

8th PT/EQA Workshop - Berlin 2014

Report from WG 6

Harmonisation of performance assessment in qualitative PT/EQA schemes

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A Focus for Analytical Chemistry in Europe

Harmonisation of performance assessment in qualitative PT/EQA schemes

Participants:

- 41 participants
- 7 accreditation bodies/regulators
- 25 PT providers
- 15 End users
- 0 Other stakeholders



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Harmonisation of performance assessment in qualitative PT/EQA schemes

Participants:

- 50% food, 40% water, 10% clinical,
- 50% micro, 50% chem
- Other sectors
 - Consumer products safety
 - Forensic, Veterinary, Textiles
 - Occupational hygiene
- 10 offering qualitative PT, 4 perform scoring



What are the different performance assessment systems (scoring systems) presently used in qualitative PT/EQA schemes?

- No scoring
 - Salmonella detection in food - Present/Absent
 - Sterility tests - Sterile/not sterile
 - Antibiotics in milk - Pass/fail
 - Identification of micro-organisms - Right/wrong



What are the different performance assessment systems (scoring systems) presently used in qualitative PT/EQA schemes?

- Simple scoring
 - Give 1 point for right and 0 points for wrong
 - Does this over-complicate it?

 - How to weight results e.g is false positive worse result than false negative



What are the different performance assessment systems (scoring systems) presently used in qualitative PT/EQA schemes?

- **Complex scoring**
 - Particle sizing, large particles easier to find than small particles, therefore weight result depending upon test

 - Fungi identification, scoring based on correct genus, species etc



What are the different performance assessment systems (scoring systems) presently used in qualitative PT/EQA schemes?

- **Interpretation**
 - Clinical case studies, presence and levels of drugs, judged on identification, interpretation and advice given
 - Forensic studies, complex system looking at interpretation, reporting etc



Do we want/need harmonization?

Mostly no:

- PT providers already offering scores may have to change their systems
- No clear drivers
- Certain fields very difficult to harmonise
 - Sensory testing, different criteria across labs
 - Environmental due to different legislation across countries
 - May be very specific so no-one to harmonise with
 - Brings everything down to a number



Do we want/need harmonization?

Some Yes,

- May be easier for participants to compare
BUT may compare PT's and chose the easiest
- To get uniform statistics
- Easier for assessors
- Only if flexible NOT mandatory and not all fields



What difficulties does the lack of harmonization cause?

- Causes more difficulties to harmonise
- Too many variables
- Different requirements for different sample types, analytes, sectors and countries
- However, would improve being able to compare results with other participants/across schemes/over time



What are the areas that can be harmonised in qualitative PT/EQA schemes?

- To not have so many different approaches
- Need more information on types of scoring systems
- New schemes can use guidance rather than invent their own 'new' scoring systems
- Suggest use their own scoring systems but harmonise to some extent, for example use a colour-coding system of red/amber/green
- Consistent criteria e.g high score should always be good for example



How can we reach harmonization and what is needed to accomplish this?

- We don't really want full harmonisation
- Need more training/information
- Software
- Surveys /guides
 - Eurachem PTWG
 - EQALM
- Pilot studies
- Not mandatory
- Flexibility