

**PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES ON THE EVALUATOR POOL OF THE TURKISH
HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY COUNCIL, FORMATION OF EVALUATION TEAMS,
AND SANCTIONS FOR NEGLECT OF DUTY BY EXTERNAL EVALUATORS**

SECTION ONE

Purpose and Scope, Basis, and Definitions

Purpose and Scope

ARTICLE 1-(1) This Procedures and Principles document has been prepared to state the duties and responsibilities regarding the evaluator pool, the formation of evaluation teams and the sanctions to be imposed to the neglect of duty by external evaluators in the scope of the evaluation programs carried out by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

Basis

ARTICLE 2-(1) This Procedures and Principles has been prepared based on the relevant provisions of the Regulation on Turkish Higher Education Quality Assurance and the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council, promulgated in the Official Gazette No. 30604 on 23.11.2018, and the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council Institutional External Evaluation Directive.

Definitions

ARTICLE 3- (1) For the purpose of this Procedures and Principles:

- a) THEQC refers to the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,
- b) Final Meeting refers to the meeting in which the institution's strengths and areas for development are verbally conveyed and the site visit is ended,
- c) External Evaluator refers to the person authorised by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council to take part in evaluation programs,
- ç) Evaluator Pool refers to a pool of competent individuals created to be assigned to institutional external evaluation teams,
- d) Evaluation Team refers to the team consisting of a team leader and team members assigned by THEQC to carry out the external evaluation process of an institution,
- e) Observer refers to the person assigned to ensure coordination between the institution and the evaluation team during the evaluation process and to observe the site visit process,
- f) Guide refers to the current THEQC Evaluation Guides,
- g) Commission refers to the Commission on Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation,
- ğ) Institution refers to the higher education institution subject to evaluation,
- h) Criteria refer to the institutional external evaluation criteria (IEEC),
- ı) Preliminary Visit refers to a one-day visit by the Evaluation Team to the Institution before the Site Visit in an online environment or face to face,
- i) Site Visit refers to the visit that commences with the arrival of the Evaluation Team at the accommodation site and ends with the completion of all the meetings, the declaration of the Exit Statement verbally, and the team's departure,
- j) Site Visit Calendar refers to Preliminary Visit and Site Visit dates determined by the Evaluation Team in coordination with the Institution and entered into the evaluation system,
- k) Team Leader refers to the member responsible for managing the evaluation team assigned to conduct the external evaluation processes of a higher education institution,
- l) International Evaluator refers to a competent person who works/has worked in a higher education institution outside Türkiye or has carried out program or institutional accreditation activities,
- m) The Council refers to the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

SECTION TWO

Evaluator Pool

External Evaluator Applications

ARTICLE 4- (1) In periods considered appropriate, THEQC invites applications to meet the demand for external evaluators to participate in planned external evaluation activities.

(2) Applications are received following the procedures and principles of THEQC and within the announced calendar.

(3) The following information is requested from the applicants during the application process to the evaluator pool:

- a) Identity and contact information
- b) Educational background
- c) Academic title and position information
- ç) Administrative position information
- d) Sectoral experience information
- e) Foreign language knowledge
- f) Duties and experience in quality assurance
- g) Information on evaluator training and experience
- ğ) Declaration of conflict/coincidence of interest within the scope of ethical compliance
- h) Declaration of explicit consent regarding the protection of personal data

(4) Applicants are responsible for the accuracy and currency of the information and documents they declare. The information provided by the applicants is checked and confirmed from public data sources (e-Devlet, YÖKSİS) and THEQC records, if possible.

Application and Admission

ARTICLE 5-(1) Those with the following qualifications may apply to the evaluator pool:

- a) Academic staff,
- b) Administrative staff,
- c) Higher education students,
- ç) Sector representatives,
- d) International experts.

(2) Applicants for the role of academic evaluator are required to have at least ten years of experience in learning and teaching or research activities carried out in higher education institutions.

(3) Applicants for the role of administrative evaluator are required to have at least ten years of experience in the administrative organisation of higher education institutions.

(4) Applicants for the role of student evaluator are required to have the qualifications specified in the Directive on the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council Student Member and Students Commission.

(5) Applicants for the role of sector representative evaluator are required to be from stakeholder institutions or organisations, employer representatives or professional practitioners with whom THEQC has no conflict/coincidence of interest.

(6) Those who will serve as international evaluators must certify their competence in this field.

Evaluator Training

ARTICLE 6- (1) The prerequisite for admission to the evaluator pool is to attend and complete the evaluator training programs organised by THEQC.

(2) Evaluator Training Program consists of practical training sessions including higher education quality assurance system, external evaluation criteria, reporting processes, ethical rules, teamwork and case studies. THEQC determines the content and duration of the training.

(3) At the end of the training program, an assessment may be made to measure the level of knowledge of the participants. Evaluation results are taken into account for admission to the evaluator pool and the formation of evaluation teams.

(4) External evaluators in the pool are obliged to attend periodic update training sessions planned by THEQC. If deemed necessary, additional training may be organised on other subjects to be determined by THEQC.

(5) Training may be conducted face-to-face, online or through hybrid methods. Participation and success are monitored by THEQC and taken into account when assigning evaluators to the teams.

(6) The validity period of evaluator training is three years. At the end of this period, external evaluators are required to reattend updated training programs. In addition, if there are substantial updates to legislation, guidelines, process documents, or evaluation criteria, THEQC may require even active external evaluators to attend update training.

Performance monitoring and evaluation

ARTICLE 7-(1) The performances of external evaluators in the external evaluation processes in which they are involved are systematically monitored and evaluated by THEQC.

(2) The following issues may be taken into account within the scope of performance evaluation:

- a) Level of preparation and timely participation in the evaluation process,
- b) Acting based on the evaluation criteria and by following the Guide,
- c) Quality of evaluation reports and timely submission of reports,
- ç) Compliance and contribution to teamwork,
- d) 360-degree survey feedback,
- e) Consistency analysis and score deviations,
- f) Observer evaluations.

(3) Performance data are taken into account in the decision-making process regarding the assignment, training or removal of external evaluators from the pool.

(4) The performance evaluation process is conducted following the principle of confidentiality, and the personal data of external evaluators is stored in a manner accessible only by authorised units.

SECTION THREE

Formation of Evaluation Teams

Formation of Evaluation Teams

ARTICLE 8-(1) External evaluations of institutions are conducted by evaluation teams.

(2) For each Institution to be evaluated, an evaluation team is established according to the organisation and size of the institution. Evaluation team members must not have any conflict/coincidence of interest with the institution to be evaluated.

(3) While it is mandatory to include academic, administrative and student evaluators in the evaluation teams, sector representatives and international experts may also be included.

(4) Evaluation teams are formed by the Commission by considering gender, geographical distribution, and field of study, updated when necessary and submitted to the Council for approval.

(5) THEQC determines the external evaluators in the relevant evaluation period through a random selection method supported by specialised software based on the criteria templates defined according to the evaluation type.

(6) The Council has discretionary authority on the formation and assignment of final evaluation teams, including cases of conflict/coincidence of interest. The Council may delegate this authority to THEQC when it deems necessary.

(7) Evaluation teams are composed of a team leader to be selected from the evaluator pool and external evaluators in a number appropriate to the organisation and size of the institution. Observers may also join the evaluation teams when necessary.

(8) It is ensured that the evaluation teams include at least one and at most two first-time evaluators.

(9) Team leaders are determined among academic evaluators who have served as External Evaluators at least three times in the THEQC Evaluation Programs.

Managing a Conflict/Coincidence of Interest

ARTICLE 9-(1) It is essential that there is no direct or indirect conflict/coincidence of interest, especially personal, financial, professional or family relationships, which may damage the principle of impartiality and objectivity between the team leader and members of the evaluation team and the institution to be evaluated.

(2) Conflicts/coincidences of interest are addressed within the framework of the situations defined in THEQC's officially published Code of Ethics. External Evaluators may submit to THEQC any conflict(s)/coincidence(s) of interest they wish to declare outside of these rules.

(3) The team leader and members to be assigned to the evaluation team are required to submit their declarations on whether they have any conflict/coincidence of interest with the institution to THEQC within seven days from the date the team members are notified.

(4) If any conflict/coincidence of interest arises during the evaluation process, the relevant external evaluator is obliged to immediately notify THEQC.

(5) If a conflict/coincidence of interest is detected, THEQC decides to exclude the relevant external evaluator from the evaluation process, restructure the evaluation team or assign new external evaluators if necessary.

(6) Sanctions stipulated in this Procedures and Principles document are imposed on external evaluators who do not fulfil their obligation to declare despite the conflict/coincidence of interest or who make false declarations.

SECTION FOUR

Duties and Responsibilities of External Evaluators and the Sanctions for Neglect of Duty

ARTICLE 9- External evaluators are obliged to:

- a) fulfil the tasks assigned to them regarding the evaluation process in a timely, impartial and transparent manner,
- b) perform their duties following the common working principles of the evaluation team,
- c) act under the principles and the calendar determined within the scope of the roles specified in the Guides published by the Council,
- ç) protect the confidentiality of institutional information, documents and processes,
- d) ensure that the evaluation results are scientific, objective and evidence-based.

ARTICLE 10-(1) If any of the following cases of neglect of duty by external evaluators are identified, appropriate sanctions will be imposed based on the nature of the misconduct.

(2) Cases subject to a warning sanction:

- a) To compare the institution evaluated with other higher education institutions during the site visit.
- b) To keep elements such as badges and promotional materials belonging to their organisation while on duty.
- c) To be late for more than half of the meetings held by the evaluation team members among themselves without an excuse.
- ç) To act individually outside the team's responsibilities.

(3) Cases that require suspension from evaluation assignments for one year:

- a) Not to attend the meetings held by the evaluation team members among themselves without an excuse.
- b) Not to attend the pre-visit program without an excuse.
- c) Not to attend the site visit program without an excuse.
- ç) To leave the site visit program incomplete without an excuse.
- d) To share information about the process on social media platforms during the site visit.
- e) To declare any conflict/coincidence of interest after accepting the team assignment.
- f) That the average score of the 360-degree evaluation surveys obtained as a result of the evaluation is below 2.0.
- g) To withdraw from the evaluation team after accepting a task, without a valid excuse.
- ğ) That the evaluation team exceeds the deadlines in the calendar specified in the Guide, without an excuse.
- h) That a difference exceeding 200 points exists between the accreditation decision score

obtained as a result of the evaluation and the consistency result.

i) To engage in behaviours that hinder the performance of the observer role.

(4) Cases that require exclusion from the evaluator pool:

a) To make negative public statements regarding the corporate identity of THEQC.

b) To disclose private information and documents related to the duty or use them for purposes outside the scope of the duty.

c) To individually record meetings, interviews, and activities through audio-visual or visual means.

ç) To act contrary to the provisions of the Regulation on the Principles of Ethical Conduct for Public Officials and the Procedures and Principles for Application and the Code of Ethics of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council,

d) To use verbal violence in the performance of the duty or committing acts that will make the order and functioning of the team difficult,

e) To make requests from the institution outside the scope of the duty during the process,

f) To present data in the evaluation report that is not based on observation, is untrue or does not reflect reality.

(5) The sanctions imposed within the scope of the cases that require removal from the evaluator pool are notified in writing to the institution where the relevant external evaluator works.

ARTICLE 11-(1) Acts that require sanctions to be imposed on External Evaluators are identified through denunciation, complaint or direct observation. At the end of each evaluation period, the Commission submits to THEQC its sanction proposals for the neglect of duty by external evaluators, as determined under these procedures and principles, in line with its findings. The Commission may seek the written or oral opinion of external evaluators, the institution or observers while addressing appeals or complaints.

(2) While applying sanctions, the principles of proportionality and gradualism are observed, taking into account the severity of the act, the degree of fault, and the external evaluator's past performance.

(3) If deemed necessary, the Commission may seek the written or oral opinion of the relevant external evaluators, observers or institutions in the process of addressing neglects of duty.

(4) Sanctions finalised by the President's approval are entered into the evaluator management system and notified to the relevant external evaluators via the system.

SECTION FIVE

Miscellaneous and Final Provisions

ARTICLE 12-(1) THEQC decides on the sanctions to be imposed for the acts not included in this Procedures and Principles document but found to violate the evaluation rules upon the proposal of the Commission.

Enforcement

ARTICLE 13-(1) These Procedures and Principles enter into force on the date of their approval by the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

Execution

ARTICLE 14 - (1) These Procedures and Principles are executed by the President of the Turkish Higher Education Quality Council.

These procedures and principles came into force with the Council decision dated 18/07/2025.