



6th PT/EQA Workshop – Rome 2008

Report from WG4



What issues are specific to microbiology PT/EQA?

- Convenors:
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- Objectives:
 - Consider those factors that are specific to microbiology PT/EQA



Q1 - How does microbiology PT/EQA differ?


- Lack of availability of real samples
- Statistics & performance scoring
- Methodology
- Unpredictable behaviour of microorganisms

Q2 - What challenges do microbiology PT/EQA providers face, and how do they address these?

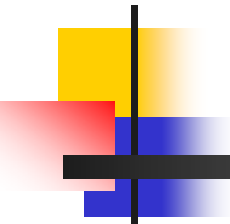


- Transport/safety issues
 - Costs and regulations higher (not always)
 - Customer confidence in materials
 - Bioterrorism issues
 - Import issues (Customs Officials!)

Q2 - What challenges do microbiology PT/EQA providers face, and how do they address these?



- Stability issues
 - Up to provider to assure stability
 - May need short testing timescales
 - Often influences real vs simulated sample choice



Q3: How important is the accuracy of the result in microbiology?

Very!

- As important as Chemistry, we just work to a different scale
- Often qualitative not quantitative
- No true correct result (statistics!)
- Method limitation
 - Less than and more than results are common in microbiology

Q4: Are the current international standards and guides for PT/EQA appropriate for microbiology?



Varied response

- 4 providers think yes
 - Generic to fit all requirements
- 12 providers think no
 - Written by chemists for chemists
 - Need guidance document to support



Q5: What are the future requirements for microbiology PT/EQA?

- Precision characteristic to appear in future ISO methods
- Micro CRM's available but not traceable to SI units
- Measurement uncertainty – is it relevant to microbiology, (it's used in serology/virology)
- Magic organism – stable, well behaved, exact numbers, doesn't multiply, doesn't die!