Document Name	Virtual/Hybrid Evaluations Guidelines
Author	Professional Board for Radiography and Clinical Technology

CHANGE HISTORY			
Version	Date	Change request	Change Comment
	9-10 October 2023	To provide for the hybrid evaluations	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Professional Boards postponed 2020 evaluations due to government restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though COVID-19-related restrictions have been lifted, Professional Boards have chosen to use virtual/hybrid evaluations of approved programs because they have proven to be efficient and cost-effective.

1.2 These guidelines are intended to be used to direct virtual/hybrid evaluations of Higher Education Institution (HEI) programmes and will be subject to periodic review as the need arises.

2. PURPOSE OF VIRTUAL/HYBRIDEVALUATIONS

2.1 To ensure there are no disruptions to the routine evaluation of Board-approved education and training programmes.

2.2 To ensure a sustainable and systematic review and evaluation of approved programmes offered by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) using technological platforms.

2.3 To promote consistency in the evaluation process and ensure all programmes are evaluated using the same standards to maintain quality and integrity of the accreditation process.

2.4 To ensure effective collaboration and communication where evaluators may easily share feedback and track progress efficiently.

3. APPROACHES TO VIRTUAL/HYBRID EVALUATIONS

3.1 Methods of conducting evaluations

3.1.1 <u>Desk top review of documents including self-evaluation reports, recorded audio or video information:</u>

3.1.1.1 All information to be reviewed should reach the HPCSA's offices by dates to be communicated in advance by the HPCSA's secretariat. The HEIs should submit the information using email to reach HPCSA's offices within the stipulated time of eight (8) weeks.

3.1.1.2   Video-taped information could include imagery of, among others, physical structures (lecture venues, examination venues and library) and equipment which ordinarily would have been inspected during accreditation / reaccreditation of clinical facility.

3.1.1.3   Evaluation panel members will individually review submitted documents, following receipt from the HPCSA's Secretariat and provide feedback to the Convener of the panel for consolidation.

3.1.1.4   Evaluation panel members may decide to meet physically for no more than a day to collectively review the submitted information.

3.1.2 Virtual interviews/Video conferencing

3.1.2.1   Evaluation panel members may choose to interview the identified stakeholders (including management, students, interns, staff, wherever applicable) virtually.

3.1.2.2   Standard video conferencing platforms may be used, especially Microsoft Teams, HPCSA's preferred platform.

3.1.2.3   All engagements on virtual platforms will be recorded.

3.1.3 Physical evaluations/onsite visit

3.1.3.1   Evaluation panel members may choose to visit HEIs for physical assessments of the physical structures, but these should be over limited periods as follows:

Radiography

For an HEI with one (1) to two (2) programmes a maximum of 2 days with 2 evaluators representing each discipline

For an HEI with four (4) programmes a maximum of 2 days with 4 evaluators representing each discipline.

Clinical Technology

For Clinical Technology programmes a maximum of 2 days with four evaluators.

On the virtual platform 7 evaluators representing each discipline should interview the discipline specific modules

3.2 IT support

3.2.1 The HPCSA's IT officials will always be available to troubleshoot any problems that may arise during virtual engagements where electronic platforms are being used.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. Education and Training Division (E&T Division)

4.1.1. Pre-Evaluation

4.1.1.1 Ascertain that the HEIs have paid outstanding accreditation / evaluation fees from prior years.

4.1.1.2 Ensure that the virtual/hybrid evaluation dates are set and agreed with the relevant parties.

4.1.1.3 Provide the HEIs with the application forms, previously approved evaluation reports and the *Guidelines for Virtual/Hybrid Evaluation.*

4.1.1.4 The Secretariat sends letters of appointment.

4.1.1.5 Ensure that the required evidence is submitted by the HEIs.

4.1.1.6 Send the evaluation pack to the panel members.

4.1.1.7 Send the proforma invoice with estimated amounts to the HEIs.

4.1.1.8 Ensure the availability of dedicated IT personnel to assist with technical glitches.

4.1.2 During the evaluation

4.1.2.1 Monitor the process and communicate with the Convener of the evaluation panel, and HEIs/Clinical Facilities.

4.1.2.2 Provide any additional, relevant documents or information as required by the evaluation panel.

4.1.2.3 Provide any other required support to the evaluation panel.

4.1.3 Post-Evaluation

4.1.3.1 Ensure that the evaluation report is received from the Convener of the panel within 14 days of the virtual/hybrid evaluation and shared with other panel members.

4.1.3.2 Ensure that the virtual/hybrid evaluation recording is safely filed and stored.

4.1.3.3 Ensure the received report serves at the relevant Education, Training and Registration Committee (ETRC) and Professional Board.

4.1.3.4 Communicate the outcome of the Board, in the form of a report, to the HEIs.

4.1.3.5 Ensure that the evaluation database is accordingly updated.

4.2 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

4.2.1 Pre-Evaluation

4.2.1.1 Ensure submission of a duly completed Self Evaluation Report to the E&T Division at least eight weeks prior to the evaluation.

4.2.1.2 Confirm in writing the set dates of the virtual/hybrid evaluation.

4.2.1.3 Ensure that arrangements for the virtual/hybrid evaluation are made on time for the interviewees to connect virtually during the evaluation, and that evidence required is readily available.

4.2.2 During Evaluation

4.2.2.1 Ensure that the HEI's representative, and identified interviewees, e.g. Management, lecturers, students, are available throughout the entire virtual meeting.

4.2.2.2 Submit comments on the factual correctness of the Preliminary Evaluation Report.

4.2.2.3 Submit annual reports and improvement plans.

4.3 Evaluation Panels

4.3.1 Pre-Evaluation

4.3.1.1 The Convener of the evaluation panel must discuss the outline of the virtual evaluation process with the panel members.

4.3.1.2 The Convener of the evaluation panel will approve the draft programme for the virtual/hybrid evaluation in consultation with the HEIs.

4.3.1.3 The panel members should confirm and inform the ET&D of the unavailability to conduct the evaluation **7 days** prior to the scheduled virtual/hybrid evaluation.

4.3.1.4 The ET&D should establish the availability of panel members 7 days before the virtual/hybrid evaluation.

4.3.2   During Evaluation

4.3.2.1 The evaluation panel must evaluate the application form and supporting evidence submitted by the HEIs.

4.3.2.2 The panel members should "pre-meet" with the Convener to discuss the documents submitted and further to plan on how the virtual/hybrid evaluation process should unfold.

4.3.2.3 The Convener of the panel should ensure that the members adhere to the signed prescribed code of conduct.

4.3.2.4 The panel should confirm and validate the availability of the required evidence as per Self Evaluation Report.

4.3.2.5 During the interviews with the staff members and students, the evaluators will among other things probe or establish the following:

   4.3.2.5.1   Relevant tutorials and/or case conferences.

   4.3.2.5.2   The level of clinical supervision and accompaniment of the learners by all members of professional staff.

   4.3.2.5.3   Management and supervision arrangements.

   4.3.2.5.4   The level to which the clinical training department/unit promotes an atmosphere that is conducive to quality learning.

   4.3.2.5.5   A system of recording examinations/procedures/treatments performed and clinical assessments in place for the students.

   4.3.2.5.6   Learner assessments, including aspects of ethics, human rights, and medical law.

   4.3.2.5.7   Communication channels between the clinical training facility/unit and the HEI to promote quality clinical training of learners.

   4.3.2.5.8   Appropriateness of learner contracts/MoU's are in place.

4.3.2.6 The following persons may be interviewed online during the evaluation process to verify or obtain relevant information relating to the students' clinical training:

   4.3.2.6.1   Staff member responsible for the clinical training and welfare of students at the clinical training facility/unit.

   4.3.2.6.2   A sample of all levels of students.

   4.3.2.6.3   Qualified practitioners of different levels of seniority/ experience.

   4.3.2.6.4   Any other professional who may have an impact on student training.

4.3.2.7 The evaluators should ask questions that include, but are not limited to

information about:

4.3.2.7.1 Management's willingness and support for student training.

4.3.2.7.2 Role of qualified practitioners in providing guidance to the students.

4.3.2.7.3 Role of the appointed clinical training supervisor.

4.3.2.7.4 Role and conduct of the appointed assessor/s.

4.3.2.7.5 Role of the supervisors/mentors/intern curators in the clinical education/training of the learners.

4.3.2.7.6 Availability and accessibility of the required resources for students – e.g. Textbooks, journals, computer, internet access etc.;

4.3.2.7.7 Provision of transport for students to various clinical facilities/units;

4.3.2.7.8 The provision of accommodation where facilities/units are far from the HEI;

4.3.2.7.9 How the facility ensures that quality of clinical education and training is maintained in the facility/unit.

4.3.2.7.10 Does the facility provide counselling and support services.

4.3.3 Post-Evaluation

4.3.3.1 After online interviews, evaluators should compile a report, which must be signed by Convener of the panel.

4.3.3.2 The HEI report needs to reflect the following:

4.3.3.2.1 Names of the evaluators.

4.3.3.2.2 Representatives from HEI who were consulted by the evaluators during the virtual evaluation process.

4.3.3.2.3 Names of persons who were interviewed and their designations. *(Students interviewed need to stay anonymous)*.

4.3.3.2.4 Information attained and report on evaluation conducted.

4.3.3.2.5 Evaluators should also provide general comments about the HEI in relation to student training.

4.3.3.2.6 A summary of the critical points noted during interviews with the different professionals and students.

4.3.3.2.7 Recommendations for approval, re-approval or non- approval in accordance with the rating below:

Criteria	Judgement	Outcomes

New programmes
 	
Approval of existing programmes
	Exceeds minimum standards:
	  a) All minimum standards specified in the criteria are met.
	  b) Examples of good practice and innovation are identified.
		Programme approval (5 Years)

	Complies with minimum standards: All minimum standards specified in the criteria are met.	

	Needs improvement:
	  a) Not all minimum standards specified in the criteria were met.
	  b) Problem weaknesses could be addressed in a short period of time.
		Provisional programme approval (with conditions: Submission of remediation plan

| | | within the timelines stipulated. (2 Years) |
| | Does not meet minimum standards:
   a) Did not meet the majority of minimum standards specified in the criteria | Non-approval of the programme |

      4.3.3.2.8 The Convener of the evaluation panel should submit the consolidated report to the ETRC for approval.

5. APPEALS BY HEIs

5.1   HEIs are entitled to appeal findings of evaluations.

5.2   The appeals should be in writing and directed to the ETRC through the E&T Division.

5.3   Appeals shall be managed in accordance with the HPCSA's Appeals Policy.