

December 2025

Subscription Charges for 2026-2027 – UK Public and Private Sector Laboratories (£)
with additional conditions/clarification for non-UK Participants

All participation requirements and purchase orders must be entered online (except overseas Distributors and POCT services), via the usual Results and Report service, during the re-registration period (January / February 2026).

- Legally, you are signing up to EQA Schemes operated by University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and they are all "Birmingham Quality Schemes". Many additionally have UK NEQAS branding, and this may be subject to change, but in any event, all Schemes are operated under the same QMS and the scope of each is clearly set out in our UKAS Schedule of Accreditation.
- Invoices are raised by "University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust" [VAT registration no GB 654 9651 01]
- Bank account details for payment are shown on invoices; settlement terms 30 days from date of invoice
- **We require a scan/pdf of your Purchase Order [PO] number documentation against the online re-registration amount (registration will be open mid-January to February 2026).** If you cannot submit a PO at this time you will be sent a quotation in March and we expect to receive a PO by mid-April, at the latest, to ensure continuation of service.
- If you are putting your EQA services out to tender, please do not rely on your Finance / Procurement Departments talking to our Trust's Finance / Procurement Departments. Speak to us directly, first. We are aware that there have been changes to procurement legislation, in particular the Provider Selection Regime (PSR) legislation. It may be that a 'Direct Award' route can be used because our services are more than the provision of EQA material — our schemes include pre-analytical and post-analytical aspects which is a requirement for ISO 15189:2022. The direction of travel is certainly going via generic portals / gateways, but if you don't engage with us you might end up having something forced on you which doesn't meet your needs. Often there are local systems / procedures to selectively allow you to by-pass some of the entry level form filling to allow your existing EQA provider to be 'shortlisted'. We obviously welcome fair competition, but please make sure you are fully specifying the service that you need and that which your patients would expect.
- We will invoice you in May 2026 (if we have been provided with a PO number and the correct details to raise an Invoice) and expect to have received payment in full by 30th June 2026. If after this date, we have not received any communication from you we will switch off your access to your Reports which will invalidate your accreditation status.
- Make sure that you have provided the correct billing details for your organisation. These do seem to change, and it is the responsibility of the Participant (not just your Finance Department) to ensure that you have provided us with the correct details.
- If your Organisation is in the fortunate position of being able to pay an invoice without the requirement to have a PO number in advance, we still need a written confirmation to that effect.
- Subsidiary participations are charged at **67%** of the charge listed, so the majority of our Participants are paying a very reduced rate compared to the 'List Price'.
- From April 2026 we are consolidating our UK NEQAS for Clinical Chemistry Scheme (fortnightly) and UK NEQAS Monthly Clinical Chemistry Scheme into a single Monthly Clinical Chemistry EQA Scheme service. This Scheme is accredited to ISO/IEC 17043:2023.
 - The acceptable return rate for the UK NEQAS Monthly Clinical Chemistry Scheme is 100%.
 - We will not be accepting 'late results' as a routine option
 - We will not be accepting 'amended results' as a routine option, but may at the Organiser's discretion make such amendments
- The prices include delivery of specimens by Royal Mail post. Many Laboratories have asked for their specimens to be sent by Courier, and an additional surcharge for this service is levied. Please phone to discuss your needs.
- If you ask for specimens to be delivered to a central point for you to subsequently forward to other laboratories in your network, it is your responsibility to ensure that specimen quality is not compromised during this transit.
- It is expected that you participate in all elements of each Scheme, whether these are pre-analytical, or post-analytical interpretations or Questions and Answers. If there are specific analytical issues we will ask for Reagent and Calibrator lot number information. We need you to complete this so that the MHRA has the correct information when communicating with manufacturers. All of this is particularly relevant if you have an automated return of results system. eg BQ-NPEX or LabgnosticEQA. We will ask that you sign up to separate T&Cs for use of LabgnosticEQA with our Schemes and we reserve the right to turn this off if you are not complying with Scheme elements that are not currently automated.
- Subscription charges for the new financial year are listed overleaf for Schemes operated from Birmingham
 - By signing up to our services you are deemed to agree with our Terms and Conditions (see below) and this constitutes a contract between your legal entity and our legal entity.
 - We have absorbed costs where possible and have enhanced our services and believe we are still offering a great value-for-money service.
 - Although many Schemes have had a price increase, we are holding the list price for a number of Schemes where we have managed to make savings.
 - We have restricted price increases to reflect the true costs that it takes to run each scheme and to take into account NHS pay increases, NI payments, rent, electricity and postal costs. This has also taken into account inflation and cost pressures.
 - Subsidiary participations are charged at 67 % of the charge listed and since most Participants have subsidiary registrations which means that, essentially, you get four registrations for the price of three.
 - We will surcharge any lab that has not made an attempt to pay.
 - We will switch off the service for any lab that, in a timely manner, has not made an attempt to pay.
 - Charges cover the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.
 - Charges to participants are subject to VAT (currently at 20%) unless you are an NHS body in England.
 - Participation starting during the period is charged above *pro rata*, to cover additional administration.
 - No refunds are given for termination during the period.
 - Participation is deemed to be continuous for 2026 – 2027 unless Birmingham Quality is advised of any discontinuation by 28 February 2026, and for 2027 – 2028 unless advised by 28 February 2027.
 - There are 11 'Monthly' Distributions in the financial year which takes into account Easter, Christmas and New Year etc.



For non-UK Participants we are trying to harmonise our services as much as possible with our standard UK approach.

The Terms of Conditions have the following key differences for non-UK Participants:

- ❑ For some countries we have Distributor arrangements and enrolment is via the Distributors. You will not be using the on-line Registration process. The price you will pay will be set by your Distributor taking into account local considerations.
 - ❑ We require payment in GBP. If you are in the EU you still need to provide an EORI number and charges to participants are subject to VAT at 20% unless you provide your full VAT registration number for us to include on your invoice. All invoices need to be paid net of bank charges; the amount on the invoice is the amount that needs to be transferred into our account.
 - ❑ Following Brexit and associated changes to postal regulations, most non-UK Participants are now using a consolidated weekly Courier approach which will incur a cost on top of the prices listed here. Participants that have already asked for this will be set up on our online re-registration, but if you haven't used couriers and want to start, please contact us to discuss options for your country.
- For non-UK Participants that access and pay for our services via a Distributor, our On-line re-registration is switched off. Please tell both us and your Distributor about any additional services you require.

Discounts

- Discounts are applicable to subsidiary participations; Discounts are not applied to the UK NEQAS for Interpretative Comments Scheme.
- We have reduced the price of standard participation in the UK NEQAS for Interpretative Comments Scheme to encourage all Participants that make comments as part of their job role to participate. We are restricting Group membership to Trainees.
- For the UK NEQAS for Newborn Screening Scheme a slightly different algorithm is used which is set in favour of, and helps to minimise the costs for, the Screening Laboratory.

Services

- Our Schemes are accredited by UKAS to ISO/IEC 17043:2023.
- Our schedule as UKAS accredited proficiency testing provider No. 7860 is available at www.ukas.com.
- Pilot Schemes and non-UK NEQAS Services are clearly identified.
- There is no additional charge for our **Network Reports service**, which is available to those responsible for multiple instrument participations, at the same or different sites. Though **Free of Charge (FoC)**, you **must** contact us to set these up for you.
- X-Lab Ltd., the provider of Labgnostic (formerly NPEx), Labgnostic EQA and LabReach are in the process of rolling-out their LabgnosticEQA product. As things stand, we, Birmingham Quality (UK NEQAS) cannot actively take on new participants using our existing BQ-NPEX service, though we are permitted to support existing users of the BQ-NPEX service (to amend/update their repertoire, etc.). We don't know when this will stop being available, but the BQ-NPEX service will remain FoC for existing participants during this period. X-Lab Ltd. and LabgnosticEQA are independent of Birmingham Quality and therefore if you are unable to return results using their service, you still need to return results manually and you need to discuss with them, as your provider, the reason for service failure. We have a separate Policy for use of LabgnosticEQA services with Birmingham Quality Schemes and you will be provided with a copy before you are enrolled on this service. Birmingham Quality reserves the right to stop you using the LabgnosticEQA component for Birmingham Quality Schemes if you are not complying with all requirements of the Scheme.
- We shall be offering new Pilot Schemes during the year, and all eligible participants will be informed.
- Though we may need to charge for some of these new services, any charges will be dealt with separately so you should not delay providing us with an order for the existing services.
- We can offer courier delivery of our specimens. This service can use either your account **or** our account, but there are associated costs either way and there is a minimum duration.
- Since our material is representative of clinical samples, on some occasions we have limited volume and though we will endeavour to provide sufficient for single analysis, regrettably we cannot guarantee sufficient volume for repeat analysis.
- We will always send out repeat specimens for the current distribution **FoC** if you have issues before the closing date, but we will charge for multiple sets of back specimens for verification, validation or trouble-shooting purposes.
- If there are additional unforeseen charges following Brexit / the Windsor Agreement or charges following edicts from the Government, we reserve the right to pass on such changes at cost to Participants, but we will not make a profit on any such levy.
- For each Scheme, the following actions will be effective from the day you notify us that you no longer wish to be a participant in that Scheme (or from the day we suspend your services due to non-payment of participation fees). After three months you will lose access to (1) all commentaries / information under the Scheme button, (2) viewing your results on the data entry page and (3) viewing your method information. After twelve months you will also lose access to viewing your reports.

On-line re-registration

- The preferred way to renew is to log-on to our Results and Reports service and click the yellow Re-registration button (This opens January/February 2026). The simplest way to renew allows you to enter a Purchase Order (PO) number on-line which will allow us, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, to send an Invoice to your Finance Department. We also require a scan/pdf of the PO number documentation to be sent to us so that we can validate information before we raise an Invoice.
- Please contact us (phone is best) to request further information if you are considering major changes to your participation.
- **You do not need to change your UK NEQAS ID if you are changing analysers**, whether from the same or a different supplier. We can reset your rolling time-window statistics to reflect your new instrumentation. Keeping the same UK NEQAS ID has advantages when using our Dashboard functionality.
- As stated earlier, for non-UK Participants that access and pay for our services via a Distributor, our On-line re-registration is switched off. Please tell both us and your Distributor about any additional services you require.

December 2025

Birmingham Quality Terms and Conditions of EQA participation

[1] Legally, you are signing up to EQA Schemes operated by University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust [UHBFT] and they are all "Birmingham Quality Schemes". Many additionally have UK NEQAS branding, and this may be subject to change, but in any event, all Schemes are operated under the same QMS and the scope of each is clearly set out in our UKAS Schedule of Accreditation.

[2] Specimens distributed as part of the Schemes should be treated, handled, and disposed of as if they were clinical samples. Participants must ensure that their laboratory facilities and expertise are adequate to ensure the safe handling of these specimens during their participation in the Schemes.

[3] Membership of the Schemes starts on 1st April each year and continues until 31st March in the next year. If a participant joins part way through the annual period, a reduced fee may be payable reflecting the proportion of the annual service to be supplied for that part year. A participant may withdraw from the Schemes at any time, but no refund will be given of fees paid. Birmingham Quality may amend the design of Schemes during the year and reserves the right to suspend services which are dependent on supply of clinical materials.

[4] Each laboratory will be registered under a unique code number, which is common across UK NEQAS Clinical Chemistry centres in the case of UK NEQAS services. The fact of participation, identifiable raw data and identifiable performance scores are confidential to the participant and will not be released by the Scheme Organiser to third parties other than under any agreed and defined mechanism for providing follow-up and counselling to Laboratories outside our Limits of Acceptable Performance. All participants offering a direct or indirect clinical service in the UK have previously been subject to the Quality Assurance Pathology Committee (QAPC), and its Conditions of EQA Scheme Participation. The QAPC and relevant committees have been 'paused' with effect from 1st January 2026. Birmingham Quality will continue performance surveillance and will work with any successor of this process. Participants will be informed of any referral and the content of such referral if and when required.

Participants are responsible for keeping their demographic (contact and address details) and method information up to date. Having the correct contact details is vital so that we can contact you, you know you are receiving the correct information and we will not be inadvertently breaching confidentiality by contacting someone who may have left your organisation.

Participants are responsible for correcting typographical errors to keep the data analytically robust. Since Scheme data is used by many NHS and other stakeholders that influence guidelines and the like, not correcting such errors compromises this function even if you yourself are content to run with erroneous data.

[5] All reports, and all the data they contain, issued by the Schemes are Copyright and may not be distributed, published or used for promotion in any form without explicit permission of the Scheme Organiser on each and every occasion.

Participants are free to share information concerning their own individual participation or performance with individual clients (clinicians, GPs etc) without consultation, but must not include Scheme data in their advertising, provided that the following reference nomenclature is used "*Scheme Name, Distribution Number, Date on Report, for example:*

UK NEQAS for Thyroid Hormones, Distribution 500, 03-Dec-2024".

The Scheme may use anonymised specimen and rolling time-window data to produce summary or method-specific or state-of-the-art data in Commentaries, Webinars and Publications etc. All information is considered proprietary information and shall be regarded as confidential.

[6] In the event of a participant failing to pay the membership fee by the due date, the Scheme Organiser reserves the right to terminate, without notice, the membership of that participant without prejudice to any claim for payment for services already provided.

[7] UHBFT and Birmingham Quality shall not be liable in any circumstances for indirect or consequential loss howsoever caused, including, without limitation, loss of anticipated profits, goodwill, reputation, business receipts or contracts, or losses or expenses resulting from the action of third-party providers. Technical issues relating to the use of any third party, or off-the-shelf product should be directed to the relevant provider in the first instance.

[8] Participants in the Schemes have entire responsibility for all specimens distributed to them under the Schemes and all activities carried out by them or any third party in relation to the specimens from the time of their receipt.

[9] UHBFT and Birmingham Quality warrant that all work carried out by them in relation to the Schemes will be carried out using all reasonable care and skill. All conditions, terms and warranties implied by common law, statute or otherwise are, to the extent permitted by law, hereby excluded.

[10] The liability of UHBFT and Birmingham Quality to the participant in any annual period resulting from or in connection with the provision of the Schemes by UHBFT and Birmingham Quality to the participant shall under no circumstances exceed the amount of the annual fee paid by the participant in respect of that annual period.

[11] Our procedures for handling Complaints and Appeals are detailed in our Participants' Manual, which is available on-line on the Birmingham Quality website.

[12] These conditions shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law, and UHBFT and the participant submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

[13] Notwithstanding GDPR considerations, in addition to sending email reminders about the opening and closing of Distributions, we will occasionally send out information concerning Birmingham Quality and UK NEQAS services. This will include information on new services that we are switching on and also information on educational user groups, Roadshows or Webinars. We will not use your contact details for marketing of products out with this limited area.

[14] If there are additional unforeseen charges following Brexit or charges following edicts from the UK Government, we reserve the right to pass on such changes at cost to Participants, but we will not make any profit on any such levy.

[15] The online Results & Reports function for all the UK NEQAS Clinical Chemistry Division is administered by Birmingham Quality. To that end, you only have to agree to this document to cover you for the online return of results for all Clinical Chemistry Centres [Birmingham Quality (University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust), UK NEQAS Cardiac Markers (NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde), UK NEQAS [Edinburgh] (NHS Lothian), UK NEQAS Guildford Peptides and UK NEQAS Trace Elements (Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust)].

[16] Participants are reminded of their responsibility to fully engage with the Scheme for all aspects of their participation, not just a numbers-only element. By signing up to our EQA services, Laboratories must complete interpretations, answer pre- and post-analytical questions, provide Reagent and Calibrator lot number information (where asked) and complete reference range/action limits as part of our regular Q&A components. We do not want to hide behind the requirements of ISO 15189:2022 to cajole Participants or to force them to contribute. We are upfront with our shared responsibilities with our Participants. We do insist that you do not cherry-pick which bits of the Scheme you want to do. We will monitor participation in all Scheme elements and poor adherence to these T&Cs will be escalated appropriately.

[17] Participation in our Schemes is via the Results & Reports portal or by contacting centres directly. This function cannot be subcontracted via a third-party App or software. The contract between the Participant and the EQA Centre has legal and professional aspects. The underlying reasons for this are to ensure that we have governance control over who is or who is not registered with us, but there are other more practical reasons.

- Laboratories are required to provide us with all relevant information regarding their contact details, addresses etc including, where relevant, the analyser, make, model, method, calibration systems (including lot numbers on a case-by-case basis) etc. to allow meaningful data for both the individual and Laboratory and any post-market surveillance of Manufacturer performance to be provided to the MHRA.
- Participations are governed via a unique Laboratory ID. This ensures that trend data can be monitored, and that Laboratories do not 'play the system', either actively or passively and so avoid scrutiny of their performance.
- Laboratories cannot jump from Scheme to Scheme or from analyser to analyser on a whim.
- We will continue performance surveillance of analytical performance, participation and engagement with the Schemes for both laboratories and manufacturers and will work with any successor to the QAPC.

[18] Participant laboratories must take responsibility for ensuring the validation of any automated system used to transfer results. This includes the accuracy of the transfer of results, the safeguarding of inappropriate use etc. It is the responsibility of the Participant to ensure that all results are returned before the Distribution deadline. Late / amended results for all Schemes will only be accepted at the discretion of the Scheme Organiser.

X-Lab Ltd. and LabgnosticEQA are independent of Birmingham Quality and therefore if you are unable to return results using their service (either for reasons due to X-Lab, or due to Birmingham Quality service unavailability), you still need to return results manually. You need to discuss with X-Lab Ltd., as your provider, the reason for service failure. We have a separate Policy for use of LabgnosticEQA services with Birmingham Quality Schemes and you will be provided with a copy before you are enrolled on this service. Birmingham Quality reserves the right to stop you using the LabgnosticEQA component of returning results for Birmingham Quality Schemes if you are not complying with all requirements of the Scheme.

[19] The primary and only authoritative source for all EQA Scheme related information is by each centre within the UK NEQAS Clinical Chemistry Division on either the Results & Reports portal or individual websites. This includes Specimen dispatch dates, Specimen information, EQA Reports performance, communication etc.