

# REGULATIONS FOR ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION \*

## PART ONE

### Objective, Scope, Basis and Definitions

#### **Objective**

**Article 1-** The aim of these regulations is to state the basic principles for evaluating and improving the quality of educational, instructional and research activities and those of administrative services at institutions of higher education, as well as approval and recognition of their level of quality through an independent “external assessment”.

#### **Scope**

**Article 2-** These regulations cover the duties, authorities and responsibilities of governing bodies of higher education and institutions of higher education, regarding assessment of their academic and administrative services, quality improvement as well as approval and recognition of their levels of quality.

#### **Basis**

**Article 3-** The regulations established herewith are based on Articles 7 and 65 of the Law on Higher Education, No. 2547.

#### **Definitions**

**Article 4-** Definitions used throughout the regulations are as follows:

- a) Governing Bodies of Higher Education: Council of Higher Education and Inter-university Board.
- b) Institutions of Higher Education: Universities and Institutions of High Technologies.
- c) Academic Units of Institutions of Higher Education: Faculties, schools of higher education, conservatories, schools of vocational higher education, graduate schools, and research centers of the institutions of higher education.
- d) Program: Departments, programs, major art or science branches of academic units at an institution of higher education.
- e) The mission and vision of an institution of higher education: The mission of an institution of higher education defines the self-defined reasons of its existence and goals; similarly the vision is the projections and ideals aimed to be reached in the future by the relevant institution of higher education.
- f) Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education: Formed by the Inter-university Board and responsible for maintaining and organizing the activities of academic assessment and quality improvements at institutions of higher education.
- g) Annual Assessment Report of Institutions of Higher Education: Annually prepared by the institutions of higher education, containing the results of the activities of academic assessment and quality improvements at the related institution of higher education.
- h) Commission Report for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education: Annually prepared by Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education based on the assessment reports prepared by the institutions of higher education.

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i) Council of Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at the Institutions of Higher Education: A council responsible for the academic assessment and quality improvements at a specific institution of higher education.

j) Student Council of an Institution of Higher Education: A student union established by university students at an institution of higher education in a democratic manner.

k) Quality improvement: Continuous improvement of the quality of educational, instructional and research activities as well as those of administrative services at an institution of higher education.

l) Strategic planning: The process in which an institution of higher education identifies its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities available and threats faced according to the results of internal or external assessment; creates its strategies of quality improvements accordingly; turns these strategies into measurable objectives and monitors them by defining relevant performance indicators.

m) Strategic objectives: Objectives having strategic importance within the framework of the mission of an institution of higher education.

n) Performance: The extent to which an institution of higher education achieves its strategic objectives and goals.

o) Internal assessment: The evaluation of the quality and quality improvements of educational, instructional and research activities as well as those of administrative services at an institution of higher education by the evaluators assigned by the relevant institution.

p) External assessment: The evaluation of the quality of educational, instructional and research activities as well as those of administrative services at an institution of higher education by independent external evaluators.

q) External evaluators: The national and international certified agencies, associations, establishments and councils possessing "The Registration Certificate for Quality Assessment".

r) Registration certificate for quality assessment: The certificate which authorizes relevant independent agencies, associations, establishments and councils eligible to perform the quality assessment of academic and administrative services as well as activities of quality improvements at an institution of higher education.

s) Quality Certificate: The certificate, received through external assessment, which indicates the level of quality of educational, training and research activities as well as those of administrative services at an institution of higher education.

t) Quality approval and recognition: The approval of the level of quality of an institution of higher education through "Quality Certificate"; and being recognized by other national or international institutions of higher education and relevant establishments.

u) Internal Institutional periodic review: The periodic review of the quality of educational, instructional and research activities as well as those of administrative services, and the activities of quality improvements and their results at an institution of higher education by the institution itself.

v) Improvement action plans: The plans specifying which improvements need to be completed, when, in what period of time, and under whose responsibility, at an institution of higher education mainly in accordance with the results of the internal or external assessment.

## PART TWO

### Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education

#### **Foundation and chairman of the commission**

**Article 5-** The Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education consists of nine members and each member, employed by a different institution of higher education, is elected by the Inter-university Board. The commission members who are experienced in academic assessment and quality improvement should be elected from different academic disciplines, whenever possible, including at least one member from each field of major sciences, engineering sciences, social sciences and health sciences.

The Chairman of the Commission is elected by the Inter-university Board among the members of the commission.

#### **Term of office for the members of the commission**

**Article 6-** The term of office for the commission members is four years. A member completing his/her term can be elected for one more term. But, he/she cannot sustain his/her membership for more than two terms. During each election period in the wake of the first one, at least 1/3 (one third) and at most 2/3 (two thirds) of the nine members of the Commission are to be re-elected, thereby the continuity of the Commission activities is ensured. If this cannot be accomplished for any reason, the commission is formed with new members as indicated in Article 5. For a member who fails to complete his/her term of office for any reason whatsoever a new member is elected in compliance with the same principles so as to complete the term of office of the member replaced.

#### **Duties of the commission**

**Article 7-** The responsibilities and duties of the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education are as follows:

a) In accordance with the strategic plan and objectives of the Council of Higher Education, defining and updating the main strategies, processes, methods and basic principles regarding the assessment of academic and administrative services at institutions of higher education for improving their quality, as well as approving and recognizing their levels of quality; and informing the institutions of higher education upon changes.

b) In the light of the strategies, methods and principles defined with respect to 7-a, examining (or having it examined) the annual assessment reports prepared by the institutions of higher education, preparing (or having it prepared) the annual Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education Report and submitting it to the Presidencies of the Governing Bodies of Higher Education.

c) Sharing the best practices of academic assessment and quality improvements of the institutions of higher education with other institutions of higher education.

d) In accordance with the strategic plan and objectives of the Council of Higher Education, participating in activities associated with international and mutual agreements for recognition in higher education on behalf of the Council of Higher Education, and ensuring that these activities are properly conducted at the national level.

e) In conformity with the strategic plan and objectives of the Council of Higher Education, defining the methods and basic principles for the Council of Higher Education to grant the “The Registration Certificate for Quality Assessment” to independent national associations, establishments and councils that are capable of carrying out academic assessment and quality improvement activities at the institutions of higher education,

examining the applications and submitting them to the Council of Higher Education for approval.

f) With respect to activities of international mutual recognition, defining the methods and principles for the Council of Higher Education to recognize “The Registration Certificate for Quality Assessment” for the international independent associations, establishments and councils that are capable of carrying out academic assessment and quality improvement activities at the institutions of higher education at international level.

g) Specifying the methods and principles for the associations, establishments and councils having the Registration Certificate for Quality Assessment as stated in 7-e and 7-f, to implement their authority and for the Council of Higher Education to revoke such authority when necessary.

h) Providing support to the Council of Higher Education during arrangements associated with the academic assessment, quality improvement, approval and recognition of the level of quality of the institutions of higher education.

### PART THREE

#### Council of Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at Institutions of Higher Education

##### **Council of academic assessment and quality improvement**

**Article 8-** Institutions of higher education form their Councils of Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement which are responsible for academic assessment and quality improvement activities within their organization. The members of these councils and the number of them are specified by the Senate of the related institution of higher education. These councils are formed by at least nine and at most eighteen persons, including the chairman. Among the council members are at least one vice-rector, one dean, one graduate school director (if any); one director of a school of higher education, one director of a school of vocational higher education, one director of a research center and the secretary general and representative of the student council of the related institution of higher education.

##### **Chairman of the council of academic assessment and quality improvement**

**Article 9-** The Council of Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement is to be chaired by the Rector. In the event of his absence, the vice-Rector who is the member of the council of the related institution of higher education chairs the council.

##### **Term of office of the council of academic assessment and quality improvement**

**Article 10-** 1/3 (one third) of the members are replaced by the senate of the related institution of higher education in duration of every two years. New members are elected from academic units different from the previous ones, thus ensuring that all units of the institutions of higher education are represented on this council in the course of time. A new member is elected from the same unit, based on the same principles, in place of a member who vacates his position for any reason before completing his term of office. The member thereby elected completes the term of the member replaced.

##### **Duties of the council of academic assessment and quality improvement**

**Article 11-** The duties of Councils for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement are as follows:

a) To perform all activities regarding the assessment of academic and administrative services, quality improvements and the approval of the level of quality at

the relevant institutions of higher education, in accordance with the strategic plan and objectives of the related institution.

b) To carry out the “internal assessment” activities at the related institution of higher education and prepare (or have it prepared) the internal assessment report accordingly.

c) To organize preparations for “external assessment” and provide the external evaluation associations, establishments and councils (evaluators) with all manner of support.

d) To work in close relation with the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education and act in accordance with the Commission’s demands, and share the best practices with the commission.

e) To announce the decisions of the commission at academic units of the relevant institution of higher education, follow up the practices and ensure monitoring of the results.

f) To provide support with regard to the reports which are to be prepared by the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education for the Council of Higher Education and Inter-university Board.

### **Participation of academic units in activities of academic assessment and quality improvement**

**Article 12-** Academic units of an institution of higher education support the activities of the Council for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at the relevant institution of higher education. They coordinate the quality improvement actions of their units in parallel to the directions of the Council for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement, and monitor their performance. They submit the results of the assessment to the Council for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at the relevant institution of higher education.

## **PART FOUR**

### **Internal Assessment**

#### **Process and time schedule of internal assessment**

**Article 13-** An institution of Higher education carries out, once in every January and February of each new year, its internal assessment of the previous year including the issues specified in Article 15 in these regulations, according to the internal assessment process specified by the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education, and submits its assessment report to the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education.

Having examined the assessment reports coming from the institutions of higher education, the Commission prepares the annual assessment report based on the reports of institutions in the months of March and April and submits it to the Presidencies of the Governing Bodies of Higher Education.

#### **Scope of internal assessment**

**Article 14-** At institutions of higher education, during the internal assessment, the actions of quality and quality improvement of educational, instructional and research activities as well as those of administrative services of pre-baccalaureate, undergraduate, graduate programs and research centers are taken into account within this scope.

### **Issues of internal assessment**

**Article 15-** For the internal assessments in an institution of higher education, the process, methods and principles specified by the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education are taken as the basis and the following issues are assessed:

- a) Mission, vision and strategic objectives of the institution, within the framework of the strategic plan and objectives of the Council of Higher Education,
- b) The measurable objectives of academic units, determination of performance indicators regarding these objectives, and periodic review of these indicators,
- c) The periodic review of measurable objectives, relevant performance and performance indicators to be determined by the Governing Bodies of Higher Education or the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education for the institutions of higher education,
- d) The effective use of financial resources of the institution for education, training, research, and administrative services,
- e) Education and training processes, course programs and curriculums, and processes relevant to quality and performance of students, with particular emphasis on effectiveness of education programs, and student participation as well as satisfaction,
- f) Processes especially relevant to participation and satisfaction of academics in institutional activities as well as academic activities and their effectiveness,
- g) Information technologies and infrastructure and academic services (laboratory, library, etc.),
- h) Research and development activities of academic units
- i) Participation and satisfaction of administrative staff in institutional activities as well as administrative and support services,
- j) Alumni management,
- k) Public access and services,
- l) Life-long education activities,
- m) Activities regarding the points needing improvement that were revealed during the previous internal assessment.

The Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education may determine these issues in more detail while forming the assessment process.

## **PART FIVE** **External Assessment**

### **Process and time schedule of external assessment**

**Article 16-** Institutions may conduct their internal institutional assessment process together with independent associations, establishments and councils that hold “the Registration Certificate for Quality Assessment” at their own discretion in accordance with the time schedule specified in Article 13.

### **Scope and issues of external assessment**

**Article 17-** The external assessment of an institution of higher education is conducted within the scope specified in Article 14 and includes at least the issues specified in Article 15 of these regulations. Once an external assessment is conducted at an institution of higher education, internal assessment is not conducted for that year.

### **Quality certificate and period of validity**

**Article 18-** Owing to the results of its external assessment, an institution of higher education may obtain a “Quality Certificate” which indicates its level of quality and the level of quality improvements achieved in that institution. The period of validity of the certificate is five years.

The Quality Certificate may be obtained by an institution of higher education at institutional level as well as at the levels of academic unit/units or program/programs in academic units

## **PART SIX**

### **Post-Assessment Actions and Periodic Reviews**

#### **Strategic planning**

**Article 19-** Taking “annual internal or external assessment report”, “the results of institutional periodic reviews”, “the relevant decisions of the Governing Bodies of Higher Education” and “the annual report of the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education” into consideration, an institution of higher education, once in every year, prepares an annual strategic plan for the succeeding calendar year, constitutes and executes the relevant annual action plan for implementing improvements up to the beginning of the succeeding calendar year.

#### **Annual action plans for the improvements**

**Article 20-** Academic units or programs at an institution of higher education prepare the annual action plans to improve the areas requiring improvement that were revealed as the result of internal or external assessments. In addition to defining responsible to conduct the improvements, estimated time to begin and complete the actions is specified in these plans.

The administrators of the relevant academic units are responsible for the execution of these plans.

#### **Periodic reviews and their frequency**

**Article 21-** Institutions of higher education perform a self-assessment and review of their activities, in accordance with the methods and principles specified by “the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education” or “the relevant Council for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement at the institution of higher education”. The self assessment is to be carried out within each academic year starting from the beginning of the year. Measures are taken to ensure that these reviews do not exceed the periods of six months.

The Councils for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement organize these reviews and present the results at the Senate meeting that follows the completion of the assessment.

Dates, participants, consequent decisions taken and the results of implementations are presented in the annual assessments to the internal or external evaluators performing the assessment.

## PART SEVEN

Awards, Expenditure and Public Accessibility to the Results of the Assessment,

### **Public accessibility to the results of assessment**

**Article 22-** Results of all internal or external assessments carried out by the institutions of higher education are open to public. Annual institutional assessment reports of the institutions of higher education and assessment reports of the Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education are to be published in the internet pages of the relevant institutions.

### **Awarding the best practices**

**Article 23-** The Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education submits the good or best practices of the institutions of higher education with respect to the issues specified in these regulations to the Council of Higher Education for awarding in order to encourage the achievements of quality efforts.

### **Budgets required within the scope of these regulations**

**Article 24-** Within the scope of these regulations, financial expenditures with regard to actions to be carried out by the Council of Higher Education and institutions of higher education are covered by the budgets of the relevant council or institutions.

## PART EIGHT

Miscellaneous and Final Articles

### **Regulations repealed**

**Article 25-** Regulations for Academic Evaluation and Quality Control at Institutions of Higher Education, which went into force upon being published in the Official Gazette No. 24914 dated 22 October 2002, are repealed.

**Temporary Article 1-** The Commission for Academic Assessment and Quality Improvement in Higher Education specifies the strategies, processes, methods and principles regarding the academic assessment and quality improvement activities at institutions of higher education as outlined in the Article 7 of these regulations until the end of the same year in which these regulations went into force. These are to be submitted to the Council of Higher Education for approval and conveyance to the institutions of higher education.

**Temporary Article 2-** Having completed the first internal or external assessment complying with these regulations, the institutions of higher education prepare their first strategic plans for the following year by the end of the first calendar year.

### **Entry into force**

**Article 26-** These regulations go into force as of the date of the publication.

### **Execution**

**Article 27-** Provisions of these regulations are executed by the President of the Council of Higher Education.