9th PT/EQA Workshop  
- Portoroz 2017  

Working Group 1

Consider what is understood to be interpretative PT/EQA schemes and to review their importance along with the challenges of organising such schemes

Convenors:
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Contributors:
- 80+ participants
- Divided into 5 groups for better organisation
- 34 countries represented including many non-European including Singapore, Tanzania, USA, Myanmar, Botswana, China, Canada, Australia, Georgia, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Palestine, New Zealand
Contributors:
- Accreditation/regulatory bodies
  - CNAS, Slovenian AB, ENAC
- PT providers
- PT participants
- Other interested parties;
  - independent consultants
  - suppliers
  - National bodies e.g. food agencies, public health, measurement institutes

The Correct Word?

Interpretative 70%
or
Interpretive 25%
or
Doesn’t matter 5%
Definition

Section 4.2 - c)
Interpretive: no measurement is involved;
The PT item is a measurement result, a set of data or other set of information concerning an interpretative feature of the participant’s competence………

More definitions

- Competence that is subjective
- There is no clear wrong or right answer
Q1 - What is understood to be an interpretative PT/EQA scheme:

– What types of PT/EQA scheme exist?
– What sectors are they used in?
– Why are they important?

Examples of schemes/sectors:

TOYTEST - Consumer safety
Participants receive a toy or a picture of a toy. They then have to interpret which clauses of the standard should apply e.g flammability, small objects, noise, toxic paint.

CLINICAL – Case scenario for illness or slide containing cells (histopathology)

FORENSIC – scene of crime, blood toxicology, fingerprints
Examples of schemes/sectors

SENSORY – Smell or taste of products
SAMPLING – field of crops to see if can detect disease
CARGO SHIPS – to test inspection procedures

What sectors are they used in?
Mainly applied in:
– Clinical
– Medical
– Forensic
But can apply to any sector, as seen in examples, also food, microbiology,
Importance

- Educational
- Available when actual samples are difficult to obtain, e.g. rare illnesses
- Suitable when actual samples are very costly
- Suitable for samples that are difficult to transport e.g. very large or not stable
- To improve quality
- When result is critical e.g. life or death

Q2 - What challenges do such PT/EQA schemes present:

- To the PT/EQA provider?
- To the accreditation body?
Q2 - What challenges do such PT/EQA schemes present:

To the PT/EQA provider?
- Use of experts, may have 2 experts and 3 opinions
- Results are subjective
- How to choose experts and how to qualify
- May be lack of experts in the field, using same experts may bias results
- Who and how to set criteria for performance
  - Simple good or bad result or range of scores

Q2 - What challenges do such PT/EQA schemes present:

To the PT/EQA provider?
- No guidance for scoring, not normalised
- Results may depend upon methods used, different methods may give different interpretations
- Regional differences
- Language issues & translation
- Consequences need to be considered
- Cost & affordability (cost of experts)
Q2 - What challenges do such PT/EQA schemes present:

To the PT/EQA provider?
- Time-consuming, cannot use Excel to assess data, need to read them all
- Presenting results in a concise format

To the accreditation body?
- Providing third party experts
- Ensuring consistency across tests
- Assessors must be open-minded to different interpretations of results
- What standards can assessors apply? All schemes use different criteria
- Not the usual stability and homogeneity questions
Q3 - How is performance evaluated in such PT/EQA schemes:

- What is used as the assigned value?
- Are performance scores used?
- What type of acceptance criteria is used?

Performance

- Model answer, degree of agreement with panel
- May score by % closeness to model answer
- Points may be awarded e.g for using certain key words
- Expert answer is the only choice
- Consensus of results dangerous as may be based on wrong information
More performance

- Performance based on risk analysis, how importance is the wrong analysis, may be life or death choices
- Use score sheet with guidelines given to participants
- Can give assigned values if numerical calculations
- Also if result may be known, e.g. comparing finger-prints or items from same source

Q4 - How are the metrological traceability and uncertainty requirements of ISO/IEC 17043 addressed in such PT/EQA schemes?

Not a quantitative test
No measurement carried out
Therefore not sure if measurement uncertainty & traceability can be applied
May be applicable to the initial test material and may need to be considered by participant
What do accreditation bodies think?
Thank you to all contributors for a lively and constructive discussion and for doing most of the work 😊