



**Reproductive Science**

**Embryology Scheme  
2013-2014**

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## Clinical Value

Assessment of embryo morphology is used by laboratories to select embryos after IVF/ICSI for transfer and for cryopreservation.

The scheme uses a standardised system for assessment of embryo morphology developed with the support of the Association of Clinical Embryologists.

*Rachel Cutting. Association of Clinical Embryologists (ACE)*  
“ACE are committed to maintaining high standards of laboratory practice and the importance of external quality assurance. Embryo selection is key to a successful programme especially with regard to elective single embryo transfers. ACE has been fully supportive of the NEQAS embryo grading scheme and would strongly encourage laboratories to join the scheme”.

The HFEA in the UK requires units to implement an elective single embryo transfer (eSET) policy to reduce the multiple birth rate eventually to below 10%

*Debra Bloor. Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA)*  
“Schemes such as this are a welcome addition in helping centres to improve the quality of the services they provide. Achieving consistency in embryo grading is likely to be a useful tool as centres aim to further reduce multiple birth rates. Guidance in the 8th Code of Practice also recommends that centres participate in inter-centre comparisons and inter-laboratory comparisons and that the results of these comparisons and relevant findings are used to improve treatment services.”

## Quality Assessment

External quality assessment schemes help to assess performance and should be used in conjunction with internal quality control procedures.

### Motivation for External Quality Assessment

- ◆ Provides data for comparison of results with other laboratories
- ◆ Improves knowledge about the participants' ability to assess embryos.
- ◆ Internal quality control – allows comparison of results within a laboratory.
- ◆ Ensures that clinicians and patients have confidence in the service
- ◆ Responds to increasing pressure to demonstrate quality processes, for example:

*Laboratories working within the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990) need to comply with item 23.23 of the 8th Code of Practice, namely “The centre should where possible participate in inter-centre comparisons and inter-laboratory comparisons. The centre should evaluate the results of these comparisons and use relevant findings to improve its service”*

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## Distributions

Participants will receive four distributions per annum. If you cannot access the online module it is essential that you inform us immediately.

Each distribution will consist of:

- ◆ 4 'virtual patient cases' each with 4-6 embryos videos hosted by <http://gamete-expert.com>

These are a combination of Time-lapse images captured from the Embryoscope™ incubator and rolling images and will include early cleaving to blastocyst stage embryo grades.

- ◆ Interpretive questions with clinically relevant 'patient scenarios' are provided.

The distributions will be sent out on:

**13 May 2013, 12 Aug 2013, 11 Nov 2013 and 10 Feb 2014**

Results should be entered online within four weeks.

## Results and reports service

All participants will be provided with instructions and passwords from:

<http://gamete-expert.com>

Reports will be available within one month of the distribution closing date from:

<https://results.ukneqas.org.uk>

All new participants will be provided with instructions and passwords.

## The Scheme year runs April - March fees 2013-2014

Embryo morphology £525.00

Laboratories may purchase additional licences for a nominal fee (see enrolment form) for internal quality control and training purposes. Licensed individuals who are members of ACE or IBMS can claim points for continued professional development on submission of results.

All fees will be charged V.A.T unless you are from UK NHS (England) or provide a copy of a valid exemption certificate.

## Participants' Meeting

We have an Annual Participants' Meeting to be held in March 2014.

A nominal charge is made for this meeting. Details will be forwarded to all scheme members.

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