Frequently Asked Questions
Graduate and Employer Surveys

February 2025

1.   What is the purpose of graduate and employer surveys?

The most important program outcome is the assessment of the individual's ability as an independent practitioner following a period of practical application of the knowledge, skills, and abilities obtained in the educational program when functioning as a practicing, certified or licensed AEMT or paramedic.

2.   Can we use our end-of-course survey as the graduate survey?

No. The end-of-course surveys capture valuable information and has a different focus.

3.   What is being evaluated in these surveys?

- Is the graduate competent in each of the three domains: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective?
- The response options are successful/competent, marginal, unsuccessful, or NA.
- If the individual is rated as marginal or unsuccessful, additional prompts/topics are provided: safety; patient assessment and history; wellness; documentation; pharmacology; medical emergencies; trauma; operations; special considerations (pediatrics, geriatrics, etc.); introductory (medical legal, pathophysiology, airway, etc.); other (please list).

4.   Our program would like a more in-depth assessment. May we add questions?

Programs may add additional and more in-depth questions to their survey and must use at least the items required by CoAEMSP.

5.   When are we supposed to send the graduate and employer surveys?

Surveys are sent six to 12 months after program completion. The individual should be employed, or volunteering, in a professional capacity that uses the skills, knowledge, and abilities obtained in the educational program.

6. Should we be using the graduate survey to locate where the individual is employed?

No. Work with your graduates to let the program know where they are working when they graduate or notify you when they secure an AEMT or paramedic position. The process works best when graduate and employer surveys are distributed at the same time.

7. Do we have to survey all graduates and employers?

- Yes. Surveys are distributed to all graduates and employers. Track the surveys sent and returned.
- Establish a reminder or tickler system for individuals who have not returned the survey.
- Consider distributing the employer surveys (paper or electronic) to employers at Advisory Committee meetings.

8. Our program prefers electronic surveys. Is there an option for that?

The options for surveys are paper copy, fillable PDF, Google forms, and Microsoft forms. The electronic formats are available on the CoAEMSP website in the Resource Library > Resource Assessment section, www.coaemsp.org/resources-library. Upon request, CoAEMSP will provide the surveys via SurveyMonkey. (The program must have a paid subscription with SurveyMonkey.)

9. What do I do with the results of the surveys?

Review the results with program faculty, administration, program medical director, and the Advisory Committee. Use the results to inform your program quality review process and long-range planning.

10. Do we include our findings in the CoAEMSP Annual Report?

Yes. There is a section of the CoAEMSP Annual Report to detail the number of surveys sent, number returned, and an analysis of the responses and action plan for any identified issues.

11. Do we submit the entire surveys to CoAEMSP?

No. The raw survey documentation remains with the program. Site visitors may ask to review the raw data.

12. Can an employer complete just one survey for multiple graduates?

Yes. If the employer is rating all the graduates from the cohort the same, one response is sufficient, and the employer should indicate the number of graduates included in their survey response.

13. Are graduate and employer surveys meaningful?

Yes. Graduate and employer feedback is an important part of your quality assessment of the program. The results also document important data for programs in evaluating effectiveness and perceptions of competency.

14. What are some of the common challenges in completing the survey process?

- The program is not able to contact the graduate and does not have information on the individual's employment status. The contact information on file may not be current, i.e., email and cell number.
- Student contact information is available, but the individual does not return requests to complete the survey or information on the current employer.
- The employer is not known.
- The employer does not return the survey. In some cases, employers have anecdotal concerns that the survey information may be viewed as part of the employer evaluation process for the employee and may be reluctant to participate.
- The survey goes to the appropriate employer, but not to the individual responsible for observation and evaluation of the graduate.
- Graduates complete the program at different times and there is no consistent program end date and resulting subsequent six-month trigger to send the surveys.
- It is easy for the program to overlook the 'send' due date.
- The graduate is not employed as an AEMT or paramedic immediately after program completion, so when does the six-month period start and how are dates tracked across graduates?
- The graduate has not passed the certifying examination and is not working as an AEMT or paramedic, using the skills, knowledge, and abilities obtained in the program.

15. What are some recommendations on how to get a better response rate?

- Obtain employment information from each student before they leave the program. Ask them to keep the program updated regarding employment changes and changes in contact information. There is an optional form in the CoAEMSP Resource Library, the Graduate Employment Verification Form that is useful for tracking https://coaemsp.org/resource-library#3. The graduate survey should not be the primary means of determining placement.
- Send follow-up email and text reminders that the survey is coming.
- Use any social media groups that the students/graduates organized to let everyone know to expect the survey and make the case for them to respond.
- Let graduates know that emails from an electronic survey provider may go to a spam folder.
- Task a program staff member to place phone calls or texts to graduates and employers. Have them review the survey verbally and record the responses.
- Set calendar reminders for faculty and administrative staff when surveys are due to be distributed.
- Surveys can be anonymous but develop a mechanism to determine who has returned the survey and who needs reminders.
- If possible, offer inducements for completing the survey, such as a small gift card for coffee or food or enter respondents into a drawing. However, this approach does have the potential to negate the perception of anonymity.
- Relationships with the students during the program are key to obtaining feedback. Students who perceive that you are interested in their feedback are more likely to respond following graduation. Advisory Committee members who are engaged are also more likely to provide written assessments.