

Dear NIH/DAIDS Study Participant:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the scoring system used to evaluate performance in the UK NEQAS Immune Monitoring program. The UK NEQAS Immune Monitoring Program scores your results in two ways. For the **overall performance rating**, your results for the T-cell markers CD3, CD4, and CD8 are graded against the peer responses of all participants in the trial. The **individual trial performance rating**, is an evaluation of your results for individual trials for out-of-range values.

To determine the **overall performance rating**, the target mean percentage and absolute values are calculated for each analyte, and the responses from each participant are scored according to the following scheme:

Standard Deviation (SD) from expected target values	Points
<1	2
1 to 2	1
>2	0

The sum of values from the most recent six samples (the past three trials) represents the running score used to grade the overall performance in the program. A cumulative score of 5 or greater for each analyte is given a satisfactory overall performance rating. For example, if your results for CD3+/CD4+ Lymphocytes were 1 to 2 SDs from the expected target values for each of the past six samples trials, your cumulative score would be 6 (6 x 1 point), a satisfactory running score. However, if the results for CD3+/CD4+ Lymphocytes for 2 of your past six samples were more than 2 SDs from the target values and the rest were between 1 and 2 SDs from the target values, your running score for CD3+/CD4+ Lymphocytes would be 4 (2 x 0 points + 4 x 1 point), an unsatisfactory overall performance rating running score.

To determine the **individual trial performance rating**, the results of individual trials are evaluated for out-of-range values. Results that exceed the 2 SD target range receive zero points in the scoring system and are rated unsatisfactory. For example, if your result for the absolute value of CD3+/CD4+ Lymphocytes is more than 2 SD from the target range, you would receive an unsatisfactory individual trial performance rating for CD3+/CD4+ Lymphocytes. **Please note that the individual performance rating is not explicitly presented in the UK NEQAS report, and it is possible to have an unsatisfactory trial performance rating and a satisfactory overall performance rating.** For example, if you received zero points for the current samples and two points for each of the previous four samples, your individual trial performance rating would be unsatisfactory (0 points), and your overall performance rating would be satisfactory (8 points). ***IQA follows up on all unsatisfactory individual trial performance ratings even if the overall performance rating is satisfactory.***

The newly implemented scoring system, which includes both the overall performance rating and the individual trial performance rating, monitors the results of individual parameters in the trial and as such, reduces the differences previously noted between overall performance rating and the performance rating for individual trials. An example of the UK NEQAS Immune Monitoring report is attached and provides further detail for interpreting results.

Should you require additional information or wish to discuss specific performance issues, please contact Liam Whitby at UK NEQAS, [l.whitby@btconnect.com](mailto:l.whitby@btconnect.com), or John Wong at IQA [john.wong@duke.edu](mailto:john.wong@duke.edu). Thank you.

Sincerely,  
 The IQA CD4 Working Group