



**OR**ganisation for **PhD** Education in **Biomedicine** and **Health Sciences**  
in the **EU**ropean **S**ystem

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## **ORPHEUS Evaluation Certificate and Labelling –tools to facilitate self-reflection of doctoral training programmes**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these tools is to assist institutions to reflect on their doctoral training programmes, by providing institutions with a comprehensive and flexible procedure to assist this process of self-reflection. This procedure will lead to award of an '**ORPHEUS Evaluation Certificate**' and possibly also an '**ORPHEUS Label**'.

The procedure is based on the ORPHEUS/ AMSE<sup>1</sup> "Best Practices for PhD Training", 2016. This represents a broad consensus, developed over many years, between around 100 biomedical and health science institutions all across Europe concerning the aims for the outcomes and content of PhD programmes.

The procedure has four stages. It will be the decision of the individual institution as to how many stages they wish to use. The procedure is organized by the ORPHEUS Labelling Board that consists of persons who have practical experience as heads of graduate schools. Whether all stages of the procedure are conducted or not, it is the experience of ORPHEUS that institutions find all aspects of the evaluation of substantial benefit.

### **The Evaluation procedure**

#### Stage 1.

Completion of an ORPHEUS self-evaluation questionnaire and submission of the completed questionnaire to ORPHEUS. It should be clarified which stakeholders have been involved in completing the questionnaire.

#### Stage 2.

Evaluation of the questionnaire by two members of the ORPHEUS Labelling Board, or other persons appointed by the Board, who will provide the institution with feedback about compliance/non-compliance with the ORPHEUS recommendations and suggestions about how the programme could be improved. The institution will be awarded an ORPHEUS Evaluation Certificate. This service will be provided without fee.

#### Stage 3.

Given that a written self-evaluation is unlikely to provide a full picture of the institution's PhD programme, ORPHEUS can organize a 1½-day site visit to facilitate the self-reflection

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<sup>1</sup> Association of Medical Schools in Europe



process. The facilitators will be members of the Labelling Board or other persons with practical experience as heads of graduate schools appointed by the Board. During the site visit the facilitators meet with relevant stakeholders, e.g. head of graduate school, dean, head of graduate school administration, programme directors, supervisors, PhD candidates etc. The institution will be asked to cover the travel and local costs of the facilitators, but institutions with limited resources may apply to ORPHEUS to have the travel costs covered. There is no fee for the facilitators. The institution can choose whether to have one or two facilitators, and whether they would also like the team to include a PhD candidate (chosen from the PhD candidates associated with the ORPHEUS Executive Committee).

The stage will be concluded by the provision by the ORPHEUS facilitators with a list of recommendations regarding the extent to which the institution complies with the ORPHEUS standards and suggestions for the institution to consider regarding measures to possibly improve the programme.

#### Stage 4

For institutions that on the basis of stage 3 are found to fully comply with the Basic ORPHEUS recommendations, the institution may if it wishes be awarded an **ORPHEUS label**. There is no fee.

The procedure may be iterative. For example, if an institution does not fully comply with the recommendations under stage 3, then it may make the requisite changes and re-apply for consideration under stage 2 or 3.

#### Outcomes

Every institution will receive an **ORPHEUS Evaluation certificate** or an **ORPHEUS Label** to recognise that the process has been conducted.

#### Points of Perspective

- Inability to comply with the ORPHEUS Standards due to national regulations (e.g. non-inclusion of supervisors in thesis examination committees) has previously inhibited interest in undertaking an evaluation procedure. With this 4-stage system, every institution has something to gain by completing the stages that are possible.
- In a longitudinal perspective, even institutions that have previously undergone an evaluation procedure can still use the system for re-appraisal at a later time point.

#### Further information

To initiate the process or for further information please contact us.

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#### ORPHEUS

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