

# THE TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY COUNCIL INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION DIRECTIVE

## SECTION ONE

### Purpose, Scope, Basis and Definitions

#### Purpose and scope

**ARTICLE 1-** (1) This Directive regulates the procedures and principles regarding the institutional external evaluation practices of higher education institutions organized by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

#### Basis

**ARTICLE 2-** (1) This Directive is based on the *Regulation on Higher Education Quality Assurance and the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council*, which has been promulgated in the Official Gazette No. 30604 of 23 November 2018.

#### Definitions

**ARTICLE 3-** (1) In this Directive:

- a) Council shall mean the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,
- b) Commission shall mean Institutional External Evaluation Commission,
- c) Institution shall mean Higher Education Institution,
- d) Evaluator Pool shall mean the group of experts selected to be assigned in institutional external evaluation teams,
- e) Evaluation Team shall mean the delegation assigned to conduct external evaluation processes of higher education institutions,
- f) Team Leader shall mean the member of the delegation responsible for the management of the team assigned to conduct external evaluation processes of higher education institutions,
- g) Evaluator shall mean the expert assigned in the evaluation team,
- h) Observer shall mean the person assigned to observe the processes during the evaluation activities,
- i) Evaluator Training shall mean the training organized to equip evaluator candidates with required skills for the external evaluation process,
- j) Institutional Feedback Report (IFR) shall mean the report prepared on the evaluated higher education institution's strengths and areas for future development,
- k) Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) shall mean the report annually prepared by higher education institutions that comprises the quality of the institution's education and research activities as well as administrative services and institutional quality improvement practices,
- l) Criteria shall mean the Institutional External Evaluation Criteria,
- m) Draft IFR shall mean the report prepared by the evaluation team and submitted to the evaluated institution for review and feedback.

**SECTION TWO**  
**Duties and Authorities Related To the Institutional External Evaluation,  
Evaluator Pool, Evaluation Teams and Trainings**

**Duties and authorities**

**ARTICLE 4** - (1) The Commission's duties within the Institutional External Evaluation are:

- a) To form the evaluator pool,
- b) To conduct works for the selection of evaluator candidates and evaluation teams,
- c) To check the consistency, grammar and style of the draft IFRs prepared by the evaluation teams and present them to the Council.

**Evaluator pool**

**ARTICLE 5** - (1) Persons with minimum 10 years of experience in education and research activities or administrative processes of higher education institutions may apply to the evaluator pool.

(2) The applicants who have experience in national and/or international external evaluation and/or accreditation processes shall be preferred for the evaluator pool.

(3) At the beginning of each evaluation period, the Commission shall initiate works for the selection of new candidates for the evaluator pool.

(4) The need for new evaluators shall be determined by the Commission in consideration of the declarations of will issued by the institutions in each evaluation period and the estimations of evaluator applications for the following period.

**Evaluation teams**

**ARTICLE 6** - (1) The external evaluation of institutions shall be carried out by evaluation teams.

(2) An evaluation team shall be assigned to each institution subject to evaluation in accordance with the structure and size of the institution. The evaluation team shall not have any conflict of interest with the evaluated institution.

(3) Evaluation teams shall be formed by the Commission in consideration of gender, geographical distribution, distribution of fields and the results of the examinations conducted subsequent to the evaluator training; shall be updated when necessary, and presented to the Council's approval.

(4) Evaluation teams consist of a team leader and team members selected from the evaluator pool. The number of team members shall be determined according to the structure and size of the institution. When necessary, student evaluators and observers may also join the evaluation teams with the institution's assent.

(5) Team leaders shall be selected among the current or former members of the Council or the evaluators in the evaluator pool. The Council members assigned in evaluation teams as team leaders shall not attend the evaluation vote of the relevant institution's IFR.

(6) Each external evaluator shall complete the evaluator training program before taking charge in site visits. It is preferable that they have previously served as observers in site visits of evaluation teams.

**Student evaluators**

**ARTICLE 7**- (1) Student evaluator candidates shall be elected by the Commission after reviewing the references of the national and/or international civil society platforms in which students have been

active, the suggestions of the administrators of relevant higher education institutions and the in-person applications.

(2) Student evaluator candidates shall:

- a) be enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program as of the date of their election,
- b) not have any prior disciplinary punishment,
- c) complete the evaluator training program.

### **Observers**

**ARTICLE 8**-(1) Council members, evaluator candidates or the representatives of national evaluation and accreditation agencies may take part in evaluation teams as observers with the assent of team leaders and evaluated institutions.

(2) In the scope of the cross-border cooperation activities with the Council's counterparts or affiliates abroad, the representatives of relevant organizations may take part in the works of evaluation teams as foreign observers. The organizations entitled to assign foreign observers shall be determined by the Council. The foreign observers shall prepare a report at the end of the site visits and present it to the Council.

### **Evaluator trainings**

**ARTICLE 9**- (1) The evaluators in the evaluator pool shall complete the institutional external evaluator training.

(2) In the event that the evaluator candidates are not assigned to any team for three years after completing the institutional external evaluator training, they shall rejoin the training program before taking on a role in a team in order to update their knowledge.

(3) The training aims to help evaluation team members internalize the evaluation criteria and acquire the competencies required for the evaluation process.

## **SECTION THREE**

### **Institutional External Evaluation Process**

#### **Purposes of the Institutional External Evaluation**

**ARTICLE 10**- (1) The purposes of the Institutional External Evaluation are:

- a) To evaluate higher education institutions on the basis of their annual ISERs, the Council's Institutional External Evaluation Criteria and the site visits paid to the institutions at least once every five years,
- b) To inform relevant stakeholders through the IFRs published by the Council at the end of the external evaluation,
- c) To contribute to the quality improvement processes of higher education institutions,
- d) To contribute to the improvement of the process by presenting to the Council a general review report that is prepared on the basis of IFRs and comprises recommendations for the problems encountered and the quality improvement process at the end of every year.

#### **Institutional External Evaluation process**

**ARTICLE 11** (1) Institutional External Evaluation process shall be conducted according to the following aspects stated in the Institutional External Evaluation Guide.

a) The site visit date shall be jointly determined by the evaluation team leader and the evaluated institution's rector after the agreement of the team members and the institution.

b) The examination and evaluation activities of the evaluation team during the site visit shall be planned in detail before the visit with the coordination of the team leader and relevant senior official of the visited institution in a way to meet the team's demands of additional information or documents, meetings and examinations.

c) Observers may take part in evaluation teams with the permission of the team leader and the institution.

d) The aspects related to the general institutional operations such as administration, student services, libraries, computer and information technologies infrastructure, the support of academic units such as departments, faculties and institutes etc. shall only be evaluated in terms of their relevance to the criteria.

## (2) Presentation of Site Visit Findings

a) As the last step of the site visit, the evaluation team shall orally present its evidence-based findings to the institution's rector and the group of officials invited by the rector. This oral presentation is named "Exit Statement", and the meeting that hosts the exit statement is named "Exit Interview".

b) Exit Statement shall reflect the findings of the visit. The institution's response to the Exit Statement shall be considered in the draft IFRs submitted to the institution.

c) The evaluation team shall submit the draft IFR, which comprises the team's feedback on the institution's strengths and areas for future development that have been orally presented during the Exit Interview, to the institution within 21 days following the end of the visit.

d) The institution shall submit its response on the draft IFR to the team within the 21-day period. Within this period, the institution may revise and update the draft IFR presented by the evaluation team. If the team does not get any response from the institution over the course of this period, it shall mean that the institution accepts all the statements in the report and waives the right to reply.

e) Within 21 days following the institution's response to the draft IFR, the evaluation team shall write the IFR in consideration of the contents of the ISERs, the information and documents requested from the institution, the meetings conducted during the site visit, the spaces visited in the institution, the institution's response to the exit statement and the revisions made. The Commission shall check the grammar and overall style of the IFRs, ensure their consistency with the IFRs submitted by different teams and in different years, and present them to the approval of the Council members. The IFRs that are approved by the Council shall be made available to the public via the Council's official website.

## **Objections**

**ARTICLE 12** (1) The institution may object to the report, in whole or in part, within 60 days after the publication of the IFRs. The objections shall be resolved by the Council after consulting the Commission and the institution shall be notified on the decision in written form within 60 days at the latest.

## **Thematic review**

**ARTICLE 13** (1) The Council may conduct thematic reviews in the areas deemed appropriate by the Council. (2) Thematic review shall be conducted in the framework of the provisions stated in the Section Three of this Directive.

## **Expenses**

**ARTICLE 14** (1) All expenses related to the external evaluation process of higher education institutions in the scope of this Directive shall be met from the budget of the related institution.

**SECTION FOUR**  
**Miscellaneous and**  
**Final Provisions**

**Legal Clauses**

**ARTICLE 15** (1) In the situations for which there are no provisions in this Directive, related legislation provisions shall be applied by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

**Enforcement**

**ARTICLE 16** (1) This Directive shall be enforced on the date of its approval by the Council.

**Execution**

**ARTICLE 17** (1) This Directive shall be executed by the President of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

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