



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Guidelines for Evaluation Visits to Government Schools





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Introduction



School evaluation visits serve as a strategic tool that supports the achievement of the UAE Centennial 2071 and the UAE Agenda 2030. They contribute to measuring the quality of educational performance, motivating schools toward excellence, and providing constructive feedback to school leadership and teachers. These visits also ensure the alignment of school policies and practices with national performance indicators and highlight strengths and opportunities for improvement, driving sustainable development that aligns with the country's aspirations to build a world-class education system.



Purpose of this Guide

This guideline is part of the efforts undertaken by the Evaluation and Quality Directorate for public and private general education institutions to promote transparency and build a shared understanding of school evaluation process between evaluation teams and school leaderships across the United Arab Emirates.

The guideline aims to introduce school principals to all stages of evaluation visits—starting from planning phase, through evidence collection and analysis, to issuing evaluative judgments and outlining improvement actions. It also clarifies the expected roles particularly those of school staff during the visit, and outlines the standards and practices followed by evaluation teams to ensure professionalism in the evaluation process and accuracy of the resulting judgments.

The guideline contributes to enhancing a culture of evaluation as a tool for school development and support. It enables school administrations to effectively prepare for evaluation visits, engage positively with evaluation teams, and understand how to utilize the results and feedback to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Additionally, it establishes a unified reference framework that helps improve school performance, ensures consistency in applying the nationally approved "School Evaluation and Inspection Framework," fosters professional partnerships with schools, and encourages the exchange of best educational practices in alignment with national directions.

Rules and Professional Conduct for Educational Evaluators and School Staff

Educational evaluators and school staff are expected to adhere to the approved Code of Conduct included within the UAE School Evaluation and Inspection Framework, ensuring professionalism and mutual respect. This commitment supports the implementation of high-quality evaluation processes that accurately reflect the school's reality and support the improvement of its overall performance.

First



Expectations from Schools During the Evaluation Visit

- Treat the evaluation visit as a positive opportunity to enhance performance quality and promote sustainable school development.
- Provide a comprehensive and accurate self-evaluation form, supported by evidence, along with a development plan that includes clear objectives.
- Submit required information and documentation in an organized and timely manner.
- Ensure the presence of relevant staff during the visit and facilitate communication with all stakeholders within the school.
- Facilitate the execution of evaluation activities such as classroom observations, interviews, and discussion sessions with relevant stakeholders..
- Respect the role of the evaluation team during the visit and address any challenges that may arise promptly and efficiently through continuous coordination with the team lead.
- Engage positively with daily feedback provided by the team, as it supports the school's continuous improvement.
- Respect the judgments and evaluations issued by the evaluation team.
- Refrain from photographing evaluation team members during the school visit, recording evaluation team members during the school visit, or record meetings held with them, invite them to participate in activities unrelated to the evaluation process, or offering them any gifts, in order to maintain the professionalism and impartiality of the evaluation process.

Rules and Professional Conduct for Educational Evaluators and School Staff

Second



Expectations from the Evaluation Team During the Visit

- Wear the official identification badge and the school's visitor badge if requested.
- Plan and manage the implementation of evaluation processes effectively to ensure the highest levels of accuracy and efficiency.
- Conduct fair and unbiased evaluations, free from personal bias or any influence from the school that affect negatively impacts the evaluation process.
- Conduct classroom visits to directly observe students' learning skills and experiences.
- Issue accurate and fair evaluations based on valid and reliable evidence aligned with the standards of the UAE School Evaluation and Inspection Framework.
- Interact professionally and respectfully with all school staff during the implementation of evaluation processes in the school, and focus on the interests and learning priorities of all students throughout the evaluation activities.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Logistics of the Evaluation Process

Evaluation of Team Size and Visit Duration

The number of evaluation days and number of evaluation team members is determined based on the school's context, including the curriculum, educational phases or grade levels, and the number of students in each phase. The evaluation team will ensure that all educational phases are adequately covered through a variety of evaluation activities.

Logistical Support Expected from the School Includes:

- Providing a suitable, dedicated room for the evaluation team, equipped with a sufficient number of chairs, workspace areas, electrical power sources, and wireless internet (Wi-Fi). The room must be free of any audio or video recording devices.
- Sharing any relevant logistical information with the Evaluation and Quality Directorate in advance, such as specific access routes or school entrances, availability of parking, or any additional information that may facilitate a smooth and efficient evaluation visit.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Evaluation Visit Activities

Pre-Evaluation Visit Activities

The school must ensure that all school staff members are familiar with the 2015 School Evaluation and Inspection Framework, and all policies approved by the Ministry of Education (MoE). These include, for example, the Assessment and Examinations Policy, the Inclusion Policy, the Child Protection Policy, the Student Behavior Policy, and other relevant policies.

First: Required Documents and Materials from Schools

The school will receive notification of the evaluation visit and its requirements at least two weeks prior to the scheduled visit. The school will also be informed in advance of the required school documents for the evaluation visit and the submission deadline. All required documents must be uploaded, and the school's data must be updated before the deadline specified in the evaluation visit notification.

The required school documents include the following:

School Profile Document	Self-Evaluation Report
School Development Plan	Subject-Specific Improvement Action Plans for Core Subjects
Internal, Benchmark, National, and External Assessment Data	International Benchmark Assessment Data (PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS)
Daily Timetable of Subjects and Lessons	Updated School Calendar, Including Activities and Exam Dates
School Organizational Structure	Floorplan of the School Building and Facilities
School Location Link (Google Maps)	Links to Parent, Teacher, and Student Surveys

Evaluation Visit Procedures

These documents must include:

- Clear and accurate timetables that specify time, grade levels, subjects, and lists of teachers with their qualifications.
- Class lists that highlight the different student groups (such as students with special educational needs/ gifted and talented/students of determination, student nationalities, etc.).

Second: Data Analysis

- Schools will be provided with templates for analyzing student attainment and progress data (Appendix No. 1), covering various types of assessments across subjects and phases. Schools are required to ensure that these templates are completed with accurate and reliable information, while adhering to the following requirements:
 - Provide evidence to support student evaluations, based on a thorough and detailed analysis of their tests and exam data.
 - Ensure the analysis is aligned with the grade levels, educational phases, or specific groups outlined in the evaluation framework.
 - Include raw data from key initial assessments (where applicable).
 - Include international benchmark assessment data, if available.

*In case the school is unable to upload any additional documentation within the specified time prior to the visit, the evaluation team will review it on-site during the evaluation visit.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Activities During the Evaluation Visit

During the evaluation visit, evaluators issue judgments based on the performance indicators outlined in the 2015 School Evaluation and Inspection Framework. Evaluators aim to verify the accuracy of the school’s Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) by reviewing supporting evidence, with a focus on specific themes, relevant practices, and targeted student groups. When necessary, evaluators may involve members of the school leadership team in selected evaluation activities, in order to promote transparency and keep them continuously informed of the evaluation process. The evaluation visit is carefully planned, with evaluators conducting multiple purposeful evaluation activities. Below is an outline of the schedule of evaluation activities, which may be adjusted as needed based on the visit’s requirements and school’s context, along with a description of the evaluation activities carried out by the evaluation team during the visit.

First: Schedule of Evaluation Activities:

Day	Evaluation Activities
One	• Introductory meeting between the MoE's evaluation team and the school principal/senior leadership team, to introduce the evaluation team, outline their roles, and meet the school's senior and middle leadership. • Internal team meeting to discuss the evaluation visit plan and activities. • The school may present a brief overview of the school and its achievements, not exceeding 15–20 minutes, to allow the evaluation team to begin their scheduled evaluation activities promptly. • Conducting various evaluation activities. • Quality assurance team visits. *
Two & three	• Carrying out various evaluation activities such as classroom observations, learning walks, other observations, and the analysis of students' work and documents provided by the school. • Holding meetings with key stakeholders in the school, including members of the senior leadership team, academic staff, subject coordinators, a group of students, the academic advisor, a group of parents, standards and indicators coordinators, and the Board of Trustees. • Providing daily feedback to the school's senior leadership team. • Quality assurance team visits. *
Four	• Complete the evaluation activities • Complete the feedback form by the school's principal • Quality assurance team visits* • Final feedback for the school

*The number of quality assurance team visits to the school during the evaluation period depends on the school's context.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Second: Definition of Evaluation Activities

Document Analysis

Analysis of the documents submitted by the school, which may include the Self-Evaluation* Form (SEF), improvement plans, other action plans, policies and procedures, school programs, the curriculum progression matrix and lesson plans. * The SEF specifications are available in the link provided in Appendix No. (2)

- The SEF must be:
 - Analytical, not merely descriptive.
 - Concise and clear.
 - Supported by clear evidence that reinforces the school's judgments.

Classroom Observations

- Evaluators aim to conduct classroom observations across all core subjects offered at the school, as well as covering a range of other subjects. These observations form a significant part of the evaluation process. The evaluation team strives to observe as many lessons as possible across all phases and subjects. However, schools are advised to maintain their regular lesson timetable and routine activities. The evaluation team understands that there may be pre-arranged school activities such as field trips, visits, or examinations. In such cases, the school must inform the team lead of any changes to the usual routine to ensure proper coordination with scheduled evaluation activities.
- Evaluators aim to observe a variety of teachers across all phases. The school must notify the team lead of any changes to the regular teaching staff. It is important to note that the evaluation is based on a "sample," so it is unlikely that all teachers will be observed during classroom visits.
- The duration of classroom observations may vary from observing a part of a lesson to observing a full lesson. The primary focus of these observations is to evaluate teaching, learning, attainment, and progress. Other areas of focus will include assessment, student behavior, use of resources, and students with special educational needs.
- Teachers are advised to carry on with lessons as usual without being affected by the arrival or departure of evaluators. Evaluators will generally not interrupt lessons and they will only speak with students when they are working individually or in groups. Teachers should not involve evaluators in any class activities during the lesson.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

- It is recommended that a chair and table be provided for the evaluators in a suitable place within the classroom. Teachers should also provide their regular lesson planning files, including the current lesson plan and any relevant assessment data. It is also important to indicate the varied grouping of students (if applicable), including students of determination, and the number of enrolled students. Student attendance for the lesson (boys and girls), as along with the total class size, should preferably be written on the classroom board. It should be emphasized that the evaluation team will not provide any comments or individual feedback to teachers.

Joint Classroom Observations

- Joint classroom observations provide an opportunity for senior and middle leaders to participate in lesson observations alongside the evaluators. This approach is intended to promote the exchange of expertise and to support school leaders in conducting future classroom observations as part of ongoing development and improvement efforts following the evaluation visit.
- A variety of lessons across all core subjects and school phases will be observed during these joint observations.
- School leaders may be asked to briefly discuss the observations findings with the evaluator, including identified strengths and areas for improvement, as part of the capacity-building and knowledge-sharing process.

School Walkthroughs

Evaluators conduct various walkthroughs to gather evidence and observe other activities that primarily take place outside the classroom visits and formal meetings. School walkthroughs during the evaluation visit may include:

- Morning assemblies
- School events
- Displays of students' work in hallways and classrooms
- Student break times
- Organization of student drop-off and pick-up from school buses
- Movement of private vehicles in and out of the school
- School facilities, such as:
 - School canteens or cafeterias
 - Libraries
 - Computer and science laboratories
 - Sports fields
 - School courtyards

Additional walkthroughs may be conducted based on the school's context and the specific requirements of the evaluation visit.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Students' Work Scrutiny

- Evaluators review students' work across all core subjects. Subject-specific evaluators examine a selection of student work samples that are appropriate to the subject. The sample may cover different ability levels across various phases, and educational streams.
- A variety of student work sources may be reviewed, including student notebooks, activity books, student projects, as well as digital materials such as e-portfolios, electronic projects, and work completed on approved digital platforms, and other similar sources.

Meetings and Interviews

Meetings and interviews are an important part of the school performance evaluation visit. They allow evaluators to gain insight into different perspectives regarding the quality of educational services provided and help identify areas of strength and improvement. These meetings are typically organized by the evaluation team lead in coordination with the school principal.

The meetings target the following groups

- **Student Groups:** Evaluators will meet with groups of students selected either by the school or by the evaluation team to ensure fair representation of all student categories. Evaluators may also engage in informal conversations with students at any time during the evaluation visit.
- **Senior Leadership Team Members:** Meetings are held between the school's senior leadership team and the evaluation team lead to assess the effectiveness of school leadership in driving teaching and learning process and guiding school towards continuous improvement. It is important to note that it is not necessary to meet with every member of the senior leadership team.
- **Core Subject Coordinators:** A schedule of meetings is arranged between core subject coordinators and evaluators to assess the effectiveness of curriculum planning and implementation, and how well it aligns with national standards and student needs. These meetings should not conflict with coordinators' regular duties (e.g., teaching lessons, supervision during break times, etc.). The length of each meeting will depend on the evaluation focus and the school's context.

Standard and Indicator Leads: Meetings will be held with those responsible for monitoring various standards and indicators, such as curriculum, student health, safety, well-being, and teaching and learning. These meetings should also not interfere with regular staff duties (e.g., teaching lessons, supervising break times, etc.). The duration will depend on the evaluation themes being discussed and the school's context.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

- **Board of Trustees Members:** The school must arrange for representatives of the Board of Trustees —such as cluster manager, committee chairperson, and a support team member —to attend the scheduled meeting during the evaluation visit. In some cases, the meeting may be held virtually. The evaluation team may record the meeting for documentation purposes and to ensure accuracy in the evaluation process.
- **Parent and School Community Representatives** (within the scope of their roles and responsibilities): Schools are required to nominate a group of parents, including parents of students with special educational needs/students of determination, to participate in a parent meeting. This meeting may be held on the second or third day of the visit, depending on the school's context. The selected parent group must represent all student groups and phases within the school community.

Additional meetings may be arranged based on the school's context and requirements of the evaluation team.

Quality Assurance Visits

- The Quality Assurance Team visits schools to carry out the quality assurance process during the evaluation period. Their role is to ensure that all stakeholders comply with quality standards and professional practices. The Quality Assurance Team is expected to participate in various evaluation activities to support both the school and the evaluation team, and to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the evaluation process.

Daily Feedback to the School

- At the end of each day during the evaluation visit, the team lead meets with the school principal to provide feedback. The purpose of this meeting is to update the senior leadership on the school's current status and the progress of that day's evaluation activities. The meeting also includes a review of the evaluation team's adherence to the Code of Professional Conduct, discussion of any major areas that require corrective action from the school, and an opportunity for the school to submit any additional evidence it deems relevant. Arrangements for the following day are also agreed upon during this meeting.

*The school may raise any concerns related to the evaluation activities or the professional conduct of the evaluation team. The team lead will address these concerns and provide the appropriate solutions to ensure the evaluation process proceeds smoothly and maintains a high standard of quality.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Final Day Activities of the Evaluation Visit

The school leadership will receive a survey link via email. This survey is designed to gather feedback on the school leadership team's satisfaction with the evaluation process, and the evaluation team's adherence to the Ministry of Education's Code of Conduct. The survey must be completed and submitted prior to the final feedback session conducted by the evaluation team.

Final Feedback to the School

The evaluation team provides final feedback to the school principal and senior leadership. This feedback includes the key evaluation judgments for each subject and indicator, highlights of the school's main strengths, and key areas requiring improvement. It also includes a summary of the recommendations that will be included in the final report. It is important to note that this session is not intended for discussion between the evaluation team and the school leadership, and recording of the session is not permitted. The evaluation team will provide regular feedback to the school throughout the evaluation visit, along with conducting several professional discussions with senior and middle leadership.

The outcomes shared in this session are confidential and private, and must not be disclosed beyond the school leadership team.

Post-Evaluation Activities

Addressing Issues Identified During the Evaluation Visit – (Letters of Concern)

A Letter of Concern is issued by the evaluation team lead who participated in the school visit, it is issued only after confirming that the school has not taken any corrective actions during the visit to address the identified issue. This letter serves as a formal notification to the school regarding serious health and safety concerns, regulatory violations, or observations of non-compliance with laws and regulations that must be adhered to during the evaluation visit.

Evaluation Visit Procedures

Quality Assurance Process

Quality assurance includes verifying the accuracy of evaluation visit outcomes and all related reports. This involves reviewing the judgments made by the evaluation team, comparing them with the supporting evidence and activities, and ensuring consistency in the evaluation processes and accuracy of the judgments made by different teams.

The Evaluation and Quality of Institutions of Public Education and Early Childhood ensures that evaluators and team lead adhere to performance standards and that the final reports accurately reflect of the school's reality. Reports must include clear and detailed recommendations for improvement before being approved and sent to schools. The directorate is committed to applying effective mechanisms for providing feedback and conducting reviews, if needed, in accordance with established policies and procedures.

Report Issuance

Final reports containing the outcomes of the evaluation visit and related recommendations are shared with the school once all quality assurance procedures are completed, and the report is officially approved by the Ministry of Education.

Procedures for Submitting Comments on Evaluation Outcomes

Schools have the right to submit comments on the evaluation report within three working days from the date they receive the final report. Comments should be sent to the department's official email address: schools.evaluation@moe.gov.ae

Approved Evaluation Standards



Standards and Indicators

- The primary goal of the evaluation visit is to support the school's improvement efforts through an independent external assessment of its progress and performance quality. This is carried out based on six performance standards and seventeen related indicators, as outlined in the 2015–2016 School Inspection and Evaluation Framework approved in the United Arab Emirates. This framework provides a detailed description of each of the six standards, along with a clarification of the quality levels associated with each aspect of the indicators and standards. Please refer to the 2015 Evaluation Framework standards at the link provided in (Appendix 3)

Analysis of Student Results and Measurement of Their Attainment and Progress

One of the main activities associated with the evaluation standards is **the analysis of student data**. This activity corresponds to **Performance Standard 1: The Quality of Students' Achievement**, which involves measuring students' academic outcomes and assessing the school's success in achieving high levels of attainment and progress for all student groups. The standard focuses on:

- Comparing students' achievement with national and international benchmarks
- Tracking their academic progress over time
- Assessing students' levels of knowledge, skills, and understanding, which reflect the effectiveness of teaching and learning provided.

The Evaluation and Quality Department has developed precise tools for analysing student results, measuring their attainment and academic progress. It has also produced a detailed guide with illustrative examples to support schools in analysing student data and determining levels of attainment and progress in line with the 2015 Evaluation Framework standards. Please review the link provided in (Appendix No. 1) for access to the guides, along with the attainment and progress calculation document.

Schools are expected to use these guides to understand the process of analyzing student data, accurately calculate attainment and progress levels, and ensure that the resulting judgments align with the quality levels of the Students' Achievement standard in the evaluation framework.

Approved Evaluation Standards

A summary of the indicators and aspects of this standard is provided below:

Performance Standard 1: Quality of Students’ Achievement	
Performance Indicator 1.1: Academic Attainment This indicator measures the level of academic attainment students achieve compared to expected standards. It includes four components:	1.1.1 Attainment as measured against authorized and licensed curriculum standards Assesses the extent to which students’ attainment aligns with the standards of the approved curriculum, in accordance with the Ministry of Education's assessment and testing policies, including both internal and external data sources.
	1.1.2 Attainment as measured against national and appropriate international standards Focuses on students’ results in national and international benchmark assessments, and the extent to which these results compare to reference standards, such as the General Secondary Examination, and international tests like PISA, TIMSS, and PIRLS (where applicable).
	1.1.3 Knowledge, skills and understanding, especially in the key subjects Evaluates students’ subject knowledge, understanding, and skill development in core subjects, as demonstrated during lessons and through their work.
	1.1.4 Trends in attainment over time Monitors changes in student attainment over the past three academic years to determine whether there has been improvement or decline, using assessments aligned with the approved curriculum.

Performance Indicator 1.2: Academic Progress This indicator focuses on measuring students’ academic development compared to their starting points. It includes three components:	1.2.1 Progress of students, including those with special educational needs, against their starting points and overtime Compares students’ current performance to their starting points, taking into account individual goals and support plans (for example, from the end of Term 1 to the end of the academic year for the same student group).
	1.2.2 Progress in lessons Assesses the extent to which students make the expected progress during lessons, based on learning objectives appropriate to each core subject.
	1.2.3 Progress of different groups of students Monitors progress differences among student groups (e.g., boys, girls, students with special educational needs, gifted and talented students) to ensure that all groups have access to appropriate progress opportunities for progress.
Performance Indicator 1.3: Learning Skills This indicator measures a range of skills that enable students to acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding. It may include various learning styles (auditory, visual, kinesthetics), as well as skills in inquiry, research, independent work —individually or collaboratively—and subject-specific learning skills.	1.3.1 – Students’ engagement in, and responsibility for, their own learning Assesses how actively students participate in learning activities, their awareness of their strengths and areas of improvement, and their ability to take responsibility for improving their performance.
	1.3.2 Students’ interactions, collaboration and communication skills Evaluates students’ ability to interact and collaborate effectively in various learning situations, explain their learning, and communicate clearly with others.
	1.3.3 Application of learning to the real world and making connections between areas of learning Assesses students’ ability to make connections between what they learn in different subjects and apply it in real-l situations, promoting a deeper understanding of the world around them.
	1.3.4 Innovation, enterprise, enquiry, research, critical thinking, problem solving and use of learning technologies Evaluates students’ proficiency in independent research, project work, problem-solving, critical thinking, and their effective use of technology to support their learning

* The 2015 Evaluation Framework provides a detailed description of this standard. Schools are advised to refer to the framework for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the **Students’ Achievement** standard.

Approved Evaluation Standards

Judgment Descriptors

Educational evaluators will make judgements using a six-level scale. The six levels of quality on the scale are defined as follows:

Outstanding	Quality of performance substantially exceeds the expectation of the UAE
Very Good	Quality of performance exceeds the expectation of the UAE
Good	Quality of performance meets the expectation of the UAE (This is the expected level for every school in the UAE)
Acceptable	Quality of performance meets the minimum level of quality required in the UAE (This is the minimum level for every school in the UAE)
Weak	Quality of performance is below the expectation of the UAE
Very Weak	Quality of performance is significantly below the expectation of the UAE

Reference: School Inspection Framework 2015, Page 19

Approved Evaluation Standards

Description of Quantitative Terms:

The following terms are frequently used when discussing performance indicators, and they carry the meanings defined in the 2015 Inspection Framework on page 20

Quantitative terms	Percentage
Almost all	Greater than 90%
Most	75% - 90%
Large Majority	61% - 74%
Majority	50% - 60%
Large minority	31% - 49%
Minority	16% - 30%
Few	Up to 15%

Appendices

#	Title	Link
Appendix 1	The guideline for calculating academic attainment and progress	
Appendix 2	Students’ attainment and progress data analysis form	
Appendix 3	Self-evaluation Form	
Appendix 4	United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework	





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