

# MODULE 4

## *HOW TO ORGANIZE A SITE VISIT*





AVEPRO

Before the Site Visit takes place the Review Group will be familiar with the **basic documents** that lay out the background and procedures of AVEPRO's work:

- Briefing note (for Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties)**
- Internal evaluation Quality Assurance Guidelines for Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties**
- SER Notes of guidance for Faculties and service Units**

- ➔ The group will receive the Faculty or unit's Self-Evaluation Report/SER (electronic version and hard copy) at least three weeks before the Site Visit
- ➔ The programme for the Site Visit will be agreed in good time (see the 'sample Site Visit programme')
- ➔ Members of the group will make their own travel arrangements and will be reimbursed by the Institution they visit



AVEPRO

## ➤ *SITE VISIT: OBJECTIVES*

The objectives of the Site Visit commission are to:

- ➔ clarify and verify details of the SER
- ➔ verify how well the mission, aims and objectives of the unit are being fulfilled, having regard to the available resources, and comment on the appropriateness of the Unit's mission, objectives and strategic plan
- ➔ confirm the Unit's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as outlined in the SER
- ➔ discuss any perceived strengths and weaknesses not identified in the SER
- ➔ check the suitability of the working environment
- ➔ comment on the recommendations for improvement proposed in the SER
- ➔ make any additional recommendations for improvement, as deemed appropriate, but with due consideration for resource implications



AVEPRO

## ► *SITE VISIT: FUNCTIONS*

The Evaluation Commission will:

- ➔ study the SER
- ➔ visit the Unit over one/two days
- ➔ clarify and verify details in the SER, and consider other relevant documentation
- ➔ review the activities of the unit in the light of the SER
- ➔ prepare a draft report and present the main findings in an exit presentation to staff and students invited by the Dean
- ➔ write the Evaluation Commission Report and deliver it to AVEPRO within six weeks



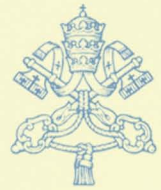
## ➤ *SITE VISIT: THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT*

In keeping with the **formative nature of the process** the Review Group should express their **recommendations in a positive manner** that **encourages Quality improvement**

Such an approach is keeping with the spirit of a process in which an **ethos of partnership and trust** ensures that real enhancement can result

As part of the External Evaluation Report, the Review Group will:

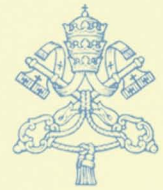
- ➔ confirm and comment on the details of the SER
- ➔ provide an overview of the present state of the Faculty
- ➔ comment briefly on each aspect of the Faculty's activities
- ➔ acknowledge achievements and quality where they exist
- ➔ point out unambiguously any deficiencies or inadequacies in management and operations that might be eliminated or ameliorated
- ➔ identify critical resource limitations (if any) that bar the way to achieving improvements
- ➔ comment on all plans for improvements that the Faculty has made in the SER
- ➔ emphasize the recommendations for improvement that the Review Group consider appropriate



AVEPRO

## ➤ *RESPONSABILITIES OF THE EVALUATION COMMISSION (EC)*

- ➔ The Chair will be **responsible for the External Evaluation Report**
- ➔ The Chair will **assign** to individual members of the group primary responsibility for taking notes in specific areas, e.g. research, teaching and learning, etc. Each member of the group will comment on preliminary drafts of all sections so that the completed draft will reflect the views of the whole group. It is suggested that the **early chapters (factual material) could be completed before the visit**
- ➔ The Chair will **prepare an oral report** on the main findings and recommendations
  - ➔ In the early stages of the Site Visit the **working meals** (including those in the hotel) should be used for an exchange of general views on visits and meetings up to that point, things yet to be done, information yet to be found etc.
  - ➔ Experience shows that it is important that the Evaluation Commission **meet with individual members of the Faculty**. So even if no volunteers show up, the EC should go and seek them



AVEPRO

## ➤ *RESPONSABILITIES OF THE EVALUATION COMMISSION (EC)*

- ➔ The EC will **present their findings and recommendations** to a group of staff and students chosen by the Dean. This will simply be a presentation of the preliminary findings of the EC and will not involve discussion with the Faculty. It will be made clear to the Department that these findings may be modified in the light of subsequent discussion and reflection. During the presentation no comment, facetious or otherwise, should be made in relation to any one who has participated in the Site Visit
- ➔ Within **six weeks** of the Site Visit the Chair will complete the External Evaluation Report, with the agreement of the other members of the group, and submit it to AVEPRO and to the Faculty which will have 15 days to “react” mainly on factual errors
- ➔ When the Site Visit is over no member of the EC should be in contact with any member of the Faculty **on matters relating to the SER, the Site Visit or the External Evaluation Report**