

PROTOCOL FOR ONLINE SITE VISITS



There are special cases and contexts where ECTE accreditation 'site' visits are conducted online. This document assists institutions and Visitation Evaluation Teams (VET) in conducting online accreditation site visits.

1. GENERAL GOOD PRACTICE

Please keep the following general items of good practice in mind as you prepare for an online site visit. These are drawn from section 1.6 of the ECTE *Guidelines for Site Visits*.

1. Online site visits undergo the same procedures, good practices and criteria that are outlined for normal site visits.
2. Online site visits examine the same standards and guidelines for accreditation and accompanying evidence that are seen in normal site visits.
3. Online site visits will normally rely heavily on video conferencing, but they can also take advantage of other tools to consider evidence (e.g. videos, photographs, virtual tours, etc).
4. The video conferencing platform must be easily accessible to all participants, easy to use and verified for security and privacy.
5. Institutions ensure appropriate bandwidth and secure connectivity for the duration of the online site visit.
6. Online site visits require a more detailed preparation of the visit and its scheduling by the VET panel leader, the Review Secretary and the institution.
7. Online site visits demand more careful distribution of tasks among the VET panel.
8. Online site visits require attention to timing. This normally means, for example, no more than 4 hours of meetings during a day, interspersed with breaks and VET panel rounds. Online video conferencing sessions should not last more than 1 hour. Such visits may require more days to complete the visit than the usual 3-4 days.
9. Online site visits give special consideration to the pressures that the medium and the circumstances may place on staff, students and stakeholders involved.
10. During the online site visit, the VET panel should have at least one informal session every day to exchange expertise and explore consensus around the outcomes of the site visit.
11. Confidentiality will be guarded, and the proceedings will not be recorded;
12. Institutions commit to providing extra documentation as the ECTE Review Secretary and the VET Leader request it.
13. An online site visit may tend to focus more on compliance than on enhancement, and an effort must be made to also include the latter.

2. ROLES

An online site visit works well when clear roles are in place, both in the ECTE VET panel and in the Institution.

1. The ECTE **Review Secretary** (RS) assembles VET panel, ensures they have the documentation, advises and helps throughout the visit and leads in the final drafting of the Review Report.

2. The VET **Team Leader** (TL) is responsible (with the IRC) for the schedule, general leadership and delegation of sub-roles leads in the first drafting of the Review Report.
3. The **VET panel**, normally composed of three members (including the TL and a student member), examines documentation, participates in the visit and participates in the initial drafting the Review Report.
4. The institution receiving the online visit must nominate an **Institutional Review Coordinator** (IRC) who coordinates the entire schedule and visitation logistics from the institutional side. The IRC, for example, makes sure the right people are in the right meetings at the right time, sends links as necessary, participates in all meetings, coordinates technology troubleshooting from the institutional side, arranges virtual video tours and provides documentation where required.

3. ZOOM CONFERENCING

3.1 – Zoom links

The institution is responsible to provide Zoom conferencing rooms that will support the online visitation. The ECTE will also provide a private Zoom room for VET panel debriefing (this room should not be used for other meetings).



The following links will be used.

Institution	<p>A designated link must be sent to the TL, VET panel, RS and General Secretary two weeks before the visit.</p> <p>This is the main link to be used for all meetings between the VET and the Institution during the site visit. The institution will be the host of this room. For more than one meeting scheduled at the same time, breakout rooms should be facilitated.</p>
ECTE	<p>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3369038435</p> <p>This link is to be used only by the TL, VET panel and Review Secretary for team debriefing.</p>

3.2 – Set up and testing

To ensure that the Zoom rooms and related technology are ready for use during the site visit, they must be tested.

1. At least two weeks before the site visit, the institution will set up a Zoom meeting with the TL using its own institutional link. The purpose of the meeting is mostly to verify that Zoom room works, that the connection is sufficient, and that video and audio settings are appropriate, that breakout rooms work and that screensharing is enabled.
2. At least a month before the visit, the RS will set up a Zoom meeting with the VET panel using the ECTE link. The purpose of this meeting is the same as n.1 above, but it can also be the occasion to review the detailed schedule.
3. In the month before the visit, the IRC should set up one or more Zoom meetings with all those in the institution that will be involved and connected during the site visit. The institution can choose to allow individuals to connect from their own devices from different locations, or to use a designated room on the campus set up for the visit. The purpose of these meetings is the

same as n.1 and 2 above. This is internal testing for the institution, and no one from the ECTE needs to be involved.

3.3 – WhatsApp Troubleshooting group

To allow instant communication during the visit, a WhatsApp group has been created for the VET panel. This can be useful there are connection issues, if there are scheduling uncertainties, if links do not work or for any other emergency situation where email is too slow.



To join please click on this link from your phone <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GivLLISg5SG1p7Ccthm15Q>

All VET panel members must join, as well as the IRC. All participants in the group must keep their phone on and notifications activated during the entire visit.

4. ADDITIONAL PRE-VISIT DOCUMENTATION

In addition to the required SER and documentation, institutions receiving online site visits are advised to provide the following additional documentation for the VET panel least one month in advance.

- Video of school facilities. A live video tour is included in the scheduling during the visit, but an additional video may provide better quality and more information before the actual visit.
- Brief video interviews of students, staff and faculty These can be simple introductions or responses to simple questions about why students have chosen this programme, how their experience has been so far or asking staff and faculty what it's like to work in the institution. The main purpose is to establish a relational context with the visitation team.
- Video recordings of events such as chapel or other informal events. These should be brief excerpts of a few minutes to allow the VET to perceive something of the institutional climate.
- Videos of placement activities and interviews with supervisors. These should again be brief and simply provide a visual and relational context of the activity (not a full report).
- 2-3 video excerpts of lectures and other learning events. A live connection to classroom activities is included in the scheduling of the visit, but these videos can provide a greater breadth.
- For programmes entailing online delivery, links and access passwords to the VLE should be provided.

The videos should all be no more than 3 minutes each and do not necessarily need to be of high quality or edited (they should not become a major production burden for the institution).

Videos should be uploaded by the institution to a cloud server and the links sent to the VET Team Leader (TL), the Review Secretary (reviewsecretary@ecte.eu) and to the General Secretary (office@ecte.eu).

5. SCHEDULING OF THE VISIT

Online site visits require particular care in scheduling. In brief, everyone needs to know what link to click on at what time and for what purpose. A detailed schedule is agreed on at least two weeks before the visit by the TL and the IRC. The RS will stand by for help and advice as necessary.

The following sample schedule is proposed as a template. Each visitation may require adjusting and personalisation, but the basic components should stay in place.

	Time/length	Purpose	Who is involved	Link	Notes
Day 1	9.30 (15m)	Saying hello	VET and everyone in the institution, IRC	Institutional Zoom room	Everyone connects. The VET panel introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the accreditation visit.
	10.00 (1h)	Introductory meeting	VET, institutional leaders, IRC	Institutional Zoom room	TL leads.
	Break				
	11.30 (1h)	Tour of facilities and library	VET, IRC	Institutional Zoom room supported by mobile device	A mobile device is used from the institutional side to walk around and show the campus. Appropriate audio must be enabled to allow the VET panel to ask questions.
	Break				
	14.30	VET coffee	VET	ECTE Zoom room	An informal time for the team to share coffee together, <u>not</u> business
	15.00 (1h)	Organisational issues	VET, institutional leaders, board members, employers, finance IRC	Institutional Zoom room with breakout rooms	TL lead. After an initial session together, VETs are assigned to separate breakout rooms with specific individuals (e.g. finances, board, etc.). This must be planned by the TL and IRC before to know who will be in what group
16.30 (30m)	Debrief	VET	ECTE Zoom room	TL leads	
Day 2	10.00 (1h)	Formation and community	VET, institutional leaders, formation leaders, community deans, local church leaders, IRC	Institutional Zoom room with breakout rooms	TL lead. After an initial session together, VETs are assigned to separate breakout rooms with specific individuals (e.g. mentoring arrangements, pastoral care, character and spiritual formation provision, etc.). This must be planned by

Day 3

				the TL and IRC before to know who will be in what group
Break				
11.30 (1h)	Meet students	VET, student representatives, IRC (initially, then steps out)	Institutional Zoom room	Students can connect individually from their own devices or as a group on a single device.
Break				
15.00 (1h)	Meet faculty	VET, faculty, IRC	Institutional Zoom room with possible breakout rooms	Either individual or group connection from institutional side. If there is large faculty, breakout rooms can be used for smaller group and greater participation.
16.30 (1h)	Meet staff, administration	VET, staff, administrators, IRC	Institutional Zoom room with breakout rooms	Initially a group connection, then breakout rooms with assigned VETs. This must be planned by the TL and IRC before to know who will be in what group. As this meeting entails viewing databases, student records, etc., screen sharing facilities should be in place.
9.30 (30m)	Debrief	VET	ECTE Zoom	Informal debriefing from day before
10.00 (1h)	Join class 1	Student VET and VET1, one teacher and students, IRC	Institutional Zoom room supported by mobile device	Classes need to be scheduled during this slot. The IRC transmits teaching session from classroom on mobile device
Break				
11.30 (1h)	Join another educational event	VET2 and VET3, facilitators and students, IRC	Institutional Zoom room supported by mobile device	Formational events, training, or other educational events need to be scheduled during this slot. The IRC transmits session from classroom on mobile device
Break				
15.00 (1h)	Curriculum, design and delivery	VET, Academic Dean, IRC	Institutional Zoom room	TL lead
16.30 (1h)	Teaching, learning and assessment	VET, Academic Dean, selection of faculty, IRC	Institutional Zoom room	The institution should be prepared to screen share

Day 4

				samplings of materials such as marked work. For programmes entailing online delivery, screen sharing of the VLE should be provided.
9.30 (30m)	Debrief	VET	ECTE Zoom	Informal debriefing from day before
10.00 (1h)	Training and placements	VET, placement and internship leaders, employers, IRC	Institutional Zoom room	Connection can be made to participants on their own devices (no need to travel to the institution).
Break				
11.30 (1h)	Extra meeting	VET and anyone invited IRC	Institutional Zoom room	This is a 'spare' slot in case other meetings have run out of time, further documents have been requested, etc. If unused, it can serve to work on the report
Break				
14.00 (1h)	Report preparation	VET	/	VETs work individually on the worksheets to compile report
15.00 (1.5h)	Report drafting	VET, RS	ECTE Zoom	TL leads, RS participates
17.00 (30m)	Final meeting	VET, institutional leaders, RS, IRC	Institutional Zoom room	TL leads

These Guidelines are approved by the ECTE Review Secretary and General Secretary and are valid until their revision.

For additional information about the ECTE, contact:
 Dr Marvin Oxenham – General Secretary, ECTE
 Via dei Lucumoni 33 1015 Sutri (VT) Italy
 Email: office@ecte.eu Website: www.ecte.eu