

U.S. Department of Education  
Staff Analysis  
of the Annual Report Submitted by  
Sweden  
Prepared August 22, 2002

Background

At its September 2000 meeting, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) determined that the accreditation or approval standards used by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (the Agency) were comparable to those used to evaluate programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States. The NCFMEA also requested that the Agency submit annual reports on specific aspects of its accrediting activities to the Committee. The Agency submitted its second annual report in July 2002. That report is the subject of the staff analysis that follows.

Summary of Findings

Based on its review of the annual report submitted by the Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, Department staff concludes that the Agency has provided all of the information requested by the NCFMEA. Department staff also concludes that the country's actions during the past year appear to be consistent with the NCFMEA guidelines.

Staff Analysis

The Agency reported on the following three categories of information as requested by the NCFMEA:

Overview of accreditation activities:

The Agency reports that it did not conduct a major review of any of the country's medical schools, as no important changes occurred in the existing schools and no new medical schools were established.

The Agency continues to require that all medical schools submit comprehensive annual reports that cover administrative, economic and educational matters of importance for Agency review and analysis. No issues were identified requiring

action. The Agency reviews internal quality assurance mechanisms at the institutions on a regular basis and the Agency has confirmed that the schools continue to comply with the Agency's standards.

The Agency has informed Sweden's National Board for Health and Welfare of the NCFMEA decision and solicited their continued support for information regarding student performance after graduation and other quality assurance and accreditation activities.

The Agency's Legal Department continues to monitor the medical schools' activities, and there have been no complaints of any kind.

Summary of any changes or developments in the following areas:

Laws and Regulations:

There have been no new changes or developments in the laws or regulations since January 1, 2001 when a new law authorized the Agency to conduct accreditation and quality reviews of all academic programs and subjects every six years.

Standards, Processes and Procedures:

The Agency reports that there have been no changes to the standards or the general procedures for accreditation and quality reviews.

The Agency reports that it established a special 5-member advisory board of members from outside Sweden and chaired by Professor Martin Trow, University of California-Berkeley to study the present Swedish system of quality review and accreditation standards. The group concluded that it largely agreed with the Agency's approach for the review of departments and programs in Sweden's higher education system.

Schedule for upcoming accreditation activities:

The Agency will not conduct reviews of the medical schools during the next year. The next full review of the six medical schools will be made in 2006. The Agency will conduct a meeting for all university presidents on quality assurance and accreditation issues in January 2003.