

Decision on the Substantive Change Report by Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC)

Register Committee

3-4 April 2024

Ref. RC42/C119

Ver. 1.0

Date 2024-04-24

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Decision of:	2024-04-04
Result:	Take note
Report received on:	2024-03-14
Agency registered since:	2022-10-26
Last external review report:	2022-10-26
Registration until:	2025-04-30
Absented themselves from decision-making:	n/a
Attachments:	1. Substantive Change Report, 2024-03-14

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 2024-03-14.
- [2.] The Register Committee noted that THEQC is introducing a new activity for institutional cross border accreditation – International Institutional Accreditation (IIAP). The agency plans to base the methodology on its current ESG aligned standards for Institutional Accreditation Programme and Institutional External Evaluation.
- 2.[3.] The Committee learned that the agency drafted methodology, which could be altered by the time the activity is launched (planned for late 2024). Taking in consideration that the methodology could go through notable changes in the upcoming period, EQAR will only register the activity on DEQAR after being evaluated by an external review panel in its upcoming review.
- 3.[4.] The Committee expects that the new activity will be analysed in full as part of THEQC next renewal of registration in 2024.

EQAR Substantive Change Report

Reference #	26541963
Status	Complete
Login Username	aysegulkozak@yokak.gov.tr
Login Email	aysegulkozak@yokak.gov.tr
Agency #1	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council
Agency acronym	THEQC
Expiry date #1	30/04/2025
Contact #1	Aysegul Kozak Çakır
Phone #1	+90 312 298 7883
Email #1	aysegulkozak@yokak.gov.tr
Other organisations?	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed?	No
C. Changes in EQA activities	1. One or several new external QA activities were introduced
Description new/changed	<p>THEQC is in the planning process of initiating a new cross-border quality assurance activity (intended to be announced last quarter of 2024). This decision stems from demands received from various stakeholders as well as some of the Turkish universities located abroad. To meet this demand, the Council has decided to embark on preparations for cross-border accreditation. The recently amended Regulation on Higher Education Quality Assurance and Turkish Higher Education Quality Council authorizes THEQC to implement this new QA activity. The program will be named as International Institutional</p>

Accreditation Program (IIAP). Under the IIAP, higher education institutions (HEIs) outside Turkiye will undergo evaluation using the same THEQC Evaluation Criteria which were previously covered during THEQC's recent external review by EQAR and ENQA.

The Guides of the newly planned QA activity will be similar to those of IEEP and IAP of THEQC's external evaluation programs, respectively for evaluation of institutions, in terms of governance and quality, learning and teaching, research and development, and service to society based on the THEQC Evaluation Criteria. Steps in evaluation process will be the same with IAP and IEEP which includes writing of SAR by the HEI; the composition of the peer evaluation experts panel; publication of reports and follow up. Consequently, it is not an external evaluation developed from scratch, but it is based on the THEQC's previous experience of evaluating institutions and study programs. The consistency procedures are nevertheless are hoped to be strengthened by the introduction of review coordinator. Minor updates include the wording in the descriptions of the THEQC criteria which...

... will help better understanding for prospective audience.

The IIAP is a planned activity and has not yet been implemented. Therefore its procedural rules, handbooks, and other pertinent documents are currently in the drafting stage. We will be attaching IIAP directive in draft form (since we are still working on it and it has not yet been approved by our council) to give an idea of what the program will look like.

1. New EQA activity:

1	International Institutional Accreditation, IIAP
Focus	study programmes or higher education institutions
ESG 2.1	For Mapping against European Standards and Guidelines Part 1, please see the attached document
ESG 2.2	<p>THEQC did not employed a new methodology for this planned QA activity. We are planning to adopt the current criteria to IIAP. The experts of the Council were invited to Higher Education Institutions abroad to be familiarized the THEQC Evaluation Criteria and external evaluation processes. After these developments, the university representatives and some NGOs officially requested from THEQC to extent its QA activities to abroad. Considering these inputs, the Council decided to take a step to conduct International Institutional Accreditation. In September 2023, a working group was constituted to work on International Institutional Accreditation. The experts at the Council started working on the applicability of the same criteria to institutions abroad. To develop IIAP's methodology, THEQC's annual status reports, feedbacks from evaluators of the current QA activities of THEQC, reports from observers in the Evaluation Teams, 2024-2028 strategic planning documents, the inputs from Council of Higher Education of Turkiye (CoHE) were utilized. When the documents and procedures are ready, they will be shared with our evaluators and other stakeholders to get their input.</p>
ESG 2.3	
1	not available yet

ESG 2.3

Not applicable

ESG 2.4

With the approval of the Council, Evaluation Teams are selected through the Evaluator System, including a team leader and some evaluators in a number appropriate to the structure and size of the institution by taking into account sex, nationality, the field of education, the results of the exams to be conducted after evaluator training, and surveys and performance data collected about the evaluators in previous evaluation periods; the teams are updated when necessary.

Each Evaluator must complete the evaluator training program before taking a role in teams. Evaluator Training is given to ensure that the members of the Evaluation Teams understand the evaluation criteria and gain the competencies to exhibit the attitudes and behaviours expected from them during the evaluation process. Evaluator candidates must attend the Evaluator Training program again if they have not been included in the IIAP teams within three calendar years after the last Evaluator Training they received, to be eligible for reassignment in evaluation teams.

ESG 2.5

CONSISTENCY IN DRAFTING STAGE:

In the drafting stage the review coordinator checks the draft IIAR (International Institutional Accreditation Report) in terms of completeness, consistency of the text and maturity levels, clarity and language. The feedback of the coordinator is provided to the team before the IIAR is sent to HEIs for their feedback.

CONSISTENCY WORK BY THE COMMISSION

When IIAR is submitted to THEQC by the evaluation team, The Commission on Institutional

External Evaluation and Accreditation check the consistency of the report to ensure consistency between evaluations conducted in different institutions in the same evaluation period and between years.

ESG 2.6

1

NA

ESG 2.7

Turkish Higher Education Quality Council conducts separate processes for Appeals and Complaints. While an appeal can be filed by HEI against the refusal of accreditation decision of the Council, a complaint can be made by an individual or an individual representing the HEI. The scope of the complaint can be any dissatisfaction with the evaluation processes of THEQC. Appeals and complaints are made to the Appeals and Complaints Commission within the scope of the " Turkish Higher Education Quality Council Directive on Appeals and Complaints" which is the same procedure with IEEP and IAP.

ESG 3.4/ESG 3.6

the same as IAP and IEEP

D. Activity outside the scope of the ESG

No

File #1

[mapping_IAP_against_ESG.docx \(112 KB\)](#)

File #2

[DRAFT_IAP_DIRECTIVE.docx \(36 KB\)](#)

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