QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION
IN THE TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION

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Turkish Higher Education System

- **129** State Universities
- **74** Foundation Universities
- **5** Vocational Schools of HEIs

Source: istatistik.yok.gov.tr
Turkish Higher Education System

- **2,829,430** Students short cycle
- **4,420,699** Students bachelor
- **394,174** Master students
- **96,199** Doctorate students

- **7,740,502** : Students (TOTAL)
- **168,112** : Academic staff
Milestones

1981 - Higher Education Law
1994 - ABET's Accreditation
1999 - EUA IEP
2001 - Participation of Turkey in Bologna Process
2002 - MÜDEK's Accreditation
Milestones

2005
Establishment of YÖDEK

2010
Approval of Turkish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education

2015
Regulation of QA in Higher Education

2017
Foundation Independent Higher Education Quality Council
## Structure of HEQC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>National and public body, with a public service mission</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Created by regulation in 2015 (HEQB), by law 2017 (HEQC)</td>
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<td>Independent body, directly funded by the Parliament</td>
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<td>The evaluation is mandatory for each HEI, at least once in every 5 years</td>
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### Members

- CoHE General Board (3)
- Inter-University Council (3)
- Ministry of National Education (1)
- Vocational Qualification Institution (1)
- Health Institutes of Turkey (1)

- Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (1)
- Turkish Accreditation Agency (1)
- Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (1)
- Student representative (1)
Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Institutional External Evaluation
- Authorization and Recognition of Accreditation Organizations
- Dissemination and Internalization of Quality Assurance Culture
Founding Principles and Values of HEQC

01. Independence
02. Benchmarking against international best practices
03. Quality assurance with developmental approach
04. Ensuring compliance with ESG, Enhancing institutional effectiveness
05. Objective, Fair, Transparent, and Collaborative approach
06. Peer review, Evidence based
National Institutional Evaluation Program

HEQ Council
- Higher Education Act
- CoHE Strategic Plan

Higher Education Institution
- Higher Education Quality Assurance Regulation
- Principles for Higher Education Institutions’ External Evaluation
- Higher Education Quality Assurance and Situational Report
- HEI Strategic Plan

External Evaluation
- Self Evaluation Report
- Feedback for continuous improvement
- External Institutional Evaluation
- Site Visit
- Institutional Feedback Report

1 year
5 year
1. INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION
   1.1. Information on the institution-resources

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM
   2.1. Mission, vision, strategic objectives and performance indicators
   2.2. Establishment and management of quality assurance system
   2.3. Participation of internal and external stakeholders in quality assurance system

3. EDUCATION
   3.1. Programme design and approval
   3.2. Continuous monitoring and updating of programmes
   3.3. Student-centered learning, teaching and evaluation
   3.4. Student admission and improvement, recognition and certification
   3.5. Teaching staff
   3.6. Learning resources, accessibility and supports

4. RESEARCH and DEVELOPMENT
   4.1. Research strategy and objectives
   4.2. Research resources
   4.3. Research staff
   4.4. Follow-up and improvement of research performance

5. ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM
   5.1. Structure of management and administrative units
   5.2. Management of resources
   5.3. Information management system
   5.4. Quality of outsourced services
   5.5. Efficiency and accountability of management

6. RESULTS - INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Quality Assessment Approach

- Administrative System
  - Does the institution have defined strategies and policies?
  - Are the processes defined and managed?
  - Does the institution ensure stakeholder participation?
  - How do the leaders manage and steer?
  - Are the resources and competencies managed?
  - How does the institution enable continuous learning and improvement?

- Education

- Research & Development

- Social Contribution

- Support Services
Process of **Application, Evaluation and Decision**

1. **Preparation of Application File**
   - The application should contain the following documents:
     * A letter of application
     * A statement providing a brief of the organization
     * Self-evaluation report comprising the evidence demonstrating that the criteria are met by the organization

2. **Submission of Application**
   - The application can be filed via a letter or the online "Accreditation Agencies Application System"

3. **Pre-Review**
   - Pre-review is conducted by the Council within 15 days.

4. **Evaluation Report**
   - Evaluation report is prepared by the Commission and presented to the Council within 30 days.

5. **Final Decision**
   - 5 year authorization
   - 2 year authorization
   - Refusal

6. **Objection**
   - Objections can be filed to the Council via a letter or the online system within 30 days.
Recognition of International Accreditation Agencies

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:

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

• 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.).
Recognition of International Accreditation Agencies

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 programmes which 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.
The Council is entitled to issue decisions on the applications submitted for the recognition of international agencies. The Council issues a final decision after reviewing the evaluation 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.
Accredited Programs in Turkey

Total Number of Accredited Programs

- 2016: 433
- 2017: 504
- 2018: 529
- 2019: 671
Accredited Programs in Turkey

The Number of Universities with at least One Accredited Program

- 2016: 54
- 2017: 64
- 2018: 67
- 2019: 85
HEQC with Numbers

160
HEIs’ external evaluation

3/11
Recognition and Authorization of accreditation agencies

4
Evaluator training

1
Bilateral agreement

671
Accredited Programme

Over 100 meetings with stakeholders

Documents updated (stakeholder feedbacks)
Conclusion

The **main goal** of HEQC's quality assurance processes is to

- **Increase the quality of HEIs in Turkey** in the context of national and international quality criteria,
- Help HEIs perform **more qualified education, research and development activities**,
- **Offer more efficient administrative services** and **increase the international acceptability** of their quality levels in order that they become more competitive at the global level.
Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated. 

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