



## **Guide to perform IAAC remote peer evaluations**

### **CLASSIFICATION**

This document is classified as an IAAC Guidance Document.

### **AUTHORIZATION**

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## Guide to perform IAAC remote peer evaluations

### 1. Objective

This document has been generated to provide general guidance for IAAC peer evaluators to perform remote peer evaluations.

### 2. Peer Evaluation scheduling and logistics

**2.1** A peer evaluation incorporating remote evaluation techniques should be executed with the same depth and reach as an on-site peer evaluation. The quality, scope and duration of the peer evaluation should not be compromised.

**2.2** In an effort to avoid fatigue during remote peer evaluation sessions, the peer evaluation team and the AB may agree on the duration of the peer evaluation days, as long as the total time of the evaluation is sufficient to comply with the objectives. The impact of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) should be taken into account in the planned evaluation time.

**2.3** When it is necessary and appropriate that a remote evaluation be performed, the lead peer evaluator will communicate with the AB to confirm the technical aspects of the evaluation. Additionally, the lead peer evaluator should confirm which parts shall be completed remotely and which parts of the evaluation shall be completed on site.

**2.4** The evaluation plan should describe which items will be evaluated remotely and which on-site.

### 3. Preparation of a remote peer evaluation

**3.1** Once the remote peer evaluation is scheduled, the lead peer evaluator should contact the AB to establish the tool(s) to be used for videoconferencing and for the exchange of documents and records. If there are questions regarding the tools to be used during the evaluation, it may be necessary to contact the IAAC Secretariat and/or MLA Chair to assist in establishing or hosting the tools chosen.

**3.2** If the AB requests to use an alternate videoconferencing tool than the one suggested by the team, it may provide its own tool to facilitate the remote peer evaluation. The proposed tool will be analyzed by the evaluation team. If the team agrees to use it, the team will inform the AB. If there is disagreement regarding the tool to be used, the team will inform the MLAC Chair who review the situation and will decide on the use of the tool to be used for the remote peer evaluation. The videoconferencing tool should meet security requirements of the AB and team and it should have the option to share documents for online review and the option to hold separate parallel meetings (breakout rooms). If the AB provides the tool, the tool chosen should be capable of making the evaluation team members “hosts” of the meeting so that they can control the exchange of information, screensharing, breakout rooms, etc.

**3.3** The videoconferencing and document/record exchange tools to be used should be confirmed at least 3 weeks before the remote peer evaluation.

**3.4** Videoconferencing tool connection tests should be conducted at least two weeks prior to the peer evaluation, including video, sound, and internet signal tests. If the tool determined by IAAC is used, the IAAC Secretariat should provide support to this activity. In case a different tool is used, the AB should



be responsible for the tests and training for the evaluation team on the videoconferencing tool to be used.

**3.5** The electronic devices of the peer evaluation team and the AB should have web cameras for a better communication during the remote peer evaluation.

**3.6** It is recommended that in addition to tests, there be an alternative method of communication between the peer evaluation team and the AB to be used in any unforeseen situation. This may be another videoconferencing and/or video-calls system as well as an alternate means to exchange documents and records.

**3.7** Considering that the peer evaluation shall cover all the applicable requirements established in MD 002, the evaluation plan should establish the activities that will be evaluated and by which specific evaluation team members through the videoconferencing tool. The plan should also identify which documents/records are required to be provided in advance of the videoconferencing meetings. Creation of the agenda will require coordination and communication among all team members and the AB. The plan will likely require more detail than a traditional onsite evaluation to ensure team member responsibilities are clearly defined and appropriate logistics have been made to facilitate an effective evaluation.

In the evaluation plan it should be clearly documented which meeting will be held by each evaluation team member and its counterparts. It is important to keep in mind the different time zones (UTC) of participants in the different meetings, and the correct reference to the evaluation plan. The meetings may be performed simultaneously using different rooms within the same tool. The team should align their schedules to fit the time zone of the AB instead of the AB adjusting to the time zones of the team members.

**3.7.1** As review of records by remote means may take longer than it would on-site and in order to optimize the connections and for a more efficient use of the evaluation team's time, it is suggested that at least the following records be sent to the team at least two weeks before the peer evaluation:

- Most recent internal audits (team may request multiple years of internal audits)
- Corrective actions of the internal audit(s) performed
- Most recent Management Reviews (team may request multiple years of management reviews)
- Insurance policies, established contracts, as applicable
- Meeting records of Committees implemented by the AB (team may request multiple years)
- Impartiality risk analysis, updated
- Records on competence and monitoring of personnel involved in the accreditation process
- Records of complaints and appeals received since the last peer evaluation
- Other records and/or documents deemed necessary by the evaluation team and/or AB

These records are to be provided in addition to the documentation (Set A/B) that is normally required for a peer evaluation and should not be confused with the requirements for submission of this documentation



as part of the normal peer evaluation process.

**3.8** Considering that a remote evaluation requires different preparation and planning than an on-site evaluation, the peer evaluation team should hold a planning meeting before the evaluation, to plan and prepare aspects to be evaluated. This meeting should be carried out during the drafting of the evaluation plan and should be different from the meeting prior to the start of the peer evaluation, according to MD 002.

#### **4. Remote peer evaluation coverage**

**4.1** All the required forms to perform an on-site peer evaluation should be completed for a remote peer evaluation, according to the peer evaluation plan.

**4.2** The plans for the remote and onsite evaluations should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure full coverage of all the peer evaluation requirements and completion of all IAAC documents/forms by the completion of all evaluation activities.

#### **5. Good practices during the remote peer evaluation**

**5.1** It is recommended that the peer evaluators highlight in their agenda which areas of ISO/IEC 17011 and other requirements should be covered, as well as which documents they should have available at that time.

**5.2** When performing the document review, the peer evaluators should take notes on what they have reviewed. If the documents are not available at that time, they should contact the AB and request them. To achieve this, it should be previously agreed (in the planning meeting) if each team member will do it directly or if it will be through the team leader.

**5.3** When performing the initial meeting, the team should inform the AB on the preferred way to work with the team. This includes:

- Carrying out regular meetings in order to inform on the progress, if applicable;
- The preferred way to work (only group meetings, or parallel meetings for each evaluation team member);
- Define the counterparts in case additional information or responses to questions are required, either by email, or through videoconference meetings;
- Coordinate the interviews of staff from other departments of the AB, for example, human resources, administration and finances, among others, to ensure that they will be available when the appropriate issues are evaluated;
- Remind the AB that the finding raised in a remote peer evaluation are final, will appear in the final A3 report and may not be modified in between the remote evaluation and other parts of the on-site evaluation, as applicable;

**5.4** When conducting the remote evaluation with the AB, the peer evaluators should confirm that the documents that were provided are the most recent versions.

**5.5** It is recommended that the evaluation team hold regular meetings during the remote evaluation and establish a means of communication, to learn about the potential findings or other issues that each



evaluator has identified, according to MD 002.