



Higher Education Quality Council
Turkey



**THEQC GUIDE FOR THE
ACCREDITATION AND
RECOGNITION OF
EXTERNAL EVALUATION
AND ACCREDITATION
AGENCIES**



THEQC GUIDE FOR THE ACCREDITATION AND RECOGNITION OF EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION AGENCIES

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The Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey



FOREWORD

The Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey (HEQC) is a national body in charge of internal and external quality assurance in Turkish higher education system, the evaluation of quality levels of education, research and social contribution activities as well as administrative services of higher education institutions according to national and international quality standards, and the recognition and authorization of independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies. This guide has been prepared to provide guidance to external evaluation and accreditation agencies in their application processes along with information on the reviewing process of their applications.

This guide presents detailed information on the methodology adopted in the review of the agencies' applications, the reviewing steps, the employed criteria, the evidence regarding the meeting of the criteria and the decision mechanisms. The review criteria and the expected evidence stated in the guide are based on the internationally recognized implementations (particularly the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area). The independent agencies who contribute to external evaluation and accreditation processes of higher education programs are expected to be in close contact and cooperation with the THEQC and respect academic ethics principles.

We believe that the external evaluation and accreditation processes constitute a significant indicator for quality assurance in higher education system, and hope the guide to contribute to the implementations of independent accreditation agencies and continuous improvement practices of higher education institutions.

The Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey



CONTENTS

Foreword / 3
Introduction / 4
Definitions / 5
1. Review Criteria / 9
1.1. Criteria for the Authorization of National External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies / 9
1.2. Criteria for the Recognition of International External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies / 13
2. APPLICATION PROCESS / 14
2.1. Application Process of National External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies / 14
2.2. Application Process of International External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies / 14
3. REVIEW PROCESS / 14
4. DECISION PROCESS / 15
4.1. Decisions on the Recognition of National External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies / 15
4.2. Decisions on the Recognition of International External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies / 15
4.3. Objection Process / 16
Annex 1: Criteria, Explanations And Expected Evidence For The Authorization Of National Accreditation Agencies / 17
Annex 2: Application, Review And Decision Processes / 21



INTRODUCTION

This guide has been prepared as part of the Article 27 titled “Process of recognition and authorization of accreditation agencies” of the Regulation on Higher Education Quality Assurance and the Higher Education Quality Council published in the Official Gazette No. 30604 of 23 November 2018. In this scope, it is aimed to guide the independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies operating in the field of higher education in the preparation, submission and review of the documents to be presented in the process of issuing the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate, which indicates that the agency is authorized to evaluate the external evaluation and quality assurance process that assesses whether or not the higher education program meets the predetermined academic and field-specific standards in a specific field.

The guide also presents detailed information on the review criteria, processes and decision mechanisms formed to evaluate the compliance of the independent agencies’ declared missions, objectives, legislations, written review criteria, processes, implementations, methods and policies with the legislative regulations of the THEQC and the ESG. The guide explains all the criteria on the review of national and international agencies and provides information on the evidence expected for each criterion.



DEFINITIONS

In this guide:

1. **Review Report** means the report issued by the Commission after the examination of the agency's application for the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate,
2. **ESG** stands for the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area,
3. **Activity Report** means the report prepared by agencies on the practices they have undertaken in their area of activity and submitted to the THEQC annually,
4. **Objection Assessment Report** means the report issued by the Objection Assessment Commission on the objections filed against the THEQC decisions regarding the authorization or recognition of agencies,
5. **Objection Assessment Commission** stands for the commission formed by the THEQC to assess the objections filed against the Council decisions regarding the authorization or recognition of agencies,
6. **Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate** means the certificate approved by the THEQC and indicating that the agencies are authorized to evaluate the external evaluation and quality assurance process that assesses whether or not the higher education program meets the predetermined academic and field-specific standards in a specific field,
7. **Commission** stands for the THEQC Commission on the Authorization and Recognition of External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies,
8. **THEQC** stands for the Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey,
9. **Agency** stands for independent external evaluation and accreditation agencies,
10. **Institution** stands for higher education institutions,
11. **Criteria** stands for the minimum standards and principles that the agencies applying for authorization or recognition by THEQC are required to meet,
12. **Self-Evaluation Report** means the report prepared by the agency with the aim of applying for the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate and presenting evidence proving that the agency meets the criteria for the authorization of national external evaluation and accreditation agencies,
13. **Program** stands for the higher education programs subject to accreditation or evaluation activities undertaken by the agencies,
14. **Program Accreditation** means the external evaluation and quality assurance process undertaken by a national or international agency that assesses whether the higher education program meets the predetermined academic and field-specific standards in a specific area,
15. **TQF** stands for Turkish Qualifications Framework,
16. **NQF-HETR** stands for National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Turkey.



1. REVIEW CRITERIA

Review criteria refer to the minimum standards and principles expected to be met by the national agencies applying for authorization and the international agencies applying for recognition.

1.1. Criteria for the Authorization of National External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies

1.1.1. Agencies should have predefined and published mission and objectives, should maintain their activities in line with these objectives, ensure a high level of stakeholder participation in their governance and practices, and prove that their practices and criteria for output-oriented program accreditation are reliable and in compliance with national and international standards (particularly with ESG) and that their decisions are accurate.

The agency should prove that its program accreditation processes and practices are reliable and in compliance with the Turkish qualifications frameworks (TQF and NQF-HETR) and national and international standards (especially with ESG) on the basis of the criteria listed below:

- a. **Organizational Structure:** The agency should clearly and explicitly define its program accreditation activities in line with its mission and objectives, form its legislations and organizational structure in accordance with its activities and make them publicly available.
- b. **Sustainability and Continuous Improvement:** The agency should conduct its program accreditation activities on a regular basis in line with the predefined processes. These activities should consider the individuality of higher education institutions and support their internal quality assurance systems. The activities must be approached with a perspective of continuous change and innovation in accordance with the changing needs, expectations and satisfaction levels of society and students.
- c. **Participation:** Representation of different stakeholders such as pedagogues, academics, students, graduates, employers and professional organizations should be ensured while choosing the members, administrative staff, boards and teams of the agency. Inclusiveness and participation should be systematized and international cooperation should be encouraged. In this scope, the agency's efforts on developing and updating their legislations, governance processes and continuous improvement works should be carried out with a broad stakeholder participation.
- d. **Criteria:** The review criteria of the agency should be regulated in a way to encompass all the mechanisms assuring that the program reaches the targeted program outcomes and educational goals. In this framework, the agency should have implementations regarding program design and implementation, teaching staff, administrative and financial supports, physical and technical infrastructure, research activities, student services, alumni competencies, feedback of internal and external stakeholders, program-specific qualities and quality assurance.
- e. **Criteria Guide:** The agency should prepare a guide that will provide information on the criteria employed in accreditation processes and the criteria expected to be met by the evaluators and institutions, make it publicly available on its official website, issue all its decisions in accordance with these published criteria and employ the same criteria and implementations in all reviewing processes.
- f. **Reliability:** The agency should take necessary measures to ensure that the results obtained and the decisions taken will not change even the evaluation is performed by different evaluator groups.

- g. **Training and Improvement:** The agency should periodically organize in-service trainings and other training activities addressing evaluators and higher education institutions. The evaluators who maintain the accreditation processes within the agency should have sufficient experience, skills, and competencies about the evaluation of the institution/field/program. Besides, the agency's administrators and evaluators should be encouraged to take part in the trainings of other national and international external evaluation and/or accreditation agencies.
- h. **Clarity and Transparency:** The agency should prove that its accreditation processes and practices are in accordance with the principles of objectivity, accountability, transparency and impartiality, and inform the public by announcing the evaluation results.
- i. **Conflict of Interest:** The agency should take necessary measures to prevent any conflict of interest in its processes and implementations.
- j. **Objection Processes:** The agency should explicitly define the processes of assessing the objections of higher education institutions and conduct the objection processes in line with this definition.
- k. **Archiving:** The agency should have a complete, up-to-date, accurate and organized archive on following subjects:
- ◆ Site visit reports of the institution and/or program,
 - ◆ Internal evaluation reports of the institution and/or program,
 - ◆ Comprehensive changes, decisions and correspondences of the institution and/or program pursuant to the evaluation and/or accreditation reports.

The practices and works conducted on the above-mentioned aspects are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◆ The mission, vision and strategic objectives of the agency,
- ◆ The legislation of the agency,
- ◆ The presence of external quality assurance and program accreditation activities in the legislation of the agency,
- ◆ Evidence presenting that opinions of relevant strategic stakeholders, particularly the ones to whom the related services will be provided, are received in the field(s) the agency operates,
- ◆ Evidence presenting broad stakeholder representation in the organizations of the agency,
- ◆ The legislations and guides on evaluation processes,
- ◆ The criteria guide,
- ◆ General evaluation criteria,
- ◆ Field-specific evaluation criteria,
- ◆ The evaluation guide of the agency,



- ◆ Evidence on the evaluator trainings organized by the agency, contents and scope of the trainings, and the participant profile (their institutions, duties, demographic information such as distribution of gender, field, institution etc.),
- ◆ Information on the in-service trainings, evaluator trainings, and trainings and workshops addressing higher education institutions organized by the agency (the content, scope, dates, participant info, training reports etc.),
- ◆ Informing the public on the evaluation results (announcement of the results on the agency's official website),
- ◆ The agency's code of ethics,
- ◆ Explicit definition of the objection process regarding evaluation results in the legislation,
- ◆ Consistency **Commission** and its working methods,
- ◆ Archiving directive,
- ◆ Other evidence and documents employed (if any).

1.1.2. The organizational and financial structure of the agency should be in line with its legislation and area of activity as well as being stable and sustainable.

The agency should prove that its organizational and financial structure is stable and in line with its legislation and area of activity and that its activities are sustainable by providing evidence on the following aspects:

- a. Legal Basis: The agency should fulfill the requirements of the national legislation it is subject to.
- b. Financial Structure: The agency should have a commercial enterprise and a sustainable financial structure.

The practices and works conducted on the above-mentioned aspects are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◆ The agency's commercial activity records,
- ◆ Evidence proving that the agency is a commercial enterprise, including profit and loss account statement, current tax certificate, trade registry,
- ◆ Registry to the Department of Associations (for associations),
- ◆ Statement of income sources and evidence on the sources (evidence showing income and expense flow and distribution by years, documents on the pricing policy of accreditation activities and accreditation costs etc.),
- ◆ Other evidence and documents employed (if any).

1.1.3. The agency should act independently in its organizational structure, operational processes and formal outcomes.

The agency should demonstrate its independence in terms of its organizational structure, operational processes and formal outcomes on the basis of the following:

- a. Organizational Independence: The agency should ensure that its works are independent from third parties.
- b. Operational Independence: The agency should undertake the definition and operation of its procedures and methods as well as the assignment and appointment of evaluators independently from third parties.
- c. Independence of Formal Outcomes: The agency should ensure that the administrators and evaluators taking part in external evaluation and accreditation processes are included in the decision-making processes on behalf of the accreditation agency and independent from the institutions they are affiliated with. The final external evaluation and accreditation decisions should be under the responsibility of the agency.

The practices and works conducted on the above-mentioned aspects are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◇ Documents provided by a legal authority demonstrating that the agency is actively operating,
- ◇ Evidence proving that the agency has an accreditation board, which is defined in its legislation, and evidence showing that the board makes decisions independently.

1.1.4. The agency should periodically publish general review reports that analyze the outcomes of its program accreditation activities.

The agency should present general review reports that analyze the outcomes of its program accreditation activities on the basis of the following:

- a. Reporting: The agency should periodically analyze the outcomes obtained from its accreditation activities in terms of the overall approach and their results and impacts, and publicly announce the reports that comprise good practice examples and structural problems (legislations, systems, human resources etc.).

The reporting activities conducted on the above-mentioned aspect are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◇ The reports prepared and published by the agency on evaluation areas at least once every two years.

1.1.5. The agency should have adequate and appropriate resources, in terms of both human resources and physical infrastructure, in order to carry out its program accreditation activities.

The agency should present the details of its human resources and physical infrastructure required for program accreditation activities on the basis of the following:

- a. Infrastructure and Resources: The agency should have adequate office services, physical spaces, external experts, competent staff, information and communication technologies, infrastructure and similar facilities.

The practices and works conducted on the above-mentioned aspect are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◇ Documents proving that the agency owns an office that has adequate staff, information and communication technologies and infrastructure facilities (lease contracts, land titles, staff's contracts of employment of definite and/or indefinite duration, resumes of the staff, contacts with the companies



providing information and communication technologies and infrastructure services, software licenses etc.).

1.1.6. The agency should have appropriate internal quality assurance processes in order to monitor, assess and ensure the outcomes of its activities and conduct continuous improvement works.

The agency should demonstrate that it has appropriate internal quality assurance processes on the basis of the following:

- a. Quality Policy: The agency should explicitly define its quality assurance system and publicly announce its quality policy that guarantees the agency's quality on its official website.
- b. Ethics: The agency should ensure that all persons involved in its activities are competent and act in accordance with ethical rules.
- c. Feedback: The agency should have internal and external feedback mechanisms that lead to a continuous improvement within the agency.

The practices and works conducted on the above-mentioned aspects are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◆ The agency's quality policy,
- ◆ Evidence on the presence of internal quality assurance system within the agency,
- ◆ The agency's ethical rules,
- ◆ Evidence on feedback and improvements within the processes such as the agency's evaluation outcomes, evaluator trainings, trainings addressing higher education institutions.

1.1.7. The agency should take part in external evaluation processes for the evaluation of its activities' compliance with national and international standards (particularly ESG) and continuous improvement of its quality assurance system.

- a. External Evaluation: The agency should periodically be subject to external evaluation processes for the review of its policy and activities.

The practices and works conducted on the above-mentioned aspect are expected to be corroborated. The evidence expected in this scope is listed below:

- ◆ Information and documents on external evaluation process.

1.2. Criteria for the Recognition of International External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies

International agencies must demonstrate their qualifications regarding the recognition process by taking the following criteria into account:

1.2.1. The agency must verify that the implementations and criteria employed for program accreditation are reliable and in compliance with national and international standards (particularly with ESG).

1.2.2. The agency must verify that it adopts an "output-oriented" accreditation approach (learning outcomes of programs, monitoring student success, assessment and evaluation approaches, feedback of graduates etc.).

2. APPLICATION PROCESS

The applications for the authorization of national accreditation agencies and recognition of international accreditation agencies are filed to the THEQC.

2.1. Application Process of National External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies

The agencies that apply for the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate submit their applications in written or electronic form via the "Accreditation Agencies Application System", with the application file they have prepared.

The application file is required to include following documents and information:

- ◆ A letter of application with wet or electronic signature (by a person having signature authority),
- ◆ A statement providing a brief history and information on the activities of the agency,
- ◆ A self-evaluation report comprising the evidence demonstrating that the criteria for the authorization of national external evaluation and accreditation agencies are met by the agency.

The agencies should clearly state the names of the fields of study and programs they wish to operate in in their application files. In the applications submitted in written form, an electronic copy of the application file should also be present in the file.

For Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate renewal applications, the application, review and decision processes stated in this guide apply.

2.2. Application Process of International External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies

Applications for the recognition of international external evaluation and accreditation agencies can be submitted by accreditation agencies as well as the higher education institutions subject to evaluation by international accreditation agencies. The application is submitted to the Council via the written or electronic application form providing information about the aspects stated below:

- ◆ The titles and levels of the programs that the agency requests to perform accreditation activities,
- ◆ Evidence proving that the agency meets the criteria for the recognition of international external evaluation and accreditation agencies.

3. REVIEW PROCESS

The reviewing stage of the agencies' applications consists of three steps, namely the pre-review, the preparation of the review report and the decision-making:

- 1. Pre-Review:** The pre-review of the application file is conducted within 15 days by the Council staff. The agency is requested to complete the missing documents within 30 days after the pre-review. The applications with missing documents are not reviewed.
- 2. Preparation of the Review Report:** The application file deemed appropriate at the pre-review step is sent to the Commission. The file is examined by the Commission within 30 days and the review report,



including the Commission's opinion, is prepared and submitted to the Council. The Commission employs the related criteria in Part I during the review of the application file. The levels of meeting these criteria are stated in the report. It is stated in the report that the criteria are "met" "met to some extent" or "are not met". The report also comprises recommendations for the criteria that are met to some extent or not met.

3. Decision: The review report is presented to the Council members before a Council meeting. After the presentation of the report, the applications of the agencies are added on the agenda of the Council and a final decision is issued.

4. DECISION PROCESS

4.1. Decisions on the Recognition of National External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies

The Council is entitled to issue decisions on the applications filed for the authorization of national external evaluation and accreditation agencies. The Council issues a final decision after examining the review report written by the Commission. If necessary, the Council can pay an on-site visit to the agency and demand additional evidence.

The Council may issue one of the following decisions regarding the authorization of national agencies:

- ◆ Five-year authorization
- ◆ Two-year authorization
- ◆ Refusal

Following aspects are taken into account while issuing decision for or against the authorization of national agencies:

- ◆ The agencies meeting all relevant criteria are granted the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate valid for five years.
- ◆ The agencies that relatively meet two of the relevant criteria at most and meet the other criteria are granted the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate for two years.
- ◆ The application of the agency that does not meet any of the relevant criteria or relatively meets more than two of the relevant criteria is refused.

The validity period of the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate begins on the date the Council issues the decision. In renewal applications, the validity period begins on the expiration date of the previous certificate if the decision date of the Council precedes the expiration date.

The agencies whose applications are refused cannot re-apply within the first three months after the refusal decision. The information on the authorized national agencies is published on the official website of the Council.

For the periodic monitoring of the agencies' activities by the Council, the agencies are required to submit annual activity reports that include their works within the relevant year by the end of every January.

4.2. Decisions on the Recognition of International External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies

The Council is entitled to issue decisions on the applications filed for the recognition of international agencies. The Council issues a final decision after examining the review report written by the Commission. If necessary, the Council can pay an on-site visit to the agency and demand additional evidence.

The Council decides for or against the recognition of international external evaluation and accreditation agencies. The decision issued on the agency also comprises information on the validity period of the recognition granted. The information on the recognized international agencies is published on the official website of the Council.

4.3. Objection Process

National or international organizations should make their objections to the Council in written or electronic form within 30 days following the notification of the decision. In the petition of objection, the standard and the evidence that this standard has been met should be included.

Objections are examined by the Objection Assessment Commission. The Commission submits the Objection Assessment Report, including its opinion on the objection, to the Council. The Council should decide on the objection by taking into account the report in question and this decision shall be notified to the agency.



ANNEX 1: CRITERIA, EXPLANATIONS AND EXPECTED EVIDENCE FOR THE AUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL ACCREDITATION AGENCIES

CRITERIA	EXPLANATIONS	EXPECTED EVIDENCE
<p><i>Agencies should have predefined and published mission and objectives, should maintain their activities in line with these objectives, ensure a high level of stakeholder participation in their governance and practices, and prove that their practices and criteria for output-oriented program accreditation are reliable and in compliance with national and international standards (particularly with ESG) and that their decisions are accurate.</i></p>	<p>a. Organizational Structure: The agency should clearly and explicitly define its program accreditation activities in line with its mission and objectives, form its legislations and organizational structure in accordance with its activities and make them publicly available.</p> <p>b. Sustainability and Continuous Improvement: The agency should conduct its program accreditation activities on a regular basis in line with the predefined processes. These activities should consider the individuality of higher education institutions and support their internal quality assurance systems. The activities must be approached with a perspective of continuous change and innovation in accordance with the changing needs, expectations and satisfaction levels of society and students.</p> <p>c. Participation: Representation of different stakeholders such as pedagogues, academics, students, graduates, employers and professional organizations should be ensured while choosing the members, administrative staff, boards and teams of the agency. Inclusiveness and participation should be systematized and international cooperation should be encouraged. In this scope, the agency's efforts on developing and updating their legislations, governance processes and continuous improvement works should be carried out with a broad stakeholder participation.</p> <p>d. Criteria: The review criteria of the agency should be regulated in a way to encompass all the mechanisms assuring that the program reaches the targeted program outcomes and educational goals. In this framework, the agency should have implementations regarding program design and implementation, teaching staff, administrative and financial supports, physical and technical infrastructure, research activities, student services, alumni competencies, feedback of internal and external stakeholders, program-specific qualities and quality assurance.</p> <p>e. Criteria Guide: The agency should prepare a guide that will provide information on the criteria employed in accreditation processes and the criteria expected to be met by the evaluators and institutions, make it publicly available on its official website, issue all its decisions in accordance with these published criteria and employ the same criteria and implementations in all reviewing processes.</p>	<p>The mission, vision and strategic objectives of the agency,</p> <p>The legislation of the agency,</p> <p>The presence of external quality assurance and program accreditation activities in the legislation of the agency,</p> <p>Evidence presenting that opinions of relevant strategic stakeholders, particularly the ones to whom the related services will be provided, are received in the field(s) the agency operates,</p> <p>Evidence presenting broad stakeholder representation in the organizations of the agency,</p> <p>The legislations and guides on evaluation processes,</p> <p>The criteria guide,</p> <p>General evaluation criteria,</p> <p>Field-specific evaluation criteria,</p> <p>The evaluation guide of the agency,</p> <p>Evidence on the evaluator trainings organized by the agency, contents and scope of the trainings, and the participant profile (their institutions, duties, demographic information such as distribution of gender, field, institution etc.),</p> <p>Information on the in-service trainings, evaluator trainings, and trainings and workshops addressing higher education institutions organized by the agency (the content, scope, dates, participant info, training reports etc.),</p> <p>Informing the public on the evaluation results (announcement of the results on the agency's official website),</p> <p>The agency's code of ethics,</p>

<p>Explicit definition of the objection process regarding evaluation results in the legislation,</p> <p>Consistency commission and its working methods,</p> <p>Archiving directive,</p> <p>Other evidence and documents employed (if any).</p>	
<p>f. Reliability: The agency should take necessary measures to ensure that the results obtained and the decisions taken will not change even the evaluation is performed by different evaluator groups.</p> <p>g. Training and Improvement: The agency should periodically organize in-service trainings and other training activities addressing evaluators and higher education institutions. The evaluators who maintain the accreditation processes within the agency should have sufficient experience, skills, and competencies about the evaluation of the institution/field/program. Besides, the agency's administrators and evaluators should be encouraged to take part in the trainings of other national and international external evaluation and/or accreditation agencies.</p> <p>h. Clarity and Transparency: The agency should prove that its accreditation processes and practices are in accordance with the principles of objectivity, accountability, transparency and impartiality, and inform the public by announcing the evaluation results.</p> <p>i. Conflict of Interest: The agency should take necessary measures to prevent any conflict of interest in its processes and implementations.</p> <p>j. Objection Processes: The agency should explicitly define the processes of assessing the objections of higher education institutions and conduct the objection processes in line with this definition.</p> <p>k. Archiving: The agency should have a complete, up-to-date, accurate and organized archive on following subjects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site visit reports of the institution and/or program, Internal evaluation reports of the institution and/or program, Comprehensive changes, decisions and correspondences of the institution and/or program pursuant to the evaluation and/or accreditation reports. 	



<p><i>The organizational and financial structure of the agency should be in line with its legislation and area of activity as well as being stable and sustainable.</i></p>	<p>Legal Basis: The agency should fulfill the requirements of the national legislation it is subject to.</p> <p>Financial Structure: The agency should have a commercial enterprise and a sustainable financial structure.</p>	<p>The agency's commercial activity records,</p> <p>Evidence proving that the agency is a commercial enterprise, including profit and loss account statement, current tax certificate, trade registry,</p> <p>Registry to the Department of Associations (for associations),</p> <p>Statement of income sources and evidence on the sources (evidence showing income and expense flow and distribution by years, documents on the pricing policy of accreditation activities and accreditation costs etc.),</p> <p>Other evidence and documents employed (if any).</p>
<p><i>The agency should act independently in its organizational structure, operational processes and formal outcomes.</i></p>	<p>Organizational Independence: The agency should ensure that its works are independent from third parties.</p> <p>Operational Independence: The agency should undertake the definition and operation of its procedures and methods as well as the assignment and appointment of evaluators independently from third parties.</p> <p>Independence of Formal Outcomes: The agency should ensure that the administrators and evaluators taking part in external evaluation and accreditation processes are included in the decision-making processes on behalf of the accreditation agency and independent from the institutions they are affiliated with. The final external evaluation and accreditation decisions should be under the responsibility of the agency.</p>	<p>Documents provided by a legal authority demonstrating that the agency is actively operating,</p> <p>Evidence proving that the agency has an accreditation board, which is defined in its legislation, and that the board makes decisions independently.</p>
<p><i>The agency should periodically publish general review reports that analyze the outcomes of its program accreditation activities.</i></p>	<p>Reporting: The agency should periodically analyze the outcomes obtained from its accreditation activities in terms of the overall approach and their results and impacts, and publicly announce the reports that comprise good practice examples and structural problems (legislations, systems, human resources etc.).</p>	<p>Reports prepared and published by the agency on evaluation areas at least once every two years.</p>

<p><i>The agency should have adequate and appropriate resources, in terms of both human resources and physical infrastructure, in order to carry out its program accreditation activities.</i></p>	<p>Infrastructure and Resources: The agency should have adequate office services, physical spaces, external experts, competent staff, information and communication technologies, infrastructure and similar facilities.</p>	<p>Documents proving that the agency owns an office that has adequate staff, information and communication technologies and infrastructure facilities (lease contracts, land titles, staff's contracts of employment of definite and/or indefinite duration, resumes of the staff, contacts with the companies providing information and communication technologies and infrastructure services, software licenses etc.).</p>
<p><i>The agency should have appropriate internal quality assurance processes in order to monitor, assess and ensure the outcomes of its activities and conduct continuous improvement works.</i></p>	<p>Quality Policy: The agency should explicitly define its quality assurance system and publicly announce its quality policy that guarantees the agency's quality on its official website.</p> <p>Ethics: The agency should ensure that all persons involved in its activities are competent and act in accordance with ethical rules.</p> <p>Feedback: The agency should have internal and external feedback mechanisms that lead to a continuous improvement within the agency.</p>	<p>The agency's quality policy, Evidence on the presence of internal quality assurance system within the agency, The agency's ethical rules, Evidence on feedback and improvements within the processes such as the agency's evaluation outcomes, evaluator trainings, trainings addressing higher education institutions.</p>
<p><i>The agency should take part in external evaluation processes for the evaluation of its activities' compliance with national and international standards (particularly ESG) and continuous improvement of its quality assurance system.</i></p>	<p>External Evaluation: The agency should periodically be subject to external evaluation processes for the review of its policy and activities.</p>	<p>Information and documents on external evaluation process.</p>



ANNEX 2: APPLICATION, REVIEW AND DECISION PROCESSES





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Turkey