



Terms of Reference Working group: Haematology

The purpose of this document is to clarify the terms of reference for the EQALM working group (WG) for **Haematology**.

A WG is a set of EQALM members or third parties with an interest in a common project addressing scientific or educational external quality assessment (EQA) issues. The WG may focus on a particular speciality or on a specific topic. The working group must clearly define the area of interest, their aims, and objectives. The WG proposal should include specific objectives with associated timelines and must be approved by the Scientific Committee.

The EQALM Executive Board will appoint Chairs of WGs for a period of 3 years and this appointment is renewable once for a period of 3 years. Chair of WG may be issued from EQALM membership or third parties. The WG steering Committee consists of the chairperson of the WG and the project leaders. The Chair is responsible for the output of the WG and must report back to the Scientific Committee.

Tasks and purpose

- 1.1 The Haematology WG is established to develop and coordinate projects in the field of general haematology on behalf of the EQALM Scientific Committee.
- 1.2 The objectives of the WG are:
 - 1.2.1 To establish a steering committee to lead the WG activities
 - 1.2.2 To hold a WG meeting at the annual EQALM symposium
 - 1.2.3 To identify and prioritise projects in the field
 - 1.2.4 To manage projects within a practical timeframe that considers other work in hand in the wider EQALM organisation
 - 1.2.5 To report activities to the EQALM scientific committee
 - 1.2.6 To report activities to the wider EQALM membership
 - 1.2.7 To support and promote the EQALM organisation through publication of projects, posters and presentations

WG Steering Committee

Barbara De la Salle
Erika Sarkany
Stéphanie Alberede
Joan Lluís Vives Corrons

The WG Steering Committee is accountable to the EQALM Scientific Committee and the EQALM Board.

Members

- 2.1 Membership of the WG is open to any EQALM member with an interest in the field of haematology.
- 2.2 The WG is led by a steering committee, which has a Chairperson.
- 2.3 Membership of the Steering Committee is open to any member of the WG but will be limited to a maximum of ten individuals, for operational purposes.
- 2.4 The WG chairperson is a member of the EQALM Scientific Committee.
- 2.5 The WG will abide by EQALM policy on declarations of interest and length of service for the chairperson and members.

Current ongoing projects

3.1 Reference ranges survey

This project is the highest priority work item. Work on this project will continue by email and not wait for the next Steering Group meeting.

Questions will include:

- The source of reference ranges in use (laboratory data, healthy volunteer samples, manufacturers' information sheets, published guidelines, text books)
- Are there national guidelines in place in the country / region
- The ranges for the following analytes: WBC, RBC, Hb, Hct, MCV, MCH, Platelet count, neutrophil count and lymphocyte count.
- The units of measurement used. SI Units are preferred and will be used for recommendations.
- Are there different ranges for different patient demographics (Ranges will be requested according to age, gender, ethnic origin and whether the patient is pregnant or not. The definition of ethnicity will be taken from published information, e.g. any WHO definitions).

The survey will be circulated electronically via the EQALM Central Office to the EQALM members, for them to send to their laboratories. Target date for circulation is June 2022 so that there will be information to report to the EQALM symposium.

3.2 Post analytical EQA survey

The aim is to make a distribution in the next year, although the priority is lower than the reference range survey. To progress the development, the following actions will be taken, when time allows:

- SA will ask the EQALM board for permission to make a simple survey (target date to be confirmed) asking the EQA providers for details of the FBC instruments registered in their schemes and the numbers of each group, by instrument manufacturer and instrument model
- We should consider the establishment of a panel of expert advisors to write the reports

- EQA providers will be engaged to translate the report into their local language
- We will need to consider the platform for delivery of the exercise
- BD may have some staff time to develop the content of a pilot case (plots, questions etc.)
- We should review the previous NOKLUS reports (and share if necessary).

3.3 PK pilot project

This project is reported by UK NEQAS Haematology as an extension to previous work on EQA for rare diseases with JVC. A further exercise has been planned for early summer 2022 and will be reported to the EQALM meeting.

3.4 Contribution to the VM sharing platform project

The members of the Haematology WG have been heavily involved with the development of the VM WG guideline, which is nearing completion. Although this project is being led by the VM WG, the Haematology WG members have contributed a lot of time in meetings and review of the proposed publication.

Financial aspects

EQALM does not finance working group chairs or members. For specific and approved projects, the Executive Board can allocate financial support.

Publication list (draft – to be updated)

Guidelines for blood smear preparation and staining procedure for setting up an external quality assessment scheme for blood smear interpretation. Part I: control material

Haematology Working Group of the European External Committee for External Quality Assurance Programmes in Laboratory Medicine (EQALM):

Juan-Lluis Vives Corrons, Stephanie Albare`de, George Flandrin, Silke Heller, Katalin Horvath, Berend Houwen, Gunnar Nordin, Erika Sarkani, Milan Skitek, Marjan Van Blerk and Jean-Claude Libeer,*

Clin Chem Lab Med 2004;42(8):922–926 □ 2004 by Walter de Gruyter • Berlin • New York

Guidelines for setting up an External Quality Assessment Scheme for blood smear interpretation. Part II: survey preparation, statistical evaluation and reporting

Hematology Working Group of the European External Committee for External Quality Assurance Programmes in Laboratory Medicine (EQALM):

Juan-Lluis Vives Corrons, Marjan Van Blerk, Stephanie Albare`de, Gabriela Gutierrez, Silke Heller, Gunnar Nordin, Milan Skitek, Andre Deom, Katalin Horva`th, Barbara De la Salle and Jean-Claude Libeer,*

Clin Chem Lab Med 2006;44(8):1039–1043 □ 2006 by Walter de Gruyter • Berlin • New York. DOI 10.1515/CCLM.2006.174

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