



Terms of Reference

Working group: Frequency

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

Tasks and purpose

The frequency working group aims at evaluating the frequency of EQA challenges. Frequency can be considered as the number of EQA rounds in a certain period on the one hand, as the number of samples per EQA round on the other hand. Currently, frequency is evaluated by observational studies and theoretical models.

WG Steering Committee

No steering committee has been established

Current ongoing projects

- Comparing EQA performance between EQA organizers using different frequencies: by collecting data from various EQA providers, EQA performance can be compared between EQA providers. By selecting a subset of the data, various other variables that may influence EQA performance are kept constant and the relation between frequency of EQA challenges and EQA performance can be assessed.
- Developing theoretical models to evaluate EQA frequency: starting from the definition of the amount of information that can be drawn from EQA results, the correlation between EQA data collected over time is used as a base to evaluate EQA frequency. Basically, when no correlation is present, the amount of information that can be drawn from EQA results is the highest. Statistical models are developed to draw the relation between frequency of EQA schemes and correlation in EQA data on the one hand, and the relation between correlation in EQA data and the loss of information on the other hand.

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

Thomas, A. (2009). External quality assessment in laboratory medicine: is there a rationale to determine frequency of surveys?. *Accreditation and quality assurance*, 14(8), 439-444.

Coucke, W., Soumali, M. R., Graham, P., Shepherd, S., & Badrick, T. (2022). A framework for evaluating the frequency of external quality assessment challenges. *Clinica Chimica Acta*, 527, 71-78.

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