

The procedure of the NAB Evaluation Committee in carrying out on-site visits to medical faculties

Evaluation visits of the committees to the departments of medical faculties where theoretical and clinical teaching of students of the Master's degree programmes in *Všeobecné lékařství* and *General Medicine* (awarded academic title MUDr.¹) takes place are one of the requirements for external quality assurance of the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). These visits are also conducted as part of the fulfilment of requirements of the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA).

This document describes the recommended procedure for the Evaluation Committees appointed by the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education (NAB) when conducting on-site evaluation visits to medical faculties. The on-site visits cover both theoretical and clinical departments.

The Evaluation Committee and organisation of its activities

The Chair of the Board of the NAB appoints the Evaluation Committee (EC) from among the persons included in the Pool of Evaluators for the relevant field of education, while the provisions of the Statute of the NAB are fully observed for their establishment and composition. The Committee includes experts from different specialisations/disciplines covered by medical faculties (representation of theoretical and clinical expertise), at least one member of the EC must have specialist experience in quality assurance and quality assessment activities in higher education and at least one member must be a student. For all members of the Committee, possible conflicts of interest relating to the Committee's activities must be excluded or minimised. In addition to the members of the EC, NAB Office staff also participate in the on-site visit and may take part in individual evaluation activities. The evaluation visit to the faculty's departments itself shall be attended by all members of the Committee as far as possible, while at least two members of the Committee must participate in each visit to a specific department. The Committee will receive the documents submitted by the medical faculty at least one month prior to the on-site visit. This is without prejudice to the possibility of submitting additional documents during the actual on-site visit (or after the visit at the request of the Committee).

¹ Equivalent to M.D.

The course and focus of visits to departments

The actual on-site visit consists of verifying compliance with the standards and criteria within the activities of:

- 1) faculty management, faculty-wide departments of the Dean's Office and departments securing faculty's operations: e.g., study administration department, faculty library (scientific information centre), computer technology department
- 2) institutes focusing on theoretical teaching
- 3) clinical departments in healthcare facilities
- 4) Specialised faculty departments related to the teaching process: e.g., simulation or testing centres (if established).

On-site visits are carried out physically on-site, only for serious reasons a part of the visit may be carried out in an online arrangement (e.g., due to illness of a member of the EC, restrictions related to the epidemiological situation). The visits are organized by the NAB Office. The duration of the on-site visit is normally between three and five days, with the detailed programme to be determined by the NAB. The programme of the on-site visit is sent to the medical faculty at least 10 working days prior to the visit. The medical faculty is responsible for communicating with other entities, typically healthcare providers that are the subject of the visit.

The arrangements of the on-site visit are always tailored to fulfil its purpose and may vary to some extent from one department to another. The basis is direct observation of the implemented activities (the actual teaching process), targeted interviews with students and faculty staff and thematic panel discussions. In the case of parallel arrangement of EC activities, the minimum number of members in a subgroup is two. The specific programme, content and participants of the visit will be determined by the EC in coordination with the medical faculty. The interviews and programme of the on-site visit are organised in such a way as to also enable an assessment of the material and technical equipment for the implementation of the teaching process. Audio or video recordings of individual meetings may be made in compliance with the relevant data protection regulations and will only be retained for as long as necessary.

The content of the on-site evaluation visits is the assessment of the extent and quality of the implementation of the defined standards and criteria (according to Government Regulation No. 274/2016 Coll. and the WFME criteria) within the faculty and its quality assurance processes that help to implement and comply with them. In doing so, the members of the EC rely on the documents provided by the faculty prior to the evaluation visit (self-evaluation report, required documents/annexes), publicly available information, as well as their own findings obtained during the on-site evaluation visit. The evaluation may also be based on data from sources other than those provided by the faculty - e.g., data from databases and systems set up by state administration bodies, generally respected databases of scientific outputs, etc. The official website of the medical faculty is considered to be a reliable source of information throughout the evaluation process and can be used by the members of the EC. The evaluation must always be based on facts and evidence the credibility, truthfulness, and objectivity of which have not been called into question. In the case of work with subjective evaluations and findings (e.g., obtained during targeted interviews with members of the academic community of a given faculty), the members of the EC must consider this nature of the data and try to confirm/objectify them.

Detailed description of the recommended course of the on-site visit by the Evaluation Committee

In the framework of the on-site visit, the following activities should be carried out by the EC as a minimum (the exact arrangement will depend on the EC and the organisation of the processes of the medical faculty, individual sub-meetings may be combined into joint meetings):

1) Faculty management, faculty-wide departments of the dean's office and departments securing faculty's operations: e.g., the study administration department, faculty library (scientific information centre), computer department, etc:

- *Meetings with the faculty management, including student representatives, regarding the general setup of the organisation and functioning of the faculty and its vision*
- *Meetings with persons responsible for the concept and content of the curriculum of the General Medicine degree programme (e.g., the Vice-Dean for Studies, guarantor of the degree programme, guarantors of key courses within the degree programme, student representatives)*
- *Meetings with persons responsible for the quality assurance system, including feedback from students (e.g., responsible member of faculty management, student representatives, representatives of the committee for student evaluations of teaching, if established)*
- *Meetings on the procedural and administrative support of the teaching process, including the admission procedure (Vice-Dean for Studies, Vice-Dean for Admissions, representative of the study administration department, student representative)*
- *Meetings with those responsible for the strategy and setup of the faculty's scientific activities (e.g., Vice Dean for Science and Research, heads of the relevant departments of the Dean's Office)*
- *Meetings with persons responsible for human resources of the faculty (including the agenda of academic promotions and continuing professional development of academic staff) and material, technical and information resources for teaching (e.g., the faculty secretary-general, responsible member of the faculty management, heads of relevant departments of the Dean's Office)*

2) Institutes focusing on theoretical teaching

The EC will carry out evaluations in at least four courses falling under theoretical teaching, whereby an evaluation of at least one of the courses implementing teaching in the following sets of disciplines will be carried out:

- *histology, anatomy, or human pathology*
- *medicinal chemistry and biochemistry, human physiology, or pathophysiology*
- *the framework of the field behavioural and social sciences that are relevant to the local context and culture and incorporate principles of professional practice, including ethics.*

3) Clinical departments of healthcare providers

The EC will carry out evaluations in at least four courses falling under clinical teaching, whereby an evaluation of at least one of the courses implementing teaching in the following sets of disciplines will be carried out:

- *the teaching of internal medicine disciplines*
- *the teaching of surgical disciplines*
- *preparation for the state final examination (can be combined with the previous two points).*

4) Specialised faculty departments related to the teaching process: e.g., simulation or testing centres (if established).

- *where such facilities are established, the EC may request a visit to them, using the principles described for categories 1) to 3) as appropriate for the format and content of the visit.*

The content of the evaluation will be based on the provided documents and the standards. Its aim is mainly to map the organisation and course of theoretical and clinical teaching in a sample of selected courses, to describe the strengths and weaknesses in its provision and implementation, including the formulation of recommendations for the department or faculty.

Key persons will be invited by the institutes and clinics to participate in the evaluation visit according to the decision of the EC, however, for each selected course, the participation of at least the guarantor of the course and the head of the relevant institute or clinic is recommended from among the academic staff. The arrangements for the course evaluation visit should include the following components:

- 1) Introductory meeting: familiarization with the course, its structure, expected outcomes, personnel, material, technical and information resources, method of formal verification of students' knowledge and methods of feedback to students
- 2) Observation of the teaching process in the course (if possible)
- 3) Interview with student representatives (a minimum of two persons) who participated in education at the given department in the current or previous academic year. In order to ensure maximum openness, the interview with students should take place without the presence of representatives of the department or faculty
- 4) A final meeting to objectify the findings during the on-site visit and with the opportunity to ask additional questions

Outputs of the Evaluation Committee's activities

The output of the evaluation visit will be a summary report of the on-site visit prepared by the EC. The NAB office will provide any administrative support in the preparation of the report. The EC will use the attached report form, which is available in the annex to this document, to prepare the on-site visit report. The form consists of two basic parts:

- 1) a section for completing the evaluation of general findings: it corresponds to the summary of evaluation activities under category 1)**
- 2) a section for the evaluation of teaching in theoretical and clinical courses, with one part for theoretical courses and one part for clinical courses**