

## **Exceptional transitory amendment of the SOP related to the case of force majeure faced by Establishments during the COVID-19 outbreak of the 1<sup>st</sup> Semester 2020**

**Approved by ExCom on 18 June 2020**

### **Introduction**

The ExCom has asked the SOP WG to consider the temporary amendment of the SOP, which is necessary due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the subsequent lockdown that is seriously affecting the member Establishments. It mainly concerns the calculation of the ESEVT Indicators, hands-on training, clinical duties and student's assessment during the lockdown, financial balance for the year 2020, practical organisation of the onsite Visitation in agreement with local regulations, etc.

The amendments are simple, easy to be implemented, fair and valuable for all Establishments, taking into account that while the outbreak is undoubtedly a case of force majeure, it should not induce a decrease in the quality process of the ESEVT system.

The amendments take into account the data linked to academic year 2019 – 2020 and concern all Visitations taking place in the second half of 2020 as well as the Visitations planned for 2021, 2022 and 2023.

The amendments concern:

- all documents written by an Establishment – i.e. Self-Evaluation Report (SER) for all types of Visitations (Full, Consultative, Re-visitiation) and the Interim Report (including the Indicators);
- the timetable and guidelines for all types of onsite Visitations;
- the Visitation Report for all types of Visitations affected by the lockdown.

These temporary amendments will be regularly revised, based on the evolution of the outbreak and of the subsequent regulations/recommendations.

### **1. SER (for all types of Visitations, i.e. FV, CV and RV, and for the Interim Reports)**

#### **A. Amendments related to the Visitations in the second half of 2020, for which the SER has already been/is being written**

- A recommendation will be sent by the EAEVE Office to the Establishments to prepare an addendum to the SER explaining how the outbreak has affected the Establishment and what actions have been taken to alleviate the impact of the lockdown.

- The addendum is not compulsory and no penalty will follow for Establishments that do not provide one. However, it is strongly recommended that such a document is made available to the Visitation Teams, as it will greatly facilitate the Visitation process by helping the Team members understand the differences between what is written in the SER and what they see on site.
- There are no special recommendations as to the length or format of the addendum, although it should be concise and free of unnecessary details.

## **B. Amendments related to the Visitations taking place in 2021, 2022 and 2023 and IRs including data on academic year 2019-2020**

- Establishments must provide information on the last three full academic years (for instance 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 for Visitations organised in 2021) and fill in the relevant tables in the SER, as they would do under normal circumstances.
- However, they must also include an addendum explaining how the academic year 2019-2020 was affected by the lockdown and what was done to compensate it.
- The addendum should be compulsory; the exact format and length – one single addendum/annex or separate comments in the Comment Section for each Substandard – is to be decided by the Establishment, although it should be concise and free of unnecessary details. Ideally, the information should be included both in the Comments Section of the relevant Substandards (to facilitate the work of the Visitation Team) and as a brief addendum/annex (for the sake of clarity and in order to have an accurate representation of the impact of the lockdown for the general public who will read the SER in the future). Failure to comply and not providing the requested information could be considered by ECOVE as a minor deficiency.
- **For the calculation of the ESEVT Indicators, the academic year 2019-2020 should be neutralised – i.e. the data linked to this academic year should not be taken into consideration.** Thus, the focus for the comparison with the ESEVT median and minimal values will be on two academic years instead of three. The Indicators' table (Excel file) is to be amended accordingly.

## **2. Timetable and guidelines for the Visitation – for all Visitations taking place in the second half of 2020 and possibly 2021**

- It is proposed that the Chairperson, the Coordinator and the Liaison Officer of the Visitation, trusting the good sense, adapt the programme as needed in order to make it safe for everybody involved in the Visitation and to implement the local regulations, whilst being in accordance with the SOP. In any case, the international and local regulations valid

at the time of the Visitations must be respected (e.g. physical distancing, frequent hand washing, wearing a face mask, etc.).

- Flexibility is essential and it is up to the Chairperson, the Coordinator and the Liaison Officer to decide by consensus how to modify the programme and whether certain elements of the programme need to be cancelled, amended or replaced by alternatives.
- It is strongly suggested to organise a tele-conference with all Visitors and the visited Liaison Officer the week before the start of any ESEVT Visitation. This e-meeting will be organised and chaired by the Coordinator, with the support of the EAEVE Office, and will focus on a reminder of the SOP which is valid for the Visitation, the finalisation of the Visitation Programme and the description of the preventive measures to be implemented for ensuring the health and safety of all concerned persons and for respecting the relevant international and national regulations/recommendations.
- For meetings, it is suggested to consider the use of videos and social media platforms if appropriate, in order to limit the physical interactions on site.

### **3. Visitation Report – for all Visitations affected by the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown**

- The work on the Visitation Report should not be too greatly affected, since it is already the normal practice for the Team members to work individually on their respective chapters and discuss the draft Reports and Visitation-related matters via e-mail. However, it is proposed to introduce online pre-meetings for the Team before the start of the Visitation in order to discuss the upcoming Visitation and any questions linked to the lockdown and the Visitation Report that might arise. If necessary and possible, the usual Team meetings during the Visitation could be conducted online as well.
- The Visitation Report should include explanation of the decisions made to adapt the programme linked to the special conditions. The addendum should be annexed to the Visitation Report.

## Tracking system

### Temporary amendments of the ESEVT SOP 2019

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