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**Abstract**

Accreditation is an instrument that is used worldwide to monitor, maintain and improve the quality of medical education. International standards have been defined to be used in reviewing and evaluating the quality of education. The organization and the process of accreditation of medical education programmes in the Netherlands and in Flanders are described in some detail. Accreditation can be based on the results of a detailed assessment of an educational programme or on an evaluation of the educational system and the organization of the institution in question. The Flemish-Dutch accreditation organization (NAO) is moving from programme accreditation towards a combination of programme and systems accreditation. The pros and cons of these two approaches are discussed.

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