

PERIODIC ACCREDITATION
OF UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR STUDY PROGRAMMES

GUIDELINES FOR THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM
OF MD STUDY PROGRAMMES IN MEDICINE AND SURGERY (LM-41)

Approved by ANVUR Governing Board's Resolution no. 26 of 13 February 2023

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Introduction

The following *Guidelines for the design of a quality assurance system for MD study programmes in Medicine and Surgery (LM-41)* provide a frame of reference for applying the specific requirements set out for this programme within the AVA 3 Model. AVA 3 represents the development and the application of the criteria and standards for the evaluation of universities and their study programmes, as defined by the Agency. It takes into account:

- the compliance of evaluation procedures with the standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area¹;
- the experience gained from the evaluation exercise aimed at the Initial Accreditation of new university study programmes;
- the changes introduced by Ministerial Decree no. 1154/2021 (“Decree on the Self-Assessment, External Assessment, Initial and Periodic Accreditation of Universities and their Study Programmes”) and, with regard to the MD Study programme in Medicine and Surgery;
- the focus on the criteria set by the World Federation for Medical Education²;
- what emerged from the public consultation carried out in June 2022 and from the cooperation with the Permanent Conference of Presidents of Italian Universities’ MD study programmes in Medicine and Surgery (*Conferenza Permanente dei Presidenti di Consigli di Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Medicina e Chirurgia dell’Università Italiane = CPPCLMM&C*), as well as from the evidence gathered during the three pilot visits carried out in the period November 2022-January 2023 in universities that were representative of different sizes, territorial locations and types of in-presence and online study offer.

As a result of the pilot visits, the Model was revised and the present Guidelines were updated.

In this document, particular attention will be paid to the distinctive elements of the evaluation of Medicine and Surgery study programmes, in addition to what was already approved by the Governing Board’s Resolution no. 26 of 13 February 2023 and included in the Guidelines for the Quality Assurance System in Universities.

¹ ESG 2015 (<https://www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/filebase/esg/ESG%20in%20Italian.pdf>): the standards and guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) provide the framework for internal and external quality assurance. They were adopted at the Ministerial Conference of the European Higher Education Area in 2015.

² More specifically, the World Federation for Medical Education (<https://wfme.org/>) is an international organisation founded in 1972 by the World Medical Association (WMA), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Federation of Medical Student Associations (IFMSA), the Junior Doctors Network (JDN) and the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), which aims to improve the quality of medical education worldwide. In 2020, it published the third updated edition of the Standards for Quality Improvement in Basical Medical Education (see the web page “WFME BME Standards 2020”).

1. The AVA system (Self-assessment, Periodic assessment, Accreditation)

As far as the general presentation of the AVA system is concerned, reference is made to the general definitions and to the methodologies, criteria and indicators set out in the Guidelines for the Quality Assurance System in Universities, published on the Agency's website ("[Guidelines and supporting materials](#)") and approved by the Governing Board's resolution of no. 26 of 13 February 2023. The latter have been supplemented as follows.

2. Study Programmes in Medicine and Surgery (LM-41) in the Italian system

Firstly, it should be pointed out that some of the specific features envisaged for the initial and periodic accreditation of single-cycle MD study programmes in Medicine and Surgery (LM-41) are closely bound up with the characteristics of this programme, which is specifically:

- spread over six years (twelve semesters), during which the student acquires 360 university credits, the aim being to train a medical doctor who possesses a multidisciplinary and integrated vision in the various biomedical, technological, clinical and health fields;
- qualifying for the profession of medical surgeon, according to the provisions of Article 102 of Decree-Law no. 18 of 17 March 2020;
- designed taking into account the current demands of the health system and aimed at providing the most appropriate care services to protect the population's health;
- accessed through an admission test, taking into account the planned number of students determined at national level for each institution qualified to offer the programme.

Holding a master degree in Medicine and Surgery is also a prerequisite for access to Specialisation Schools in the medical, surgical and health care services area (lasting 4 or 5 years with a national admission test) or to training courses in General Medicine (lasting 3 years with a regional admission test).

The educational programme must initially provide a solid biomedical background (pre-clinical three-year period) by ensuring an in-depth knowledge of the human body, centred on the modern scientific method, knowledge of the molecular, morpho-functional and physiopathological processes underlying diseases. The programme must continue with a clinical three-year period, in which the student can acquire solid clinical-diagnostic knowledge and skills in the medical and surgical areas, as well as in the area of health prevention and promotion. During the programme, attention must also be paid to the acquisition of skills in the field of human sciences, as a necessary background for achieving awareness of being a doctor. It should also be noted that ANVUR has outlined an operating model for the Initial Accreditation of study programmes and publishes, on a yearly basis since 2020, Guidelines for the quality design of new university study programmes³.

Within the framework of these Guidelines, a specific section is devoted to healthcare area study programmes, which include the MD study programme in Medicine and Surgery (LM-41).

³ For the academic year 2023/2024 reference is made to the Guidelines for quality design of new study programmes, approved by the Governing Board's Resolution no. 224 of 3 November 2022 and published on ANVUR's website (Guidelines for New Study Programmes 22-23_2022.11.03 (anvur.it)).

2.1 – ADMISSION TO THE MD STUDY PROGRAMMES IN MEDICINE AND SURGERY (LM-41)

In order to be admitted to the MD study programme in Medicine and Surgery, it is necessary to hold a High School Diploma or similar qualification issued abroad, recognised as valid in accordance with current regulations. As the number of students is planned on a national level (under Law no. 264 of 2 August 1999), candidates must pass an admission test. The eligibility for enrolment is released to the candidates, depending on the number of places available, on the basis of their position in the ranking list (which is drawn up in decreasing order of score), provided that they have obtained a minimum score in the test as established in the admission call. The number of admissible students is determined annually by Decree of the Ministry of Universities and Research (MUR), taking into account the educational capacity declared by each university on the basis of the resources and teaching and clinical facilities available, as well as the needs expressed by the Regions to which they belong and by the Ministry of Health in terms of healthcare personnel in the relevant professional profile. The procedure for admission to the programme is defined on an annual basis by the Ministry of University and Research and, starting from academic year 2022/23, according to the provisions of Ministerial Decree 1107/2022 ⁴.

Candidates with a score below the one indicated in the call are not entitled to enrol, regardless of their position in the ranking list. Through a series of multiple-choice questions, scientific knowledge relating to Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics (based on the ministerial high school syllabi), as well as general knowledge, deductive and inductive logic, and text comprehension are tested and assessed. The subjects of the admission test questions are attached to the relevant ministerial call.

In the event of a positive result that allows enrolment, the results of the selection test for admission to the study programme in Medicine and Surgery may also be used to verify possession of adequate initial preparation. Only for those who have passed the selection test, where specific gaps are found, may Additional Educational Obligations (OFA = *Obblighi Formativi Aggiuntivi*) be envisaged, to be met during the first year. For the disciplines to which OFAs are attributed, the procedures for making them up, and the verification of their fulfilment, please refer to the didactic regulations of the individual programmes.

2.2 – PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Students are required to acquire specific expertise in the field of the various medical-surgical disciplines. To this end, students must carry out the Professional Training Activity (*Attività Formativa Professionalizzante* = AFP), i.e. the internship, envisaged in the educational programme by attending the relevant laboratory and clinical facilities, during the expected periods, for a minimum total number of 60 university credits, out of which 15 are earmarked for the Practical and evaluative traineeship for access to the State Qualifying Examination (*Tirocinio Pratico-Valutativo per accedere all'Esame di Stato per l'abilitazione* = TPVES).

The AFP is a form of tutorial teaching activity carried out in small groups, which involves students' participation in clinical or laboratory activities and the guided execution of practical activities through

⁴ In this regard, it is worth recalling that according to Ministerial Decree no. 1107 of 24 September 2022, and starting from the academic year 2022/2023, a special test called "TOLC" (CISIA OnLine Test) must be passed.

simulation of clinical or laboratory procedures. At each stage of the training, the student is required to work under the direct supervision of an AFP tutor ("internship tutor" or "clinical tutor"), also during the professional activity for which the latter is responsible. A student trainee cannot, under no circumstances, be allowed to work as a substitute for tenured staff.

The tutors for professional training activities (AFP) are appointed annually in agreement with the professors holding the relevant courses. This appointment, approved by the programme Coordinator on the basis of a comparative evaluation, can be awarded to the following professionals, provided that they hold a university degree and perform a professional position related to the subject areas of the relevant courses:

- permanent employees of the National Health Service or other public organisations, subject to authorisation by the institution to which they belong;
- employees of public and private organisations in retirement;
- employees of private companies;
- self-employed professionals with a VAT number and membership of the respective professional register for more than five years;
- PhDs;
- PhD students (only as practice tutors).

The AFP is carried out mainly in in-patient, day-hospital, out-patient, laboratory or other care facilities, at GPs' surgeries or in clinical simulation settings. To this end, agreements may also be arranged with centres, both in Italy and abroad, that meet the necessary requirements in terms of activities and provision of services, infrastructures, facilities and personnel. These centres are selected by the programme itself, based on a process of evaluation and accreditation of their teaching standards.

2.3 – PRACTICAL AND EVALUATIVE TRAINEESHIP VALID FOR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

The practical and evaluative traineeship valid for the professional qualification as a medical doctor and surgeon must be carried out in the fifth and sixth years of the study programme, in compliance with the regulations set out in Ministerial Decree no. 58 of 9 May 2018 and Ministerial Decree no. 23 of 29 January 2021.

The certification of attendance and the assessment of the training activities shall take place under the direct responsibility and charge of the university professor or medical director heading the centre attended by the trainee and the general practitioner. The latter shall issue, each for the part falling within their respective competences, formal certification of attendance, along with an assessment of the results related to the skills demonstrated, and, in the event of a positive outcome, an aptitude rating.

2.4 – MINIMUM TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

According to the provisions of Ministerial Decree no. 1154/2021, with respect to the fulfilment of minimum teaching requirements for the initial and periodic accreditation of study programmes, the study

programme in Medicine and Surgery Course must provide for the following minimum number of professors: No. Professors: 18, 10 of whom shall be tenured professors.

It should be noted that this number represents the minimum teaching resources of the study programme, which must in any case be supplemented by all the professors affiliated to the university or adjunct professors, in order to cover all courses. As this is the case for all programmes, there is also a qualitative requirement to be met, whereby at least 50% of the professors belong to academic recruitment macro-fields that group together basic core academic disciplines as referred to in the planned study offer.

In the event that the number of students enrolled in the first year exceeds the maximum number of 60 set out in Annex D of Ministerial Decree no. 1154/2021, the number of professors (*Dr = Docenti di riferimento*) is increased proportionally to the number of students exceeding this threshold, and the number of tenured professors also rises accordingly.

Each professor must be in charge of at least one teaching activity in the relevant study programme and may only be counted once. At most, he or she can be indicated as reference professor for 2 programmes, with a weight of 0.5 for each.

As regards the initial accreditation of a new study programme, a lack of the minimum number of professors at an early stage determines the compulsory submission of a Teaching Achievement Plan, which will be verified in its concrete implementation by the Agency from year to year. The plan must comply with the following minimum gradation:

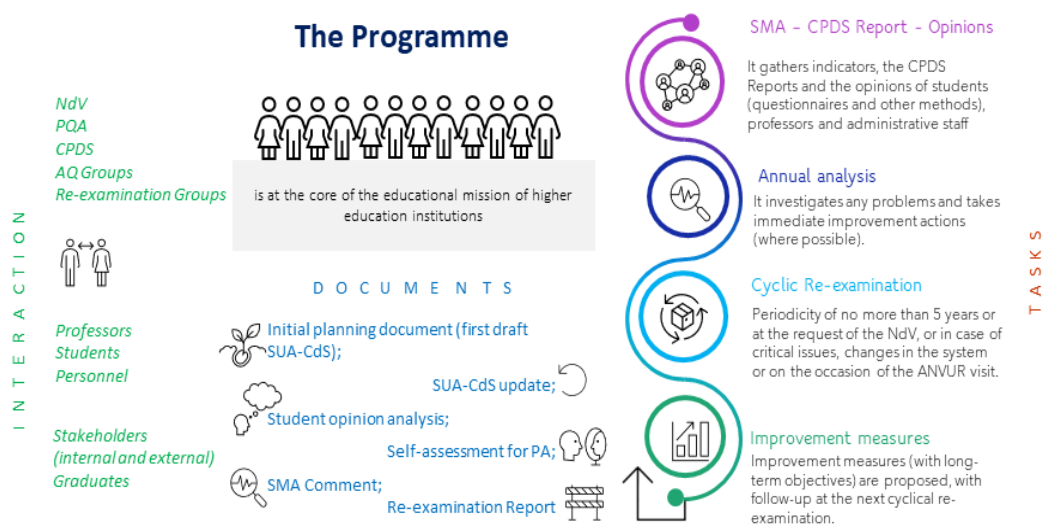
Study programme	No. professors	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	5th year	6th year
Medicine and Surgery	18	3	6	9	12	15	18

2.5 – THE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW PROCESS IN MEDICINE AND SURGERY STUDY PROGRAMMES

Study programmes are at the core of the educational mission of higher education institutions. They must be constantly updated and reflect the most advanced knowledge in the relevant disciplines, also with a view to the continuation to the continuation of students' careers in higher degrees of education, ensuring interchange with the research world and the employment world.

The study programme's QA cycle is summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – The Quality Assurance Cycle of University Study Programmes



The Study programme is in charge of drawing up the Annual Monitoring Form (*Scheda di Monitoraggio Annuale* = SMA) and the Cyclical review report (*Rapporto di Riesame Ciclico* = RRC).

The Annual Monitoring Form includes a concise critical comment on the quantitative indicators calculated by ANVUR on the basis of students' careers, attractiveness and internationalisation of the programme, graduates' employability, quantity and qualification of teaching staff, and graduates' satisfaction.

The Cyclical review report is drafted every five years at the latest, and in any case whenever a substantial change to the teaching system and regulations becomes necessary, or on the occasion of the periodic accreditation visit by ANVUR, as a reference document for redesigning the study programme. It contains an in-depth self-assessment of the overall performance of the study programme, which takes into account all relevant elements of analysis. The Report not only pinpoints and analyses the most relevant problems and challenges, but also proposes solutions to be implemented in the next cycle.

Study programmes are therefore required to prepare/update at least the following documentation:

- Initial study programme Design document and first draft of the Annual study programme form (*Scheda Unica Annuale dei Corsi di Studio* = SUA-CdS);
- SUA-CdS (yearly);
- analysis of the results of the student opinion survey;
- self-assessment document for Periodic Accreditation (if selected for the on-site visit);
- Annual Monitoring Form;
- Cyclical review report, which must be completed at least every 5 years and in any event in one of the following cases:

- at the request of the University Evaluation Board (*Nucleo di valutazione* = NdV);
- in the event of major critical issues;
- in the event of substantial changes in the regulations;
- on the occasion of the Periodic Accreditation (if dating back more than 18 months or not updated to the current situation of the study programme).

Moreover, the Joint Teaching Staff-Student Committee (*Commissioni Paritetiche Docenti-Studenti* = CPDS) contribute to the self-evaluation of the study programme by acknowledging first-hand experience of its performance.

CPDSs may operate at the Department/Faculty/School/Coordination Unit level, with the largest possible representation of students from the Study programme, and may organise themselves into sub-committees, in cases where there are no students for each programme. The CPDS must work to directly address the requests of the students of the various courses, through audits or other forms of collective activities or by designating a student contact person to interact with the CPDS.

As part of their monitoring activities regarding the study offer and the quality of teaching and student services, CPDSs are entrusted with the tasks of making proposals to the University Evaluation Board for improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching facilities, disseminating the university's quality policies to students and monitoring the indicators that measure the degree of achievement of teaching objectives at all levels.

3. PERIODIC ACCREDITATION PROCESS

As far as the Accreditation process in general is concerned, please refer to the general methodologies, criteria and indicators provided in the *Guidelines for Quality Assurance System in Universities* (available on the page "[Guidelines and supporting materials](#)"). However, it is important to dwell on some aspects that are illustrated below.

3.1 – Composition and Operation of the Evaluation Expert Panels

As regards the appointment of the Panels in general, their composition and the training of experts, reference should be made to the [Register of Evaluation Experts](#) and the *Guidelines for the Quality Assurance System in Universities*. The members of the Panel, in compliance with the provisions of the [Code of Ethics](#) and the general and specific measures contained in the [Three-Year Anti-Corruption and Transparency Prevention Plan](#) (which can be accessed on the Agency's institutional website), operate with rigour and professionalism, and respect official secrecy before, during and after the on-site visit. They do not disclose information on decisions to be taken and measures relating to ongoing proceedings before they have been officially deliberated and commit themselves to maintaining the utmost confidentiality on everything that comes to their knowledge within the scope of their mandate (see the [Regulations for the composition of the Registers of Expert Evaluators of the AFAM and university sector](#), approved by Resolution no. 113/2022 of ANVUR Governing Board).

In order to participate in the evaluation activities, in the event of the adoption of new Guidelines (or their updates), or if ANVUR deems it necessary, experts are asked to attend a compulsory training course free of charge. The training courses are usually organised by ANVUR (in presence and/or remotely) and have a minimum duration of one day. Such courses, which also involve external experts, are aimed at:

- illustrating the regulatory and procedural context;
- providing a framework for Quality Assurance standards and requirements;
- providing useful indications for experts to understand and evaluate the roles and tasks of the main organisations/offices in charge of the implementation of Quality Assurance systems;
- illustrating the procedures to be followed in the management of the evaluation process and in the drafting of the evaluation reports.

Each Evaluation Expert Panel (*Commissione di esperti della valutazione* = CEV) includes a sub-CEV appointed to the evaluation of the Medicine and Surgery study programme. Each sub-CEV is made up of experts in the health area, divided according to the following profiles: a System Expert heading the sub-CEV, a Disciplinary Expert and a Student Expert. The Disciplinary Expert belongs to a disciplinary macro area included among the core, basic or related and integrative academic disciplines (in order of preference) of the Study programme in Medicine and Surgery, and possesses specific expertise in the clinical field.

Table 1 – Example of composition of a Medicine and Surgery sub-CEV

Sub-CEV
Health Area System Expert – Sub-CEV Head Disciplinary Experts: a) Group of Academic Recruitment Fields: 06/A, 06/B, 06/C, 06/D, 06/E, 06/F, 06/G, 06/H Health Disciplinary Areas Student Expert

As stated in the ANVUR Regulations for the composition of the Register of Evaluation Experts of the AFAM sector and university sector (art. 8), supplementing the sub-CEV with highly qualified experts displaying a significant scientific or professional curriculum (including, for example, hospital executives or professionals registered with the relevant professional association) can be envisaged, also upon request of the Ministry of Health.

3.2 – Periodic accreditation process

The Periodic Accreditation process of the MD study programme in Medicine and Surgery is divided into the steps shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 –Steps

Step	When	Who	Description	How
1. Notice of the start of the accreditation process	At least 5 months before the visit	ANVUR	ANVUR announces the selection of the study programmes, Medicine and Surgery study programmes (English language, technology focus), PhDs and Departments and the week of the visit.	PEC
2. Announcement of the CEV and sub-CEV	16-12 weeks before the visit	ANVUR	ANVUR announces the members of the CEV and the sub-CEV for Medicine and Surgery	PEC
3. Self-assessment	Within 8 weeks before the visit	Medicine and Surgery Study Programme	For each point of attention, the study programme draws up a self-assessment including key documentary and supporting sources to describe how it implements its quality assurance system.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
4. Desk Analysis	8 weeks before the visit, to be concluded at least one week before the visit	Medicine Sub-CEV	The sub-CEV analyses the self-assessment and the documentary sources provided, and defines both the aspects to be explored during the visit and the visit schedule.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
5. On-site visit	Duration 3 to 4 days	Medicine Sub-CEV and Study Programmes	The sub-CEV meets professors, students, technical and administrative staff, tutors, stakeholders, medical directors, graduates, etc. at the teaching premises and healthcare facilities.	In presence
6. Preliminary Evaluation Form	+60 days after the visit	Medicine Sub-CEV	The sub-CEV submits to ANVUR the study programme's Preliminary Evaluation Form, which is integrated by ANVUR in the part concerning the evaluation of the Indicators.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
7. Submission of Preliminary Evaluation Form	Within 30 days after receipt of the Preliminary Evaluation Form	ANVUR	ANVUR sends the Preliminary Evaluation Form of the Medicine and Surgery study programme to the university.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
8. Counter-arguments	+30 days after receipt of the Preliminary Evaluation Form	Medicine and Surgery Study Programme	The Medicine and Surgery study programme, through the university, delivers any counter-arguments.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
9. Final Evaluation Form	+30 days after receipt of counter-arguments	Medicine and Surgery sub-CEV	The Medicine and Surgery sub-CEV complements the Evaluation Form with its own responses to counter-arguments, and drafts the Final Evaluation Form.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
10. ANVUR Final Assessment	+30 days after receipt	ANVUR	The Governing Board decides on the Accreditation/Non-accreditation proposal by issuing the final ANVUR	PEC

Step	When	Who	Description	How
	of the Final Evaluation Form		Assessment. The ANVUR Final Assessment is submitted to the Ministry and to the university along with the Final Report drawn up by ANVUR.	
11. Possible review procedure	Within 10 days after receipt of the final assessment	MUR (Ministry of University and Research) University	Within 10 days after receiving the final assessment, both the Ministry and the university have the possibility to request a review for specific reasons.	ANVUR Accreditation Platform
12. MUR Decision		MUR (Ministry of University and Research)	In the event of a positive evaluation, the study programme is considered automatically accredited until the next accreditation visit to the university. In the event of a negative evaluation, the Ministry adopts a Decree withdrawing the accreditation of the study programme.	Ministerial Decree
13. Publication of results	After the Ministerial Decree	ANVUR	ANVUR publishes the Evaluation Form on the Medicine and Surgery study programme and the Final Report on the university.	Institutional website

3.2.1 – DRAWING UP OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT SECTION

Periodic Accreditation starts with the Self-Assessment of each Sub-section and Point of Attention of the AVA 3 Model. At this stage, the first actor in the process is the programme itself, which has to submit a Self-Assessment document supplemented by the relevant documentation through the IT platform provided by ANVUR for each Point of Attention. The self-assessment must also take into account the results of the first cycle of Periodic Accreditation, the evolution of the QA System over time and the results achieved. It must then refer to the relevant documentary sources that provide adequate evidence of what is declared. The Self-Assessment phase is also supported by key documents that are the result of the self-assessment and review process, already illustrated in Section 2.5 of these Guidelines (e.g., comments to the Annual Monitoring Form, Cyclical review report, CPDS Report, documentation in the SUA-CdS, etc.).

The Agency provides indications on how to complete the Self-Assessment, suggesting to refer to the *Notes on Requirements*, the relevant *Guidelines* (for Universities and for study programmes in Medicine and Surgery), the *Self-Assessment and External Assessment Guidelines*, the *Glossary* and other supporting materials (available at the Agency's website page "[Guidelines and supporting materials](#)") and the *Guidelines for Quality Design of Study Programmes* (available at the Agency's website page "[Study Programmes Accreditation](#)").

For each Point of Attention, the self-assessment form is organised as follows:

Self-assessment (max. 1,500 words)

...

...

Documentary sources provided by the study programme (max. 8 documents):

Key documents:

- Title:
- Brief description:
- References (chapter/section, etc.):
- File Upload / Link:

Supporting documents:

- Title:
- Brief description:
- References (chapter/section, etc.):
- File Upload / Link:

After the self-assessment on the IT platform has been completed, the sub-CEV starts its work by examining the submitted self-assessment and the sources provided.

3.2.3 – DESK ANALYSIS BY THE MEDICINE AND SURGERY SUB-CEV

The desk analysis usually starts 8 weeks before the institutional on-site visit starts. It is carried out remotely and has the purpose of understanding and preliminarily assessing the founding elements of the QA System, as it has been designed and implemented by the study programme, through a careful examination of the available documentation, of the university website and of the information reported in the Self-Assessment section, including also the key documentary and supporting sources.

All the documents necessary for the analysis of the sub-CEV must already be available and used within the study programme's QA System by the time the desk review starts and shall also be the result of the self-assessment and review process (section 2.5). Therefore, no reference can be made to documents drafted after the beginning of the desk analysis.

The CEV President and Coordinator, together with the Head of the Sub-CEV, organise the work of the sub-CEV. During the desk analysis, the sub-CEV experts draft the *Evaluation Form of the study programme in Medicine and Surgery* on the platform. Such in progress documents will be an integral part of the CEV Draft Report and then of the Final Report. The *Evaluation Form* will be made definitive and accessible to the university only after its approval by the sub-CEV in its final version and will also include the Self-Assessment rating, as well as the documentary key and supporting sources provided.

The Sub-CEV President and the Disciplinary Expert appointed for the evaluation of the study programme in Medicine and Surgery must be able to assess not only general disciplines, but also those in the clinical field. Student Experts are fully involved in all evaluation activities, with special regard to the following points of attention: D.CDS.2.1 - Orientation and tutoring; D.CDS.3.2 - Staffing, facilities and teaching support services;

D.CDS.4.1 - Contribution of professors, students and stakeholders to the review and improvement of the programme.

The System Expert coordinating of the sub-CEV supervises the work related to the evaluation of the Study programme. The evaluation has a collegial character within the sub-CEV.

During the remote desk analysis of the documents, in agreement with ANVUR, the Head of the sub-CEV may convene several meetings, to be held online with the members of the sub-CEV. If deemed appropriate, the sub-CEV may request clarifications and supplementary documentation.

At least ten days before the start of the on-site visit, the Medicine sub-CEV meets to conclude the desk analysis and to share its initial findings. Afterwards, at least one week before the start of the on-site visit, the CEV holds a joint meeting to share the downstream findings of the desk analysis already discussed at sub-CEV level.

Based on the outcome of the self-assessment analysis and the documentary sources submitted by the Study programme, the sub-CEV prepares a draft *Visit Programme* and a *Visit Diary*.

3.2.3 – ON-SITE VISIT

The on-site visit concerns both the university as a whole and, in this case, the Medicine and Surgery study programme.

As regards the university as a whole, the visit is attended by the CEV President and Coordinator, the System Experts, the Economic and Financial Sustainability Expert, the Student Experts and, where applicable, the Telematic university Experts. The members of the sub-CEV dealing with the Medicine and Surgery Study programme, besides participating in the overall evaluation of the university, focus their activity and evaluation on this specific Study programme. Members of ANVUR Governing Board and/or staff may participate in the on-site visit as observers.

The purpose of the institutional on-site visit is to allow the experts and the various components of university life to interact, so as to gather useful information, insights and points of view on the areas under evaluation, starting from what emerged during the desk analysis phase. This is the most important phase of the evaluation, which can serve to highlight the strengths of the Study programme and examine any critical aspects or areas for improvement.

The on-site visit also makes it possible to directly observe the venues where the teaching activity is carried out, including the activity undertaken in the context of the healthcare facilities where the clinical training activity takes place (facilities, laboratories, classrooms, libraries, support services, outdoor spaces, tools and technologies available, healthcare units, etc.).

On each of the days of the on-site visit, after the evaluation activities have been completed, the CEV holds a meeting and devotes an appropriate amount of time to internal discussion and the alignment of evaluations.

The following is an example of a visit schedule for a Medicine and Surgery Study programme.

Model visit schedule for a Medicine and Surgery study programme.

Day	Meetings
Day 1	Participation of the Medicine sub-CEV in the CEV Meetings with the university Governance System
Day 1	Individual meetings: Pro-Rector/Rector's Delegate for Teaching; Pro-Rector/Rector's Delegate for the medical area, where present; Dean/President of the Faculty/ Coordinating Unit; General Director and Medical Director of the relevant healthcare centre; President/Coordinator of the Faculty/Coordinating Unit Teaching Commission; Faculty/Coordinating Unit Teaching Manager, where present; Faculty/ Coordinating Unit Student Representatives
Day 2	Meeting with the study programme Coordinator and the Review Group
Day 2	Meeting with technical and administrative staff staff involved in the management of teaching activities, support services for courses and services aimed at fostering the employability of graduates
Day 2	Interviews with students
Day 2	Meeting with the Joint Teaching Staff-Student Committee
Day 2	Meeting with the stakeholders mentioned in the SUA-CdS (both Specialisation Schools and the PhD programmes are to be considered stakeholders) and with graduates students/interns of the study programme
Day 2	Meeting with professors (from all years of the study programme)
Day 2	Internship Head and Tutors
Day 3	Visit to Teaching facilities, teaching premises within Healthcare facilities, Healthcare facilities, Hospital(s) Interviews with trainees/tutors during the visit
Day 3	Closing meeting with the study programme Coordinator/Dean/President of the Connecting Unit and the Review Group, if deemed useful

During the visit to the facilities, the sub-CEV shall verify the way the internships are carried out and, besides meeting the students in the teaching and healthcare facilities, shall also meet the clinical tutors.

3.2.3 – CEV EVALUATION FORM AND ANVUR FINAL REPORT

The *CEV Report* is made up of the *Evaluation Forms* drawn up by the CEV, including the one devoted to the Medicine and Surgery study programme, which contains the self-assessment section, the key and supporting documents submitted, the strengths and areas for improvement found and the assessment class, in relation to each point of attention.

The Report - which, at this stage, takes the form of a *Preliminary Report* - is entrusted to the CEV President; it is approved collectively by the CEV and is sent to ANVUR within 60 days after the end of the on-site visit.

Within 30 days from its receipt, the *Preliminary Report*, once examined by ANVUR, is sent to the university and to the Medicine and Surgery study programme, which in turn has 30 days to submit, if necessary, its own *Counter-arguments*. The *Counter-arguments* must refer to factual elements aimed at responding to the statements made in the *Evaluation Forms* and with reference to the university documentation submitted for the desk analysis and/or to the findings of the on-site visit.

After considering the university's *Counter-arguments*, if any, the CEV shall, within 30 days, supplement the *Evaluation Forms* with its own *Responses to the counter-arguments*, and, if necessary, amend the *Final Report* with collegial approval.

This Final Report is finally submitted to the Agency's Governing Board, which, within 30 days from its receipt, has the task of carefully assessing the correctness of all the stages of the evaluation process and the contents of the Report, before proceeding to approve the Periodic Accreditation Report in its final and official version, which is then sent to the Ministry of University and Research and to the university involved.

Notwithstanding any provisions for the activation of the review procedure outlined in the following section, once the Periodic Accreditation Report has been received in its final version, it is up to the Ministry of Universities and Research to conclude the administrative procedure for the evaluation of the individual study programme.

3.2.4 – POSSIBLE REVIEW PROCEDURE

Any review procedure can be launched only after ANVUR's final assessment has been sent to the Ministry and to the university in two different ways. As far as the Ministry is concerned, according to the provisions of Legislative Decree no. 19/2012 (art. 8, paragraph 6) the MUR, should elements emerge for an evaluation differing from that of ANVUR, may request a review of the evaluation with a motivated request and within 10 days from ANVUR's notice.

Following the Ministry's request, ANVUR shall start the assessment procedure again, if necessary by resorting to Evaluation Experts included in the Register other than those who carried out the first assessment. The university will also be informed of the start of the review procedure, but the outcome of the review will be notified exclusively to the Ministry within 30 days from the request, as a result of a decision made by resolution of the Governing Board.

The review may also be requested by the individual university, taking into account the provisions of art. 4, paragraph 2 of Presidential Decree no. 76/2010. This procedure is regulated by art. 18 of ANVUR's Organisational Regulations and may be activated at the university's request within ten days after receiving the evaluation, in relation to:

- a) serious violations during the procedure leading to the final assessment;
- b) clear inconsistencies or incongruities in the formulation of the final assessment as regards the counter-arguments drafted by the Institution, if they substantially affect the outcome of the assessment;
- c) violations of the Agency's Code of Ethics.

In this case ANVUR avails itself of a Guarantee Committee, made up of three members from outside the Agency, adequately representative of the evaluated parties. As a result of its evaluation, the Guarantee Committee informs the ANVUR Governing Board whether or not the request is admissible, by providing specific reasons. If so, it may propose to the Agency's Governing Board to:

- a) reconsider the decision, taking into account the elements that emerged from the analysis conducted by the Guarantee Committee itself;
- b) confirm the decision already taken.

The Governing Board, on the advice of the Guarantee Committee, notifies within forty-five days from receipt of the request for review whether or not it has been accepted.