Manager: Katy Veale

Quality Manager and Senior EQA Scientist: Claire Whitham

Extended Phenotyping Lead Scientist: Dipika Shah

EQA Scientist: 1 vacancy (due to be filled in March 2025)

Associate Practitioner: Hannah Ellicott

Update on BTLP Programmes

UK NEQAS BTLP remains ISO/IEC 17043:2010 accredited for PTT, FMH, DAT and ABOT programmes. We had a successful UKAS assessment in February 2024. In 2025 we will undergo our transition assessment to the new ISO/IEC 17043:2023 standards.

Pre-transfusion Testing (PTT)

2024 saw no major changes to the PTT programme.

In exercise 24R5 we sent an additional sample as part of an emergency exercise together with a questionnaire related to provision of components in an emergency. Results from the analysis of this will be available in early 2025.

Fetomaternal Haemorrhage (FMH)

2024 saw no major changes to the FMH programme.

ABO Titration (ABOT)

2024 saw no major changes to the ABOT programme.

Direct Antiglobulin Test (DAT)

The DAT programme exercises continue to be issued with the four PTT 'R' exercises. UK and non-UK labs are split into different exercises and each cohort receives a different set of samples.

Point of Care Testing - D typing

UK NEQAS BTLP runs a programme for any users performing D typing at the point of care where the results are used to determine whether anti-D prophylaxis is indicated. There are four exercises per year and each exercise includes three whole blood samples for D typing. For more information please contact the Scheme.

Extended Red Cell Phenotyping (ERP)

The ERP programme assesses phenotyping for a range of common antigens four times a year. In 2024 we introduced scoring and performance monitoring for this programme. An application for accreditation of this programme has been sent to UKAS for assessment.

BTLP Pilot Programmes

Red Cell Genotyping (RCG)

The RCG programme assesses genotype and predicted phenotype for a range of blood groups four times a year. Two 'patient' whole blood samples are provided for D, C, c, E, e, K, k, Fy^a, Fy^b, Fy, Jk^a, Jk^b, M, N, S, s, Do^a, and Do^b typing.

This will be the next programme to become a fully scored accredited programme after ERP.

Antenatal Antibody Titration (ANT)

There are four exercises per year, distributed with four of the six PTT 'E' exercises. At least one 'patient' plasma sample is provided for titration each time, and extra information is collected on the follow-up undertaken if a similar result were to be obtained in clinical practice.

All pilot programmes are open to UK and non-UK laboratories; it is easy to join during on-line re-registration.

For more details of these pilots, go to www.ukneqasbtlp.org or contact us via btlp@ukneqas.org.uk

2025 Programme Developments and Proposals

No more paper instructions

From April 2025 we will no longer be sending paper instructions in our exercise packages.

The instructions will still be available from the data entry page, or by navigating to <https://www.ukneqash.org/downloads/xxxxxxInstructions.pdf> where xxxxxx is the exercise code

D genotyping pre-pilot

We will be running a pre-pilot for D genotyping, with an emphasis on detection of D variants (weak D or partial D). If successful we will apply to the UK NEQAS organisation to run this as a pilot programme.

Training Assessment and Competency Tool (TACT)

The continuing aim of this system is to provide laboratory staff and managers with an interactive knowledge-based training and competency assessment tool; helping to monitor theoretical knowledge of Biomedical Scientists working in blood transfusion laboratories. Currently, TACT features a single scenario, based on routine request handling, representing a typical request received in a hospital blood transfusion laboratory, but we have plans to expand upon the current system iteration to bring you a second scenario type.

We are now working on developing serological crossmatching as part of the TACT system to run alongside the selection of red cells scenarios.

If you would like the fees for TACT membership to be added to your BTLP re-registration fees, the re-registration website has a field for you to enter how many TACT memberships and how many managerial memberships you would like for the next financial year.

Comprehensive user guide at:-
<http://www.ukneqasbtlp.org>

Subscribe at any time at:-
<http://tact.ukneqasbtlp.org.uk>

Scheme Committees and Meetings

BTLP Steering Committee

The UK NEQAS Steering Committee for BTLP is a professional group that advises the Scheme and operates according to guidelines and terms of reference produced by the UK NEQAS organisation. The composition of this committee reflects the different professional groups and national organisations involved in delivering blood transfusion services to patients in the UK.

Members serve for three years, and travel expenses are reimbursed by the UK NEQAS organisation where applicable. The Committee meets three times a year and helps to plan and organise the Annual Participants' Meeting. In 2023, two meetings were held virtually with one face-to-face meeting occurring in November.

The Steering Committee has an overview of all the BTLP programmes, but the main focus is on the PTT, DAT and ERP programmes, as the other programmes have scientific advisory groups. Issues such as supply of material for EQA, the relevance and design of the programmes in the context of new national initiatives / guidelines are covered, and proposed new developments are reviewed. Changes in local practice that committee members may be aware of are discussed, and the committee advises the Scheme on issues raised by participants.

Scientific Advisory Groups

Scientific Advisory Groups (SAGs) are in place to monitor and advise the other BTLP programmes. There are three SAGs overseeing FMH, Titration (ABOT / ANT) and Red Cell Genotyping, and all report to the BTLP Steering Committee, so if you have expertise and a special interest in any of these areas...

...Get involved

We really appreciate the work of our committee members, and it is a great way to get involved, so if you are interested in joining the Steering Committee or SAGs please contact either Richard Haggas (Scheme Director) or Katy Veale (Operations Manager) to discuss informally. SAG and Steering Committee members are also invited to the annual meeting.

If you do decide to apply, we'll need a CV, a supporting letter from a professional referee and a supporting statement from your employer agreeing to release you to attend meetings.

Replacement of Steering Committee and SAG members is a continuous but informal process and a vacancy that matches the expertise, professional group and UK region may not be immediately available, but we will keep all applications on record.

Annual Meeting 2024

The 2024 meeting held at Old Trafford Football Stadium, Manchester in November was attended by approximately 260 delegates and covered a wide range of transfusion topics including ISO 15189, serological case studies, and a patient experience of aplastic anaemia and bone marrow transplant.



Date for the diary – Annual Meeting 2025

We are intending to hold an annual meeting with the BBTS Blood Bank Technology SIG at The Birmingham Conference & Events Centre on 27 November 2025 - preliminary programme to follow. There will be an opportunity to pre book places to this meeting during the reregistration process in March 2024.



We realise that not everyone has the opportunity to attend the meeting due to cost and work pressures, and if you would like us to take part in a local 'technical discussion group' meeting to give a presentation or just be there to answer questions related to the BTLP EQA programmes and issues highlighted by the exercises, please contact us and we will do our best to be there or join you virtually depending on the circumstances.