



Higher Education Quality Council
Turkey



**THEQC CODE OF
ETHICS**



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The purpose of this document is to define the code of ethics relating to the activities of the Higher Education Quality Council of Turkey (THEQC) members, commission members and external evaluators. Each member or external evaluator assigned in the activities of the Council and its commissions is expected to exercise and maintain the highest standards of professionalism, honesty and integrity and fully comply with the ethical principles stated in the document. The activities of the THEQC require strict impartiality, objectivity and equal treatment. The members and external evaluators are expected to act in accordance with these principles while performing their tasks. "The Statement of Confidentiality and Commitment to THEQC Code of Ethics" attached on the last page of the document is required to be signed by every member and external evaluator. The general principles set out by the THEQC are stated below:

1. The THEQC members, commission members and external evaluators must exercise their authority in a responsible and ethical manner and pay respect to laws to enhance the productivity and prestige of the Council.
2. The members, commission members and external evaluators are obliged to treat everyone equally, fairly, and impartially regardless of their varying backgrounds.
3. The members, commission members and external evaluators are informed about the responsibility of helping their colleagues and co-workers with their professional development and compliance to the code of ethics.
4. The members, commission members and external evaluators should not allow the misrepresentation of their or their colleagues' academic or professional competence. In case they are convinced that anyone has engaged in misconduct, they are required to inform relevant authorities.
5. The members, commission members and external evaluators should participate only in assignments which they are qualified and competent to perform.
6. The members, commission members and external evaluators do accept the confidentiality of all information and documents relating to their tasks. During their assignments, they exercise maximum discretion concerning their work and do not disclose any information for the purposes irrelevant to their duty.
7. The members, commission members and external evaluators are informed about their responsibility of providing the public with accurate information and maintaining strict impartiality in their reports, statements and announcements. All the published reports, statements and announcements do only comprise relevant information pertinent to the subject matter.
8. The members, commission members and external evaluators do not request or accept any gifts, whether direct or indirect, from the officials of the institutions they cooperate with.
9. The members, commission members and external evaluators do accept representing the Council as reliable members, avoid any conflict of interest, and notify all the parties that might be affected in the case of a conflict. Preventing any conflict of interest during the external evaluation process aims to ensure the prestige of the external evaluation process and the reliability of the decisions taken, guarantee a fair and impartial decision-making process and avert any kind of impartial behavior.
 - a. The THEQC members and commission members do not attend the meetings on the matters they have any real or apparent conflict of interest. The names of the persons who recuse themselves due to a

conflict of interest during a meeting are notified. A real or apparent conflict of interest occurs in following situations:

- i) Having close or personal relations with the institution.
- ii) Having financial or personal ties.
- iii) Any factor that might prevent one from making an impartial decision.

b. If the external evaluator has been in a close relationship with the institution under the evaluation process, they are not allowed to take part in any evaluation process related to the relevant institution. The team members assigned in the evaluation process are asked to submit a written statement informing that they do not have any real or apparent conflict of interest or affiliation with the evaluated institution and its members.

Affiliation encompasses, but is not limited to, the following:

- i) Working or having worked in the evaluated institution as academic or administrative staff, or advisor.
- ii) Engaging in negotiations to be assigned or employed by the evaluated institution.
- iii) Having studied at the evaluated institution.
- iv) Having received an honorary degree from the evaluated institution.
- v) Having a spouse or a relative within the third degree of affinity or the third degree of consanguinity who is a student or an employee at the evaluated institution.
- vi) Having non-financial official ties with the evaluated institution (e.g. board of visitors or advisory board membership).

10. The THEQC members, commission members and external evaluators should receive the approval of the Council before attending or organizing any presentations, seminars or meetings on behalf of the Council. The affiliated institution of the person organizing or attending such activities is specified as the THEQC and the official logo and templates of the Council are used in the documents of all activities.

11. Any evidence concerning a breach of the Code may lead to the termination of the members', commission members' and external evaluators' affiliation with the Council.

The Statement of Confidentiality and Commitment to THEQC Code of Ethics

As a member/ commission member/ external evaluator of the THEQC, I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the code of ethics presented in the THEQC Code of Ethics, and I shall fully comply with the principles set out in the Code by maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. According to this, I accept:

1. Acting in a responsible and ethical manner and respecting the laws to enhance the productivity and prestige of the THEQC.
2. Participating only in assignments which I am qualified and competent to perform.
3. Representing the Council as a reliable member, avoiding any conflict of interest, and notifying all the parties that might be affected in the case of a conflict.
4. Treating everyone equally regardless of their varying backgrounds.
5. Safeguarding the confidentiality of all information made available to me.
6. Issuing impartial and accurate statements inside and outside of the Council.
7. Helping my colleagues and co-workers with their professional development and compliance to the code of ethics.
8. Supporting the proceedings that will enable an expedited and fair decision on the accusations regarding the breach of the code of ethics.

Date: _____

Signature: _____



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