



*Faculty of Health and Occupational Studies*

## **Instructions for use of the AssCE form, basic level**

**The purpose** of the AssCE form is to serve as an aid and support in assessment of students' professional development during the practice-based parts of the training. Every course in the nursing programme has specific learning goals stated in the syllabus, and it is these goals that shall be assessed and given marks. The AssCE form is thus used as an aid in determining to what degree the student has developed and achieved the goals specified in the syllabus for the various parts of the practice-based training.

### **The AssCE assessment form**

The AssCE form is based on various steering documents for a degree in nursing and the field of nursing. The 21 factors in the form are grouped into five areas and exemplify how the learning goals for each course can be put into practice in nursing work. The learning goals are often described more generally and are multidimensional, and it is in this connection the content of the AssCE form may provide support by giving examples and making learning goals clearer and more tangible.

Every factor in the AssCE form includes written descriptions formulated as evaluation criteria related to the levels "Good achievement of goals" and "Very good achievement of goals", however these descriptions should be viewed as examples. At places of instruction within various branches of the health and medical care system there are innumerable alternative examples, and preceptors and lecturers may also put these forward. Assessment is based on how well the student has achieved the goals for the respective factors. Three levels of achievement are given: "Inadequate achievement of goals", "Good achievement of goals" and "Very good achievement of goals". Depending on the learning goals for a given course, the factors on the form may be emphasized differently or be of varying importance. To help in rating the student's development in relation to each factor, a scale is drawn as a line with marked intervals. A mid-course discussion in which every factor is gone through shall always be carried out, and the outcomes may be marked on the scale. At the final assessment, every factor shall be assessed by marking the scale with a cross. There is also space for comments to be made regarding each factor. Please indicate, using the abbreviations that follow, whether the comment was written at the mid-training discussion (MD) or at the final assessment (FA).

If the student or preceptor does not believe that "Good achievement of goals" has been reached for any individual factor at the mid-course discussion or the final assessment, the reason for such an assessment shall be given in the space provided for "Comments".

The students, preceptors and lecturer are all responsible for ensuring that assessments are made of students' knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities, valuation skills and attitudes – exactly those areas that the training is intended to develop. If the student is to have the opportunity to develop in all of these areas, planning and follow-up are required. Every period involving practical training shall be structured to include a planning discussion, a discussion half-way through the training period and a final assessment discussion.

### **Planning discussion**

When the training period begins, the student and preceptor shall discuss the student's knowledge, previous experience and expectations. At the same time, the preceptor shall present his/her planning and expectations for the training period. This discussion shall result in an overall plan for how the student is to achieve the goals of the training. The factors in the AssCE form, along with the learning goals specified in the syllabus, can be used as a basis for this discussion.

### **During the training period**

The practical parts of the training shall be characterized by an on-going dialogue, between the preceptor and the student, concerning the student's development. The dialogue is to be a natural part of precepting, and students shall receive frequent and regular feedback on their performance. Feedback is a prerequisite for continued development and an opportunity for students who need more training in certain areas to be made aware of this.

### **Mid-course discussion**

A time for the mid-course discussion is to be planned in advance. Experience shows that this discussion takes approx. 45-60 minutes.

*The student* shall prepare for the assessment by making self-ratings on his/her own AssCE form. In preparation for the discussion, the student shall write down examples of actual situations that support his/her self-ratings.

*The preceptor* shall prepare for the discussion by marking every factor on a separate AssCE form. Part of the preceptor's preparation also involves gathering information and viewpoints from colleagues who have had contact with the student in various situations during the training period.

The student shall be given and take upon him-/herself a highly active role in the discussion and base this on his/her own self-ratings. The discussion may concern one or several actual situations that can be related to the factors and assessment criteria. The preceptor shall offer his/her comments and refer to actual care situations, but only after the student's descriptions and viewpoints have been presented. The student is also responsible for being able to account for the theoretical correlates of the care situations and for having read the appropriate literature during the training period.

*The clinical lecturer* (i.e., the examining lecturer) contributes to the discussion by asking questions and giving examples, and influences its content such that the assessment also becomes a learning opportunity. The lecturer has ultimate responsibility for conducting the assessment and for establishing appropriate requirements (i.e., at a level corresponding to the student's progress in the programme and in relation to the learning goals specified in the syllabus).

The mid-course discussion is summarized by the preceptor or lecturer on the last page of the AssCE form. The student shall receive clear information about his/her strengths and weaknesses in relation to the assessment criteria. This summary is to be signed.

### **Final assessment**

The final assessment is to be prepared and carried out in the same way as the mid-course discussion, which is used as the point of departure. The discussion is summarized in an assessment that is documented on the assessment form, and the participants sign the form. A final assessment in which the lecturer participates may also be an oral examination and discussion carried out with support from the AssCE form and may constitute the basis for the student's marks. The lecturer is responsible for determining the student's marks using the preceptor's viewpoints as supporting information (Swedish Higher Education Authority 2017).

### **Literature**

Swedish Higher Education Authority (2017). Fair examination - summary of the Swedish report Rättssäker examination. 2017, Swedish Higher Education Authority, Stockholm.

### **Recommended reading** (recent studies are places first)

Löfmark, A., Mårtensson, G., Vae, KJ., Engström, M. (2019). Lecturers' reflection on the three-part assessment discussions with students and preceptors during clinical practice education: A repeated group discussion study *Nurse Education in Practice* 36, 1-6.

Vae, KJ., Engström, M., Mårtensson, G., Löfmark, A. (2018). Nursing students' and preceptors' experience of assessment during clinical practice: A multilevel repeated-interview study of student-preceptor dyad. *Nurse Education in Practice* 30, 13-19.

Engström, M., Löfmark, A., Vae, KJ., Mårtensson, G. (2017). Nursing students' perceptions of using the Clinical Education Assessment tool AssCE and their overall perceptions of the clinical learning environment - A cross-sectional correlational study. *Nurse Education Today* 22 (51), 63-67.

Löfmark, A., Mårtensson, G. (2017). Validation of the tool assessment of clinical education (AssCE): A study using Delphi method and clinical experts. *Nurse Education Today* 50, 82-86.

Swedish Higher Education Act (SFS 1992:1434) Stockholm: Ministry of Education and Research.

Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (SFS 1993:100 altered 2018:1503). Stockholm: Ministry of Education and Research.