


# FROM INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION TO INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO QUALITY ASSURANCE



## ABOUT TURKISH HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

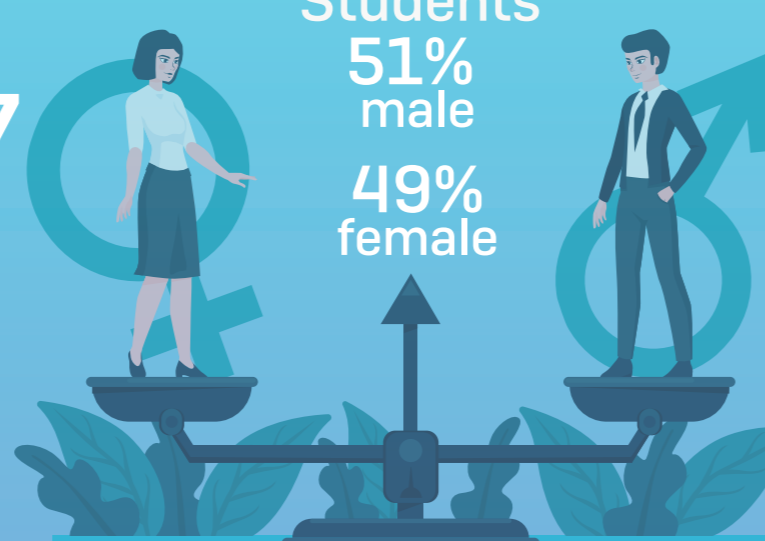

**208** Higher Education Institutions

129 State Universities  
75 Foundation Universities  
4 Foundation Vocational Schools

**8.240.997** Students

Students  
51% male  
49% female

**184.709** Academics

## ABOUT THEQC

Founded in July 2015, THEQC is a public legal entity with administrative and financial autonomy, founded with the aim of evaluating the quality levels of HEIs' education and research activities and administrative services in accordance with the national and international quality standards, and coordinating the processes of external quality assurance of HEIs and authorization/recognition of independent external evaluation organizations.

The primary duties of the THEQC:  
Performing external evaluation of HEIs,  
Coordinating the authorization and recognition processes of accreditation agencies,  
Ensuring the internalization and dissemination of quality assurance culture in HEIs.

### 01 SELF EVALUATION

The IAP process is carried out based on the ISERs, which constitute the self-evaluations of HEIs, and specific criteria supported by the IAP legislation. ISER process is executed through a web-based system, QAMIS. HEIs upload the evidence into this system. The report, written utilizing a rubric-style measurement tool, comprises the institution's activities in four areas: Leadership, Governance and Quality, Teaching and Learning, Research and Development, and Service to Society; 14 criteria; and 46 sub-criteria. Thus, the ISERs of the institutions that will undergo IAP are formed. ISER reports are published on the official websites of THEQC and the institution.

### 02 SETTING EVALUATION TEAMS

External evaluation teams, consisting of academic and administrative staff, students and international experts, are formed by considering the size of the institutions to be included in the scope of institutional accreditation. A dual confirmation from the institution and the candidate evaluators that the evaluators who will work in these teams have no ties to the institution to be visited (graduates, employees of the institution, etc.) is ensured. Team members are selected from a pool of candidates who had taken a series of training about ISER review, IAP processes, duties and responsibilities of the evaluation team etc.

### 03 SITE VISITS

Two visits (pre-visit and site visit) are carried out by the evaluation teams to the HEIs. A hybrid approach is adopted (online pre-visit, face-to-face site visit). Site visits usually take three days.

### 04 REPORT WRITING

The report is written by the team based on the review of the ISERs, IFRs and site visit observations. Being the output of the accreditation process, IARs present the strengths and areas for improvement of institutions. In the IAP evaluation will be based on the following grading:  
Leadership, Governance and Quality 300,  
Teaching and Learning 400,  
Research and Development 200,  
Service to Society 100 points all totalling up to 1000 points.

### 05 CONSISTENCY CHECK

IAR is submitted to THEQC Commission on Institutional External Evaluation and Accreditation where it is checked by two experts, one being a member of the Commission and the other an expert of the Council, taking into account the following considerations:  
Compatibility of the sub-criteria maturity levels in the reports with the report content.  
Evidence-based evaluation of sub-criterion maturity levels.  
The language of the reports being objective and impartial.

### 06 DECISION

The decision regarding accreditation is made by THEQC considering IARs which include the maturity levels of the institution regarding the sub-criteria. According to these maturity levels, the Council decides on full accreditation for five years, conditional accreditation for two years or rejection of accreditation. The council's decisions on accreditation are published on the official website of THEQC.  
12 HEIs were granted 5 years full accreditation, 7 HEIs were granted 2 years conditional accreditation.

QAMIS System (Web Based System)

## Reflections

“The IAP is an authentic output of THEQC's recent work on quality assurance. It combines international perspectives and blends them with local characteristics by assisting HEIs in their transformation towards the future with SDGs.”

01 ONE The level of knowledge and awareness in the field of quality assurance in our higher education institutions has increased

03 THREE Limited use of information management systems to monitor performance indicators

05 FIVE Continuous improvement mechanisms need further enhancement

02 TWO Universities face challenges in collecting and analyzing the data required to write their IARs

04 FOUR The organizational structures related to quality management have been strengthened

06 SIX Universities need to work further on stakeholder diversity and stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes