

**REGULATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE AND THE TURKISH HIGHER  
EDUCATION QUALITY COUNCIL**

**SECTION ONE**

**Purpose, Scope, Basis and Definitions**

**Purpose and Scope**

**ARTICLE 1–(1)** This Regulation sets out the procedures and principles regarding internal and external quality assurance in higher education system; the evaluation of quality levels of learning and teaching, research, and service to society activities as well as administrative services of higher education institutions by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council according to national and international quality standards; recognition and authorization of independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies; the organizational structure and working principles of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council; and the organization of quality commissions within higher education institutions.

**Basis**

**ARTICLE 2 – (1)** This Regulation has been prepared on the basis of the additional provision 35 of the Law on Higher Education dated 4/11/1981 and numbered 2547.

**Definitions**

**ARTICLE 3 – (Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)**

(1) In this Regulation:

a) Mid-term Evaluation Program shall refer to the process in which higher education institutions that hold full or conditional accreditation within the scope of the Institutional Accreditation Program are evaluated by the Council at the end of the second year following the accreditation date,

b) Mid-term Evaluation Report shall refer to the report written by the evaluation team for the higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the Mid-term Evaluation Program,

c) Independent External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies shall refer to the institutions and organizations engaging in external evaluation and accreditation activities at home or abroad,

c) President shall refer to the President of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,

d) Vice President shall refer to the Vice President of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,

e) Evaluation Processes shall refer to the Institutional External Evaluation Program, Follow-up Program, Institutional Accreditation Program, Mid-term Evaluation Program, International Institutional Accreditation Program, Joint Institutional Evaluation and Accreditation Program, and Graduate School Evaluation Program processes carried out by the Council,

f) External Evaluator shall refer to the person authorized by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council to take part in evaluation programs,

g) External Evaluation shall refer to the evaluation process of the quality assurance of higher education institutions or programs by independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies,

ğ) Graduate School Evaluation shall refer to the evaluation work for graduate schools engaged in postgraduate learning and teaching as part of the internal quality assurance system in higher education institutions,

h) Graduate School Evaluation Program shall refer to the external evaluation process of graduate schools that carry out postgraduate learning and teaching activities within higher education institutions and graduate their cohorts of students within the framework of the criteria established by the Council,

i) Graduate School Evaluation Report shall refer to the report written by the evaluation team for the higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the Graduate School Evaluation Program,

i) Graduate School Mid-term Evaluation Program shall refer to the process in which the graduate schools that are granted silver (3-year) or gold (6-year) labels within the scope of the

Graduate School Evaluation Program are evaluated by the Council at the end of the third year following the label's grant date,

i) Graduate School Mid-term Evaluation Report shall refer to the report written by the evaluation team for the higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the Graduate School Mid-term Evaluation Program,

k) Secretary General shall refer to the Secretary General of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,

l) Self-Evaluation shall refer to the evaluation of the quality of higher education institutions or programs carried out by the institutions or programs themselves,

m) Follow-up Program shall refer to the evaluation process in which quality developments of the higher education institutions assessed within the scope of the Institutional External Evaluation Program, are evaluated by the Council,

n) Follow-up Report shall refer to the report written by the follow-up team for a higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the Follow-up Program,

o) Quality Evaluation Authorization Certificate shall refer to the certificate granted by the Council to national independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies that evaluate higher education programs according to predetermined criteria specific to the study field,

ö) Quality Evaluation Recognition Certificate shall refer to the certificate granted by the Council to international independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies that evaluate higher education programs according to predetermined criteria specific to the study field,

p) Council shall refer to the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,

r) Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) shall refer to the report annually written by a higher education institution with an aim to monitor its quality assurance processes pertinent to the institution's learning and teaching, research and development, and service to society activities as well as administrative services in the previous year,

s) Institutional Accreditation Program shall refer to the evaluation process in which planning, implementing, monitoring, and improving processes of higher education institutions in learning and teaching, research and development, service to society, and administrative services processes are evaluated by the Council qualitatively and quantitatively and the decision to give accreditation is taken as a result of this evaluation,

ş) Institutional Accreditation Report shall refer to the report written by the evaluation team for a higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the institutional accreditation program,

t) Institutional External Evaluation Program shall refer to the evaluation process of the quality of learning and teaching, research and development, and service to society activities as well as administrative services of higher education institutions that graduated their first cohorts of students to be conducted by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,

u) Institutional Feedback Report (IFR) shall refer to the report written by the external evaluators on the higher education institution evaluated as part of the institutional external evaluation program that comprises the strengths and the areas for improvement of the relevant institution,

ü) Joint Institutional Evaluation and Accreditation Program shall refer to the evaluation processes in which the decision regarding external evaluation and/or accreditation is made as a result of the external evaluation of higher education institutions operating abroad within the framework of the criteria created together in accordance with the protocol signed by the Council with its international counterparts,

v) Joint Institutional Evaluation and Accreditation Reports shall refer to the reports written by the evaluation teams for a higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the joint institutional evaluation and accreditation program and the mid-term evaluation,

y) Performance Indicators shall refer to the instruments employed to assess, monitor and evaluate whether or not or to what extent higher education institutions accomplish their objectives and targets,

z) Program Evaluation shall refer to the works to evaluate teaching programs as a component of internal quality assurance system in higher education institutions,

aa) Program Accreditation shall refer to the external evaluation and quality assurance process performed by independent external evaluation or accreditation agencies measuring whether or not a higher education program meets the predetermined academic and field-specific standards in a specific field,

bb) Turkish Qualifications Framework shall refer to the national qualifications framework designed in line with the European Qualifications Framework that sets out all the principles of qualifications acquired with vocational, general and academic learning and teaching programs and other channels of learning that include primary, secondary, and higher education levels,

cc) International Institutional Accreditation Program shall refer to the evaluation process in which the accreditation decision is made as a result of the external evaluation of higher education institutions operating abroad within the framework of the criteria created by the Council,

çç) International Institutional Accreditation Report shall refer to the report written by the evaluation team for a higher education institution evaluated within the scope of the international institutional accreditation program,

dd) Higher Education Quality Assurance Status Report shall refer to an annual report submitted to relevant stakeholders, including the Council of Higher Education, taking into account quality assurance works performed by the Council within the relevant year,

ee) Higher Education Quality Assurance System shall refer to the principles regarding the processes of internal and external quality assurance and accreditation processes of learning-teaching, research and development, and service to society activities and administrative services of higher education institutions as well as the authorization and recognition processes of independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies, and

ff) HEIE (YKS) shall refer to the Higher Education Institutions Exam.

## **SECTION TWO**

### **Organizational Structure, Duties and Authorities of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council**

#### **Bodies of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council**

**ARTICLE 4 –** (1) The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council consists of the Council and the President.

#### **The Council**

**ARTICLE 5 –** (1) The Turkish Higher Education Quality Council shall comprise:

a) Three members elected by the General Assembly of the Council of Higher Education,

b) Three members elected by the Turkish Inter-university Council,

c) One member representing the Ministry of National Education,

ç) One member representing the Vocational Qualifications Authority,

d) One member representing the Turkish Accreditation Agency,

e) One member representing the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye,

f) One member representing the Health Institutes of Türkiye,

g) One member representing the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye,

ğ) One student representative,

with thirteen members in total.

(2) Members elected in accordance with the clauses (a) and (b), each of whom working in different higher education institutions, shall be designated amongst faculty members who are experienced in the organization, operation and administration of higher education system as well as in quality evaluation and improvement practices, who have worked at higher education

institutions at home or abroad for at least ten years, and are specialized in different fields. The member elected in accordance with the clause (c) shall be a faculty member in a higher education institution and experienced in the organization, operation and administration of higher education system as well as in quality evaluation and improvement practices with minimum ten years of work experience in higher education institutions at home or abroad. Members representing the institutions in accordance with the clauses (ç), (e) and (f) shall at minimum be in the capacity of Vice President, whereas members representing the institutions in accordance with the clauses (d) and (g) shall at least be in the capacity of Deputy Secretary General. The student representative shall be assigned within the principles and procedures to be determined by the Council.

(3) The Council members shall fulfil the general conditions stated in Article 48 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657.

(4) The Council elects the President and the Vice-President with the absolute majority of the total number of members. Term of office for the Council members shall be one year for the student representative and four years for the rest of the members. Membership shall not last more than two terms. In the event that a member completes his/her term of office or leaves the Council due to any reason, the relevant institution/organization shall elect/assign a replacement for the missing member through the same procedure within one month at latest. The assigned member shall serve until completing the missing member's remaining term of office.

(5) The Council shall convene at least once a month on the dates determined by the President and any given time upon President's call or written request of one third of Council members.

(6) The Council shall convene with at least two third majority of the total number of members and take decisions with the absolute majority of the total number of members. In the event of an equality of votes, decision shall be considered in favour of the President's vote. Members shall not participate in the meetings where issues related to institutions, they represent or work for or are affiliated with, are discussed.

(7) Membership shall be terminated before the term of office is completed for those who failed to attend a total of four meetings in one year without a valid excuse and those who are unable to work for more than six months due to illness, accident or another reason.

(8) Administrators and faculty members of supreme higher education bodies and higher education institutions may attend the Council meetings upon invitation. Those invited are obliged to conform to the confidentiality of the information they had during their assignments. The travel allowances and unavoidable costs of the assigned participants shall be covered out of the budget of the Council. Those attending meetings upon invitation except for Council members shall not have the right to vote.

#### **Duties and Authorities of the Council**

**ARTICLE 6 – (1)** Duties of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council are as follows:

a) To define national policies and strategies for quality assurance in higher education system and publicly announce them,

b) To organize activities for the improvement and dissemination of quality culture in higher education system,

c) To encourage the establishment of internal quality assurance systems in higher education institutions and provide higher education institutions with guidance on this issue,

ç) To monitor activities regarding quality assurance systems in higher education at national and international levels and organize joint activities at national and international levels,

d) To set out the principles, quality indicators and related rules to be applied in external evaluation and accreditation,

e) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** To conduct an evaluation of higher education institutions regarding the quality levels of their learning and teaching, research and development, service to society, and administrative services within the scope of evaluation programs; to evaluate higher education programs that apply to institutional accreditation

program; to give decision of accrediting them as a result of this evaluation; to inform primarily the Council of Higher Education and the related stakeholders thereof; and to evaluate the higher education programs when deemed necessary,

f) To evaluate and monitor activities of the higher education institutions within the scope of the mission differentiation and specialization program and submit their results to the Council of Higher Education,

g) To organize activities and issue publications for informing higher education institutions on the procedures to be applied in external evaluation and accreditation,

ğ) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** To annually write and publish the Higher Education Quality Assurance Status Report that comprises recommendations for quality improvement in national higher education by evaluating the evaluation processes and internal quality assurance works of higher education institutions, and authorization of accreditation agencies, and to submit it for the relevant stakeholders' information, including the Council of Higher Education,

h) To issue decisions about them by examining registration applications of legal persons in private law applying to the Council to become registered for carrying out activities in the areas of external evaluation and accreditation within the framework of the determined principles and rules; to monitor the activities of these organizations and obtain information, issue warnings, or terminate their registration when deemed necessary,

ı) To represent the Republic of Türkiye in international organizations for quality assurance in higher education,

i) To cooperate with the Board of Turkish Qualifications Framework on subjects pertinent to quality assurance system in higher education, and

j) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** To evaluate the implementation levels of the provisions within the "Regulation on Ensuring the Quality Assurance of Qualifications to Be Included in the Turkish Qualifications Framework" promulgated on the Official Gazette dated 25/3/2018 and numbered 30371, in higher education institutions.

(2) The Council may establish commissions and assign advisory boards, determining their working principles and procedures, if deemed necessary.

#### **The President and the Vice President**

**ARTICLE 7 –** (1) The Council elects a president and a vice president among the Council members with four years of term of office for each.

(2) The Vice President acts as a deputy of the President in the event that the President is unable to work due to leave, illness, assignments at home or abroad or another reason.

(3) The President and Vice President shall be appointed on a full-time basis and deemed on leave without pay from their affiliated institutions during their term in office. In the event that their term in office ends or they leave the office before the completion of their term, they shall return to their positions without any requirement for extra proceedings. Subsequent to the end of their term, they shall be paid the salaries of their permanent positions as of the payday of the month following the date they reassume their duty.

(4) The President and Vice President shall not work for any public or private organization, with or without pay, except in the case of exceptional temporary duties assigned by the President of the Republic of Türkiye, during their term in office.

#### **Duties and Authorities of the President**

**ARTICLE 8 –** (1) The President is the principal administrator of the Council and in charge of the general administration and representation of the Council and executes the provisions of regulations and laws, and decisions taken by the Council.

(2) Duties of the President are as follows:

a) To determine the agenda and dates of Council meetings, to chair the meetings, to conduct necessary procedures on the applications not included in the agenda and to inform the Council in this respect,

b) To prepare the annual budget and financial statements in accordance with the strategies, objectives and targets defined by the Council, and to send them to relevant institutions,

c) To appoint the Secretary General and the Unit Managers,

ç) To appoint staff upon the recommendation of the Secretary General,

d) To assign duties and authorities of staff and to designate staff's service units and places of duty,

e) To enable the execution and ensure implementation of the Council decisions,

f) To enable the highest-level organization and coordination of operations undertaken by administrative units to ensure productivity and harmony, and to resolve issues related to duties and authorities that might arise between service units.

#### **Financial Rights of the Council Members**

**ARTICLE 9 –** (1) The payments determined as part of financial and social rights to the President of the Council, the Vice President of the Council, and the Secretary General of the Council are in the framework of same principles and procedures with the payments determined for the Vice President of the Council of Higher Education, Executive Board members of the Council of Higher Education, and Secretary General of the Turkish Inter-University Council respectively. Due to this clause, these payments shall be considered legally equivalent to the payments made to the personnel designated as their equivalent and they shall not be subject to taxes or any other legal deductions if the corresponding payments to their equivalents are not subject to such deductions. The retired members shall continue receiving their pension. With the exception of the President and the Vice President, attendance fee to the Council members shall be paid in the framework of the same methods and principles with General Assembly members of the Council of Higher Education. Attendance fees to be paid to the Council members correspond to the multiplication of the coefficient of their civil service salaries with (4000). However, more than twelve attendance fees shall not be paid within a year.

### **PART THREE**

#### **Administrative Organization of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council**

##### **General Secretariat**

**ARTICLE 10 –** (1) General Secretariat consists of Institutional External Evaluation and Registry of External Evaluation Agencies Unit, Publicity and Stakeholder Relations Unit, and Administrative Services Unit.

##### **Secretary General**

**ARTICLE 11–** (1) Secretary General is the head of the administrative organization of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council and accountable to the President for the operation of this organization. The Secretary General is required to hold at least a bachelor's degree.

##### **Duties and Authorities of the Secretary General**

**ARTICLE 12-** (1) Duties of Secretary General are as follows:

a) To enable the entire staff in units to serve in compliance with their duties and responsibilities and receive in-service training,

b) To enable coordination between units, fulfillment of the services in the charge of the Council and their supervision,

c) To give recommendations to the President of the Council about staff to be assigned in units,

ç) To act as rapporteur in Council meetings by abstaining from voting,

d) To enable writing, signing and preserving of Council decisions,

e) To enable timely distribution of the Council agenda prepared by the President and arrange works and procedures in respect to this,

f) To enable announcement of Council decisions to relevant parties,

g) To provide all kinds of administrative services and needs of the Council,

ğ) To engage in legislative works,

h) To fulfill other duties assigned by the President.

### **Institutional External Evaluation and Registry of External Evaluation Agencies Unit**

**ARTICLE 13** – (1) Duties of Institutional External Evaluation and Registry of External Evaluation Agencies Unit are as follows:

a) To implement principles, quality indicators and rules determined by the Council to be applied in external evaluation,

b) To prepare documents to inform higher education institutions on methods and instruments to be employed (**Amended expression: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656**) in evaluation processes,

c) To enable timely submission of self-evaluation reports that are annually written by higher education institutions,

ç) To enable execution of procedures and works on (**Amended expression: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656**) evaluation processes of higher education institutions,

d) To apply principles and rules determined by the Council regarding the recognition and authorization of independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies,

e) To examine applications of legal entities in private law applying to the Council for authorization to operate in the fields of external evaluation and accreditation, within the framework of designated principles and rules, and to issue preliminary assessment reports on applications,

f) To monitor activities of legal entities in private law established to operate in the fields of external evaluation and accreditation, to receive information from them when deemed necessary, and to give recommendations to the Council for the issue of warning or cancelation of their registries, when necessary,

g) To prepare a report on the field of activity at the end of every year,

ğ) To perform other duties assigned by the President.

### **Publicity and Stakeholder Relations Unit**

**ARTICLE 14** – (1) Duties of Publicity and Stakeholder Relations Unit are as follows:

a) To plan and carry out publicity, information and training activities in order to foster and disseminate quality culture,

b) (**Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247**) To ensure that the provisions of the “Regulation on Ensuring the Quality Assurance of Qualifications to Be Included in the Turkish Qualifications Framework” are implemented in higher education institutions,

c) To monitor activities on higher education quality assurance systems at the national and international levels and to give recommendations to the Council for the organization of joint works at the national and international levels,

ç) To prepare printed and visual materials of the Council and to conduct activities for the preparation and publication of the Council’s official media organs or periodicals,

d) To perform other duties assigned by the President.

### **Administrative Services Unit**

**ARTICLE 15** – (1) Duties of Administrative Services Unit are as follows:

a) To perform works and procedures on the employment and personal rights of the Council’s staff,

b) To perform technical services on construction, and to undertake tasks related to maintenance, repair, lighting, heating, cleaning, etc. or have them undertaken,

c) To undertake works related to civil defence, security and environmental control, or to have them undertaken,

ç) To enable information and document management of the Council,

d) To maintain documentations and correspondences,

e) To establish information infrastructure required for the Council services, follow technological advancements, and take necessary measures on information security and reliability,

f) To transfer publications and documents into data processing environment, preserve them and put them into service when necessary,

- g) To undertake printing and graphic works or have them undertaken,
- ğ) To manage legal consultancy services for the Council and to follow the lawsuits and execution proceedings concerning the Council,
- h) To coordinate strategic planning activities and the monitoring process,
- i) To perform other duties assigned by the President.

#### **SECTION FOUR**

#### **Establishment and the Duties and Authorities of Quality Commissions of Higher Education Institutions**

##### **Quality Commissions of Higher Education Institutions**

**ARTICLE 16** – (1) A higher education institution shall establish a Quality Commission to conduct quality assurance activities within the related higher education institution.

(2) The Commission shall be chaired by the rector of the relevant higher education institution, or by the vice-rector to be assigned by the rector in the absence of the rector.

(3) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** Commissions shall be established by the senates of higher education institutions with an inclusive and participatory approach and by the board of executives in higher education institutions that do not have a senate, in line with the academic and administrative structure of the higher education institution and by reflecting the basic components of the quality assurance system. The commission members shall be academic and administrative staff and student representatives representing different fields of academic and administrative units, provided that there is not more than one representative from the same faculty, graduate school, conservatory, college, and vocational school. Among commission members shall also be included the secretary general of the higher education institution, the head of the department of strategy development in public higher education institutions, and the unit manager responsible for relevant processes in foundation higher education institutions. The number of members, the membership duration provided that it is no shorter than two years for the members assigned by the senate, and the working principles and procedures of the commission shall be determined by the senates of higher education institutions. In the absence of a senate, they shall be set out by the board of executives of the relevant higher education institutions. The selected commission members shall be announced to the public on the website of the higher education institution. The student representative of the Commission shall be assigned within the scope of the principles and procedures to be defined by the senates of the higher education institutions and serves for one year.

(4) Support services for office and staff for the commission shall be carried out by the directorate of strategy development or other relevant unit of the relevant higher education institution.

##### **Duties of the Quality Commissions of Higher Education Institutions**

**ARTICLE 17** – (1) Duties of the Commission are as follows:

a) To establish the internal and external quality assurance system of the relevant institution for evaluation, follow-up, and improvement of the quality of learning and teaching, research, and service to society activities as well as administrative services, to identify key performance indicators of the institution, and to conduct program evaluation in line with the strategic plan and objectives of the institution and the principles and procedures set out by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council, and to submit these activities to the approval of the Senate, or to the board of executives in the absence of a senate,

b) To plan and conduct internal evaluation activities, to write an annual institutional self-evaluation report comprising the results of institutional evaluation and improvement activities, to submit it to the senate, or to the board of executives of the institution in the absence of the senate, and to share publicly the approved annual institutional self-evaluation report on the official website of the institution in an easily accessible way,

c) To make necessary preparations for **(Amended expression: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** evaluation processes and to inform internal and external stakeholders on the process,



ç) To support the Council's works during **(Amended expression: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** the evaluation processes.

#### **SECTION FIVE**

##### **Internal and External Quality Assurance System in Higher Education Institutions Establishment of Quality Assurance Systems in Higher Education Institutions**

**ARTICLE 18** – (1) Higher education institutions shall be responsible for ensuring the establishment and operation of internal and external quality assurance systems to be applied in their own institutions and the execution of internal and external evaluation processes of the institution and programs within the scope of the code of practice set by the Council.

(2) **(Addendum: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** Higher education institutions shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining their internal quality assurance systems in accordance with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) User's Guide.

##### **Institutional Self-Evaluation Process and Schedule**

**ARTICLE 19** – (1) Higher education institutions shall maintain their self-evaluation processes in integration with their strategic plan, annual performance program and activity report. Foundation higher education institutions that do not have the obligation to write the stated reports shall maintain their self-evaluation processes in integration with their vision, mission, strategic objectives and quality assurance systems in a way to encompass learning and teaching, research, and service to society activities as well as the administrative services supporting these activities.

(2) Higher education institutions shall upload the institutional self-evaluation reports comprising their self-evaluation works on the web-based system formed by the Council between the months of January and March every year.

(3) Institutional self-evaluation reports shall be published on the official websites of the relevant higher education institution and the Council.

##### **Scope of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Reports**

**ARTICLE 20** – (1) Higher education institutions shall annually write their self-evaluation reports that include improvements in their internal quality assurance system.

(2) The self-evaluation report of the higher education institution shall include remarks on how quality assurance processes are defined and conducted in the institution, how targeted competencies in teaching programs are achieved and ensured, how performance indicators are monitored and how continuous improvement cycles are completed, and all of them shall be corroborated.

(3) Self-evaluation reports to be written by higher education institutions to encompass the institution's learning and teaching, research, and service to society activities, as well as administrative services, shall include:

a) The institution's quality policy, the methods adopted by it, and its processes in line with the institution's mission, vision and strategic objectives identified in the light of national strategies and objectives of higher education,

b) The administrative/organizational processes and activities implemented by the institution to realize its mission and objectives,

c) Internal quality assurance system that includes evaluation of the measurable objectives and key performance indicators of academic and administrative units and their periodic reviews to ensure the realization of mission and objectives of the institution,

ç) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** Improvement activities related to areas that were identified during previous evaluation processes and needed to be improved.

##### **Evaluation Processes**

##### **ARTICLE 21 – (Amended with the Title: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)**

(1) Higher education institutions shall be evaluated as part of the Institutional External Evaluation Program conducted by the Council at latest within the fifth year following the first learning and teaching year in which their students are graduated. The schedule of external evaluation of higher education institutions shall be arranged and announced by the Council.

(2) Institutional External Evaluation Program shall comprise the evaluation process that involves pre-review of the institution on the basis of the institution's self-evaluation report, site visit, and drafting of institutional feedback report, by means of the external evaluators assigned by the Council.

(3) External evaluators shall be chosen by the Council among the academic and administrative staff, students and sector representatives within higher education institutions who have filed external evaluator application. Those assigned as external evaluators shall be deemed on leave from their institutions during site visit.

(4) Institutional external evaluation of higher education institutions shall be conducted to encompass the scope and subjects stated in the Article 20 of this Regulation and within the framework of the procedures and principles regarding the institutional external evaluation defined by the Council.

(5) The higher education institutions evaluated within the scope of institutional external evaluation program shall be included in the Follow-up Program at earliest in the second year following the evaluation year.

(6) The higher education institutions evaluated within the scope of institutional external evaluation program shall apply to the Institutional Accreditation Program conducted by the Council at latest in the fifth year following this evaluation. The higher education institutions that have not been evaluated within the scope of the Follow-up Program shall not apply to the Institutional Accreditation Program.

(7) The higher education institutions to be included in the Institutional Accreditation Program shall be selected by the Council among the applicants of the related year. Out of the higher education institutions that have been evaluated within the scope of the Institutional External Evaluation Program, the ones that have not applied to the Institutional Accreditation Program within five years following the evaluation shall be included in the Institutional Accreditation Program directly by the Council.

(8) Institutional Accreditation Program shall comprise the evaluation process that involves pre-review of the institution on the basis of the institution's self-evaluation report, site visit, drafting of institutional accreditation report, and the Council's decision to give accreditation, by means of the external evaluators assigned by the Council. The evaluation principles and criteria for the Institutional Accreditation Program shall be determined by the Council.

(9) The decision to give accreditation to the higher education institutions evaluated within the scope of the Institutional Accreditation Program shall be given by the Council considering the Institutional Accreditation Report written by evaluation team within the scope of the criteria set by the Council on the basis of full accreditation for five years, conditional accreditation for two years, and refusal of accreditation.

(10) The higher education institutions for which the decision to refuse accreditation is given shall apply again to the Institutional Accreditation Program at earliest two years after this decision.

(11) Institutions evaluated within the scope of the Institutional Accreditation Program shall be exempted from the Institutional External Evaluation Program.

(12) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** Higher education institutions that are granted conditional accreditation for two years within the scope of the Institutional Accreditation Program shall be subject to mid-term evaluation after these two years. Higher education institutions that are granted full accreditation for five years are subject to mid-term evaluation at the earliest in the second year following the grant of accreditation. As a result of the mid-term evaluation, the Evaluation Programs Guide shall be taken into account while making an accreditation decision for higher education institutions.

(13) **(Amendment: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** The decisions to grant full accreditation for five years and conditional accreditation for two years regarding the Institutional Accreditation Program or Joint Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation Program shall

be sent to the Council of Higher Education to be published in the Higher Education Programs and Quotas Guide for HEIE.

(14) **(Addendum: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** Joint institutional external evaluation and accreditation program shall be carried out within the scope of directives and guidelines approved by the Council and its international counterparts.

(15) **(Addendum: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** In cases where the external evaluation of higher education institutions, which are granted full or conditional accreditation by being included in the Institutional Accreditation Program and the Mid-term Evaluation Program, cannot be carried out due to force majeure, the accreditation decision can be extended by the decision of the Council for a maximum of one year.

(16) **(Addendum: Official Gazette-13/7/2023-32247)** Graduate schools of higher education institutions with full institutional accreditation shall be eligible to apply to the Graduate School Evaluation Program upon invitation. The number of graduate schools to be evaluated within the scope of the Program shall be determined according to the workload of the Council. As a result of the evaluation, three-year silver or six-year gold labels are awarded. The graduate schools that are granted silver and gold labels shall be included in the Graduate School Mid-term Evaluation Program at the end of the third year.

#### **Evaluation Reports**

#### **ARTICLE 22 – (Amended with the Title: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)**

(1) An institutional feedback report shall be written at the end of the evaluation process by external evaluators assigned by the Council for each higher education institution included in the Institutional External Evaluation Program.

(2) The institutional feedback report written for a higher education institution shall comprise the institution's learning-teaching, research and development activities, regional/national service to society activities, if any, quality assurance system employed in the institutional decision-making processes and administrative services as well as the institution's strengths and areas for improvement.

(3) An institutional accreditation report shall be written at the end of the evaluation process by external evaluators assigned by the Council for each higher education institution included in the Institutional Accreditation Program.

(4) The institutional accreditation report written for a higher education institution shall comprise the institution's learning and teaching, research and development activities, regional/national service to society activities, quality assurance system employed in the institutional decision-making processes and administrative services as well as the institution's strengths and areas for improvement.

(5) A follow-up report shall be written at the end of the evaluation process by external evaluators assigned by the Council for each higher education institution included in the Follow-up Program.

(6) The follow-up report written for a higher education institution shall comprise the quality development process of the institution by considering the institutional feedback report written for the related higher education institution.

(7) A mid-term evaluation report shall be written at the end of the evaluation process by external evaluators assigned by the Council for each higher education institution included in the Mid-term Evaluation.

(8) The mid-term evaluation report written for a higher education institution shall comprise the quality development process of the institution by considering the institutional accreditation report written for the related higher education institution.

(9) The content and templates of the reports related to the evaluation processes shall be determined by the Council.

#### **Higher Education Quality Assurance Status Report**

**ARTICLE 23 –** (1) Higher Education Quality Assurance Status Report, which includes the problems encountered and recommendations for quality improvement process and aims to

contribute to higher education quality assurance activities, is annually written by the Council on the basis of **(Amended expression: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** evaluation reports of higher education institutions evaluated by the Council within the relevant year, and presented to all relevant stakeholder institutions and organizations, especially to the Council of Higher Education.

(2) Higher Education Quality Assurance Status Report shall be published on the official website of the Council.

#### **Public Announcement of Institutional Self- and External Evaluation Results**

**ARTICLE 24** – (1) Results of self- and external evaluations conducted in higher education institutions shall be announced to public. Annual institutional self-evaluation reports and **(Amended expression: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** the evaluation reports regarding the evaluation processes shall be published on the official websites of the Council and relevant institutions.

#### **Expenses for Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement Works**

**ARTICLE 25** – (1) Within the scope of this Regulation, all expenses related to works to be conducted by higher education institutions shall be met from the allowance to be allocated to the budgets of higher education institutions under the relevant item. Foundation higher education institutions shall also allocate adequate allowance in their budgets for works to be carried out within the scope of this Regulation.

### **SECTION SIX**

#### **Program Accreditation and the Authorization and Recognition of Accreditation Agencies**

##### **Program Accreditation**

**ARTICLE 26** – (1) The external evaluation services on the basis of program accreditation in higher education institutions shall be conducted by independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies recognized or authorized by the Council in the area of program accreditation.

(2) **(Addendum: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)** Program accreditations approved by the Council shall be sent to the Council of Higher Education to be included in the Higher Education Programs and Quotas Guide for HEIE (YKS in Turkish).

##### **Process of Recognition and Authorization of Accreditation Agencies**

**ARTICLE 27** – (1) National independent accreditation agencies that provide accreditation service shall be authorized by the Council and hold a Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate, whereas international independent accreditation agencies shall be recognized by the Council for the approval of program accreditation by the Council.

(2) The procedures and principles regarding the authorization of national independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies shall be designated by the Council.

(3) The procedures and principles regarding the recognition of international independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies shall be designated by the Council.

### **SECTION SEVEN**

#### **Miscellaneous and Final Provisions**

##### **Financial Structure of the Council**

**ARTICLE 28** – (1) All expenses needed to be made as a result of the services of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council shall be covered by the budget of the Council.

##### **Revenues of the Council**

**ARTICLE 29** – (1) The revenues of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council consist of:

- a) Treasury grants,
- b) Operating revenues,
- c) All kinds of donations and subsidies,
- ç) Other revenues.

**Institutional Accreditation Practice Regarding the Higher Education Institutions Evaluated within the Scope of Institutional External Evaluation Program**

**PROVISIONAL ARTICLE 1** – **(Addendum: Official Gazette-11/11/2021-31656)**

(1) The periods specified in the clauses six and seven of article 21 regarding inclusion of the higher education institutions, which were evaluated within the scope of institutional external evaluation program before enforcement date of this article, in institutional accreditation program shall start as of 1/1/2022.

**Enforcement**

**ARTICLE 30 – (1)** This Regulation shall enter into force on the date of its publication.

**Execution**

**ARTICLE 31 – (1)** Provisions of this Regulation shall be executed by the President of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

<b>Of the Turkish Official Gazette on Which the Regulation was Published:</b>		
	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>
	23/11/2018	30604
<b>Of the Turkish Official Gazettes on Which the Regulations Amending the Regulation were Published:</b>		
	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number</b>
1.	11/11/2021	31656
2.	13/7/2023	32247