Annex 15: The Regulation on Higher Education Quality Assurance

SECTION ONE
Purpose, Scope, Basis and Definitions

Purpose and scope
ARTICLE 1 – (1) This Regulation sets out the principles regarding internal and external quality assurance of education and training and research activities and administrative services of higher education institutions, accreditation processes, and authorisation processes of the independent external evaluation agencies as well as roles, authorisation and responsibilities defined in this scope.

Basis
ARTICLE 2 – (1) This Regulation was prepared on the basis of the articles 7 and 65, and subparagraph (b) of the article 44 of the Higher Education Law dated 4/11/1981 and numbered 2547.

Definitions
ARTICLE 3 – (1) In this Regulation:
   a) Accreditation shall mean the evaluation and external quality assurance process measuring whether or not a higher education programme meets academic and field-specific standards that were previously identified in a specific field by an external evaluation agency,
   b) External evaluation shall mean the external evaluation process of the quality of education and training and research activities and administrative services of a higher education institution or programme, run by external evaluators authorised by the Higher Education Quality Board or external evaluation agencies recognised by the Council of Higher Education, and holding independent Quality Evaluation Registration Certificates,
   c) External Evaluation and Accreditation Agencies shall mean institutions operating at home or abroad, and holding the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate that is recognised by the Council of Higher Education,
   d) External Evaluators shall mean persons who are assigned to work in the institutional external evaluation process of higher education institutions and authorised to conduct the external evaluation process,
   e) General Board shall mean the General Board of the Council of Higher Education,
   f) Internal Evaluation shall mean evaluation of the quality of education and training and research activities and of administrative services and institutional quality development activities of a higher education institution by evaluators appointed by the relevant higher education institution,
   g) Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate shall mean the certificate approved by the Council of Higher Education upon proposal of the Higher Education Quality Board and indicating that the independent institutions or organisations, , are authorised to evaluate the quality of education and training and research activities as well as administrative services and institutional quality development activities of a higher education institution,
   g) Quality Assurance shall mean any planned and systematic procedure undertaken to provide assurance that a higher education institution or programme fully implements quality and performance processes that are in compliance with the internal and external quality standards,
   h) Strategic Planning shall mean the process of preparing a strategic plan by a higher education institution with inclusive methods and continuously monitoring the relevant performance indicators in order to establish its future mission and vision within the framework of development plans, programmes, relevant legislation and adopted fundamental principles, identify strategic goals and measurable objectives, measure its performance in view of pre-determined indicators and conduct monitoring and evaluation of the process,
   h) National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education in Turkey (NQF-HETR) shall mean the National Qualifications Framework defined for Higher Education,
   i) National Qualifications Framework shall mean a system which explains the relations between higher education qualifications at national level or at the level of an education system, and in which qualifications, recognised by national and international stakeholders, are structured in a specific order,
   i) Higher Education Quality Board shall mean the Board established by this Regulation and responsible for the regulation and execution of quality evaluation and assurance activities as well as accreditation activities in higher education institutions,
j) Higher Education Quality Commission shall mean the Commission established by this Regulation and responsible for the regulation and execution of quality evaluation and assurance activities as well as accreditation activities within higher education institutions,

k) Progress Report on Higher Education Evaluation and Quality Assurance shall mean the report that the Higher Education Quality Board prepares or has it prepared annually, taking into account institutional evaluation reports of higher education institutions that have gone through external evaluation within the relevant year,

l) Performance Evaluation Report of Higher Education Institution shall mean the report consisting of the results of a higher education institution in institutional evaluation and quality development activities and prepared annually by the relevant higher education institution.

SECTION TWO
Higher Education Quality Board
Establishment and organisational structure of the Board
ARTICLE 4 – (1) The Higher Education Quality Board shall comprise;
   a) five members representing higher education institutions elected by the General Board,
   b) four members elected by the Inter-University Board,
   c) one member representing the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology,
   d) one member representing the Ministry of Development,
   e) one member representing the Ministry of Finance,
   f) one member representing the Ministry of National Education,
   g) one member representing the Ministry of Health,
   h) one member representing Turkish Academy of Sciences,
   i) one member representing the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey,
   j) one member representing the Presidency of Health Institutes of Turkey,
   k) Student Representative,
   with a maximum of twenty-one members in total.

(2) Members elected by the General Board and Inter-University Board to represent higher education institutions, each of whom works for different higher education institutions, shall be designated amongst faculty members who are experienced in the structure, functioning and management of higher education as well as in quality evaluation and development practices, have worked at higher education institutions for at least ten years, and specialize in different fields including social sciences, sciences, engineering, health and fine arts. As for representatives from the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology, the Ministry of Development, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health, Turkish Academy of Sciences, Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, Presidency of Health Institutes of Turkey, Vocational Qualifications Authority, Turkish Accreditation Institution and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, requests shall be made to the Ministries that these institutions are affiliated or relevant. Student representative shall be assigned within the principles and procedures to be determined by the Higher Education Quality Board.

(3) The Higher Education Quality Board shall elect a president amongst the members elected by the Council of Higher Education with absolute majority. The president shall select one of the members, elected by the Inter-University Board, as deputy president.

(4) Term of office for Higher Education Quality Board members shall be one year for the student council representative and four years for the rest of the members. Membership cannot last more than two terms.

(5) With the exception of those who failed to attend a total of four meetings in one year without a valid excuse and those who are unable to work for more than six months due to illness, accident or another reason, membership cannot be terminated before the term of office is completed.

(6) In the event that the number of members of the Higher Education Quality Board decreases due to any reason, the relevant institution/organisation shall elect/assign a replacement for the missing
member through the same procedure within one month by latest. The elected/assigned member shall serve for four years.

(7) Higher Education Quality Board shall convene at least once a month on the dates determined by the President and any given time upon President’s call or written request of one third of Higher Education Quality Board members. In the absence of the President, deputy president shall chair the meetings.

(8) Higher Education Quality Board shall convene with the absolute majority of the total number of members and take decisions with the absolute majority of the participants in the meeting. In the event of an equality of votes, decision shall be considered in favour of the President’s vote.

(9) Members elected by the Council of Higher Education and Inter-University Board shall not participate in the meetings where issues related to institutions, they represent or work for or are affiliated with, are discussed.

**Duties of Higher Education Quality Board**

**ARTICLE 5** – (1) Duties of the Higher Education Quality Board are as follows:

a) To define and submit to the approval of the General Board a national policy and strategy for quality assurance and accreditation in higher education,

b) To support building internal quality assurance systems in higher education institutions and provide higher education institutions with guidance on the issue,

c) To organise training programmes, meetings, workshops and other similar activities to develop and mainstream quality culture,

d) To monitor activities regarding quality assurance systems in higher education at national and international level, and realise joint activities at national and international level,

e) To set out and submit to the approval of the General Board the principles, quality indicators and rules applied in external assessment and accreditation,

f) To draft the final report to include recommendations for quality improvements and submit to the General Board by examining external evaluation reports following the self-evaluation and external evaluation process prepared by higher education institutions,

g) To make a request from the General Board on an external evaluation at the expense of relevant higher education institution in the event that a higher education institution has not undergone an external evaluation which is required at least once every five years although it is overdue,

h) To submit proposals regarding external quality evaluations that have been performed in higher education institutions throughout the year, problems encountered and quality improvement process to the General Board at the end of each year,

i) To present remarks to the General Board by examining registration applications of private law legal persons applying to the Council of Higher Education to become registered for carrying out activities in the area of external quality evaluation and accreditation in the framework of the set principles and rules; to monitor these organisations’ activities and obtain information when deemed necessary, issue warnings if necessary or make a proposal to the General Board to terminate their registration,

j) To represent the Board on quality assurance in higher education before international organisations,

i) To share simultaneously with public on the website of the Council the reports and opinions submitted to the General Council pursuant to sub-paragraphs (d), (f), (g), (ğ) and (h),

j) To perform other tasks assigned by the Council of Higher Education within the purpose and scope of this Regulation.

(2) The Higher Education Quality Board may establish commissions and assign advisory boards, determining their operational principles and procedures, if deemed necessary.

**Office and staff needs and administrative and current expenses of the higher education quality board**

**ARTICLE 6** – (1) The expenses on office, expert and administrative staff required in the services of the Higher Education Quality Board shall be met from the budget of the Presidency of the
The Council of Higher Education; and administrative and current expenses shall be met from the budget of the Council of Higher Education.

SECTION THREE
Establishment, Roles and Responsibilities of the Quality Commission of Higher Education Institution

The Quality Commission of Higher Education Institution

ARTICLE 7 – (1) Higher education institutions shall establish a Quality Commission to conduct internal and external evaluation and quality development activities.

(2) The Commission shall be chaired by the rector of the relevant higher education institution, or by the vice-rector in the absence of the rector.

(3) Commission members shall be assigned by university senates on condition that no more than one member shall be included from the same faculty, institute, school, vocational school, and not more than one and they are from different disciplines. Amongst commission members shall also be included the secretary general of the higher education institution, student representative as well as head of the department of strategy development in public higher education institutions and unit manager responsible for relevant processes in foundation higher education institutions. The number of members, membership duration, which shall not be shorter than two years for the members assigned by the senate, and operation principles and procedures of the commission shall be determined by university senates, in the absence of which they are set out by executive boards of the relevant higher education institutions, and shared publicly on the website of the higher education institution. Student representative shall be assigned within principles and procedures to be defined by university senates and shall serve for one year.

(4) Support services on office and staff for the commission shall be carried out by the department of strategy development or other relevant unit of the relevant higher education institution.

Duties of the Quality Commission of Higher Education Institution

ARTICLE 8 – (1) The Commission shall be responsible for:

a) Establishing the internal and external quality assurance system of the relevant institution related to evaluation of education and training and research activities as well as administrative services and development of the quality in line with the strategic plan and objectives of the institution, identifying institutional indicators, conducting activities therein in line with principles and procedures set out by the Higher Education Quality Board and submitting these activities to the approval of the Senate,

b) Conducting internal evaluation activities, preparing an annual institutional evaluation report comprising the conclusions of institutional evaluation and quality development activities, submitting it to the senate, or to the executive board of the institution in the absence of senate, and sharing publicly the approved annual institutional evaluation report on the website of the institution.

c) Making necessary preparations through external evaluation process and providing the Higher Education Quality Board and external evaluation agencies with all the necessary support.

SECTION FOUR
Internal and External Quality Assurance System in Higher Education Institutions

Establishment of quality assurance systems in higher education institutions

ARTICLE 9 – (1) Higher education institutions shall be required to ensure the establishment and operation of the internal and external quality assurance system to be realised in their own institutions and maintenance of the internal and external evaluation process in the scope of implementation principles to be prepared on this issue.

Reports and calendar of internal evaluation

ARTICLE 10 – (1) Higher education institutions shall prepare a strategic plan, encompassing education and training and research activities as well as the whole administrative services supporting these activities, and on an annual basis an internal evaluation report having integration of the performance programme and activity report.

(2) Higher education institutions shall complete their internal evaluation activities in January-March every year. By the end of April, they shall submit to the Higher Education Quality Board the Internal Evaluation Report they have prepared for information.
Scope of internal evaluation reports
ARTICLE 11 – (1) Internal evaluations to be conducted at higher education institutions shall include:
   a) mission, vision and strategic objectives identified in the light of national strategies and objectives of higher education as well as policies and processes identified for quality assurance,
   b) measurable objectives of academic units, performance indicators regarding these objectives and their periodic reviews,
   c) activities on structuring of programmes linked with NQF-HETR and based on learning outcomes and fulfilment of accreditation process requirements,
   c) activities related to areas, realized during the previous internal and external evaluations and in need of improvement.

Process and calendar of external evaluation
ARTICLE 12 – (1) Higher education institutions are required to go through evaluation in the scope of a periodic institutional external evaluation process to be conducted by the Higher Education Quality Board once in at least five years. External evaluation calendar of higher education institutions shall be prepared and announced by the Higher Education Quality Board.
   (2) External evaluation of higher education institutions shall be performed by external evaluators recognised or assigned by the Higher Education Quality Board or by independent agencies authorised by the Higher Education Quality Board with the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate.
   (3) External evaluation service for accreditation at unit/programme level shall be realised by a national or international independent agency holding the Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate and remain limited to unit/programme.

Scope of external evaluation reports
ARTICLE 13 – (1) Institutional external evaluation of a higher education institution shall be conducted in order to include the scope and issues mentioned in the article 11 of this Regulation.
   (2) In the event that the external evaluation is carried out at unit/programme level, evaluation subjects shall be limited to activities/services of the unit/programme to be evaluated.

Public announcement of internal and external evaluation results
ARTICLE 14 – (1) Results of internal and external evaluations conducted in higher education institutions shall be made public. Annual internal and external evaluation reports of higher education institutions shall be published on the websites of relevant institutions.

Expenses in the scope of quality development and quality assurance activities
ARTICLE 15 – (1) In the scope of this Regulation, all expenses related to activities to be realised by higher education institutions shall be met by the allowance allocated to the budgets of higher education institutions under the relevant item. Foundation higher education institutions shall also allocate adequate allowance in their budgets for activities to be undertaken in the scope of this Regulation.

SECTION FIVE
External Evaluation Agencies and Recognition Process

External evaluation agencies
ARTICLE 16 – (1) Apart from the Higher Education Quality Board, independent quality assurance agencies and organisations holding a Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate may also realise evaluation activities on the basis of institution, unit or programme.
   (2) Principles and procedures for the evaluation of reports by independent quality assurance agencies and organisations except for the Higher Education Quality Board, application for Quality Evaluation Registration Certificate, periodical evaluation processes and activities shall be determined by the Higher Education Quality Board.
SECTION SIX
Miscellaneous and Final Provisions

Repealed regulation
ARTICLE 17 – (1) The Regulation on Academic Evaluation and Quality Development in Higher Education Institutions, which had been published in the Official Journal dated 20/9/2005 and numbered 25942, has been repealed.

Transitional provision
PROVISIONAL ARTICLE 1 – (1) Higher Education Quality Boards shall identify strategies, processes, procedures and principles for academic evaluation and quality development activities in higher education institutions as indicated in the article 5 of this Regulation; submit them to the Council of Higher Education for approval and notification to other higher education institutions within six months as of the enforcement of this Regulation.

Enforcement
ARTICLE 18 – (1) This Regulation shall be enforced on the date of its publication.

Execution
ARTICLE 19 – (1) Provisions of this Regulation shall be executed by the President of the Council of Higher Education.