



ZIDEK

*Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Agricultural Engineering Educational Programs
Ziraat Fakülteleri Eğitim Programları Değerlendirme ve Akreditasyon Derneği*

OPERATIONAL REGULATIONS

2011

ZIDEK

Ziraat Fakülteleri Eğitim Programları Değerlendirme ve Akreditasyon Derneği

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ZİDEK Operational Regulations

Table of Contents

ARTICLE 1. Grounds, Purpose and Scope	1
ARTICLE 2. Definitions and Abbreviations	1
ARTICLE 3. Purposes of the Accreditation of Agricultural, Forestry and Aquacultural Engineering Educational Programs.....	2
ARTICLE 4. Agricultural Engineering Programs Accreditation Board (ZAK)	2
4.1 Duties, Powers and Responsibilities of ZAK.....	2
4.2. ZAK Members and Term of Office.....	2
4.3. Conditions of ZAK Membership.....	3
4.4. Appointment of ZAK Members	3
4.5. ZAK Meetings and Operational Principles.....	3
4.6. Representation of ZAK on the Executive Board.....	4
4.7. Withdrawal from ZAK Membership	4
ARTICLE 5. Program Evaluation Teams	4
5.1. Program Evaluation Teams	4
5.2. Program Evaluators	5
5.3. Student Evaluators.....	5
5.4. Observers.....	6
ARTICLE 6. Nominating Committee (ABK)	6
ARTICLE 7. ZİDEK Trainings	7
ARTICLE 8. ZİDEK Evaluation Criteria	7
ARTICLE 9. Conflict of Interest	8
ARTICLE 10. Confidentiality	8
ARTICLE 11. Appeals.....	8
ARTICLE 12. Internal Auditing and Quality Assurance	9
12.1 Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement	9
12.2. External Auditing.....	9
ARTICLE 13. Transparency and Accountability	9
ARTICLE 14. Archiving of ZİDEK Documents.....	9
ARTICLE 15. ZİDEK Headquarters	10
15.1 Vice-chair of Executive Board.....	10
15.2 ZİDEK Economic Enterprise.....	10
ARTICLE 16. Amendments to the Regulation.....	10
ARTICLE 17. Enforcement	10
ARTICLE 18. Execution	10

ZİDEK

Operational Regulations

ARTICLE 1. Grounds, Purpose and Scope

- (1) These regulations are issued based on Articles 15 and 17 of the Charter of the Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Agricultural Engineering Educational Programs (ZİDEK).
- (2) The purpose of the regulation is to define the operations of ZİDEK, the Agricultural Engineering Programs Accreditation Board (ZAK), as well as all other boards, commissions, and work groups serving as ZİDEK bodies.
- (3) These regulation cover matters for which a resolution of the General Assembly is needed in regard to the operations of ZİDEK.
- (4) Additionally, these regulation aim to identify programs that meet the minimum evaluation criteria in order to inform the public, students, future students, student counselors, parents of students, educational institutions, professional societies, prospective employers and government institutions.

ARTICLE 2. Definitions and Abbreviations

- (1) In these regulation, the following terms and abbreviations will be used under the following definitions:
 - a) **ZİDEK** stands for the Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Agricultural Engineering Educational Programs
 - b) **General Assembly** stands for the General assembly of ZİDEK,
 - c) **Executive Board** stands for ZİDEK Executive Board,
 - d) **ZAK** stands for the Agricultural Engineering Programs Accreditation Board, which directs and implements activities regarding the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering programs on behalf of ZİDEK
 - e) **ABK** stands for the Nominating Committee constituted to assist in the selection of the members and the vice-chair of ZAK.
 - f) **Criteria** stands for the ZİDEK Evaluation Criteria to be used for the accreditation of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering educational programs.
 - g) **ZOSUDEK** stands for the Deans' Council of Faculties of Agriculture, Forestry and Aquaculture of Universities within the scope of Council of Higher Education (YÖK/CHE)
 - h) **TMMOB ZMO** stands for the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) Chamber of Agricultural Engineers (ZMO)

ARTICLE 3. Purposes of the Accreditation of Agricultural, Forestry and Aquacultural Engineering Educational Programs

(1) ZİDEK pursues the following specific objectives in performing the function of “program evaluation and accreditation” set out in its charter, regulation, and directives:

- a) Identify educational programs that meet the minimum evaluation criteria to inform the public, students, future students, student counselors, parents of students, educational institutions, professional societies, prospective employers and government institutions.
- b) Foster the advancement and continuous improvement of existing programs in agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering as well as the development of new programs and
- c) Encourage the development of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering education in Türkiye.

ARTICLE 4. Agricultural Engineering Programs Accreditation Board (ZAK)

The Agricultural Engineering Programs Accreditation Board takes the necessary actions for the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering programs. This board is referred to as “ZAK” in all public documents and correspondences of ZİDEK

4.1 Duties, Powers and Responsibilities of ZAK.

- a) Prepare and implement a detailed schedule for the accreditation of faculties of agriculture, forestry and aquaculture which are recognized by the Council of Higher Education located in Türkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and in the public universities founded by the Council of Higher Education with special status assigned in other countries,
- b) Select the program evaluation teams and program evaluators, co-evaluators, student evaluators, team chairs, and co-chairs to be appointed to these teams,
- c) Nominate program evaluators and student evaluators,
- d) Propose to the Executive Board amendments to the standing accreditation processes and evaluation criteria as needed.

4.2. ZAK Members and Term of Office

- a) ZAK consists of a total of 13 members: seven (7) academics from universities, one (1) representative of the professional society (TMMOB-ZMO: Union of the Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects – Chamber of Agricultural Engineers), one (1) representative from a non-governmental organization working in the field of quality and/or accreditation (KalDer: Turkish Quality Association), one (1) representative from an association of the profession (TZYMB: Union of Turkish Master Agricultural Engineers, two (2) industry representatives and one (1) student representative.
- b) One of the ZAK members shall serve as the chair, while another member shall serve as the vice-chair.

- c) ZAK membership begins in the month of January and lasts for three (3) years; members cannot serve for a period longer than 3 successive terms without interruption. Such a restriction does not apply to the chair, vice-chair and the past chair.

4.3. Conditions of ZAK Membership

- a) ZAK members should have at least 5 years of experience in agricultural, forestry or aquacultural engineering education and/or the profession.
- b) Academic members should have experience in engineering programs accredited domestically and/or abroad. Academic members may be academic staff or retired academic staff, except those serving as a university's president or vice president.
- c) Non-academic members should have experience in at least one of the engineering education, management of engineers or quality processes areas
- d) A person cannot simultaneously be a member of the ZİDEK Executive Board and of ZAK.
- e) A person cannot simultaneously be a member of the ZİDEK Auditing Board and of ZAK.

4.4. Appointment of ZAK Members

- a) The members of ZAK for an upcoming term shall be appointed by the Executive Board from among the nominees to be nominated by ABK.
- b) The Executive Board may ask for ABK's nomination to be amended. If the second nomination by ABK is also considered not appropriate, the Executive Board may make a direct appointment.
- c) The new members appointed by the Executive Board shall serve for a term of two (2) years from the beginning of the following calendar year.
- d) The process of the selection of ZAK members shall be determined by the ABK Directives approved and published by the Executive Board.

4.5. ZAK Meetings and Operational Principles

- a) The ZAK chair is responsible for the ZAK's operation. In the absence of the chair, the ZAK vice-chair is in charge on behalf of the chair.
- b) ZAK holds a minimum of four (4) meetings every year. The call for a ZAK meeting accompanied by the agenda shall be provided by the ZAK chair to the ZAK members, the representative of the Executive Board and the chair of the Executive Board, in writing and/or by e-mail no later than two (2) weeks prior to a meeting. A copy of the minutes of the meeting shall be presented to the Executive Board.
- c) ZAK members have to attend the ZAK meetings in person. They may not send representatives. The membership of any member shall be automatically terminated, if s/he fails to attend three successive meetings without excuse.
- d) ZAK meetings are held only in presence of the absolute majority of members. The chair, or in the chair's absence the vice-chair, presides over the meeting.

e) ZAK meetings are open to the members of the Executive Board, but they do not hold any voting rights, the representative of the Executive Board providing a liaison between the ZAK and the Executive Board must attend each ZAK meeting, but s/he does not hold voting rights.

f) Decisions regarding proposals on regulation, directives and criteria as well as accreditation are passed based on a minimum of six (6) votes, other decisions are to be made by majority vote of the attending members.

g) In cases needing immediate negotiation and decision, other than ordinary ZAK meetings and accreditation decisions, virtual meetings can be organized using meeting and voting methods such as mail, fax, e-mail and web pages. The terms described in items (d) and (f) above are also applicable for decisions made in these meetings.

4.6. Representation of ZAK on the Executive Board.

The ZAK chair attends the meetings of the Executive Board, without voting rights, in order to provide a liaison between the ZAK and the Executive Board.

4.7. Withdrawal from ZAK Membership

In case of withdrawal from ZAK membership before the expiration of the relevant term, action shall be taken according to the following rules:

a) In case the chair withdraws, a new chair is appointed by ZAK members among the members present in the first meeting following the withdrawal. These procedures and the appointment for the vacant ZAK membership shall be carried out in accordance with the procedures defined in Article 4.4

b) ZMO, TZYMB or KalDer shall notify ZİDEK of their nomination of the new representative within thirty (30) days in case their representative withdraws. The new representatives are determined as defined in Article 4.4.

c) Addendum for Article 4.2.1.: Twice the number of members is requested for nominations from ZMO and TZYMB. These nominees shall not be active or retired academicians.

d) In case any member other than the chair, vice-chair, ZMO representative, TZYMB representative or KalDer representative withdraws, the position remains vacant until the end of the calendar year. The new members are elected according to Article 4.4, to serve beginning with the following year.

ARTICLE 5. Program Evaluation Teams

5.1. Program Evaluation Teams

(a) Accreditation evaluations are conducted by program evaluation teams.

(b) Program evaluation teams are formed by ZAK. A separate evaluation team is formed for each institution whose programs are to be evaluated.

(c) Program evaluation teams consist of a team chair and program evaluators. If necessary, a co-chair, co-evaluators, student evaluators and observers can also be included in the team. Every team that conducts a General Review shall include at least one student evaluator.

- (d) The team chair and co-chair are appointed from among those members who are currently serving or have previously served on ZAK or, if required, from among experienced program evaluators who have served as ZİDEK evaluators for a minimum of two terms.
- (e) The rules to be observed in forming the program evaluation teams are determined by the Directive on Policies and Procedures for Evaluation and Accreditation, as approved and published by the Executive Board.
- (f) The work of the program evaluation teams shall be presented to ZAK as a report. In case the report is not approved, the work should be repeated. ZAK shall decide whether the work is to be done by the same team.
- (g) When necessary, external observers from national or international accreditation institutions can be appointed by the ZİDEK Executive Board to inspect the process of accreditation.
- (h) External observers submit their report to the Executive Board at the end of the visit. The Executive Board will be responsible for considering such reports and using them for improvement.

5.2. Program Evaluators

- (a) A pool of program evaluators is formed with people who have considerable experience in agricultural, forestry or aquacultural engineering education.
- (b) Program evaluators are selected from the program evaluator pool in accordance with the fields of expertise of programs to be evaluated.
- (c) Each program evaluator is expected to have completed the training program provided by ZİDEK before participating in the visit. Moreover, it is strongly recommended for each program evaluator to have participated in a visiting team as a co-evaluator or observer.
- (d) Academic members are expected to have experience in the assessment, continuous improvement, and preparations for the accreditation of engineering programs accredited domestically and/or abroad.
- (e) Non-academic members should have experience in at least one of the following areas: engineering education, management of engineers, or quality processes.
- (f) In selecting the persons to be included in the pool of program evaluators, other considerations such as balance between academics/industrialists, gender, and organizations shall also be taken into account.
- (g) The rules to create the pool of program evaluators shall be determined by the Executive Board.

5.3. Student Evaluators

- (a) Potential student evaluators are nominated by ZAK from among the students selected from the accredited programs by the deans of the engineering faculties upon ZİDEK's request.

- (b) Student evaluator nominees should be registered to a bachelor or master degree program at the date of nomination.
- (c) Nominated student evaluators should not have received any disciplinary penalty.
- (d) Student evaluator nominees shall be prepared for the duty they will be undertaking by participating in a ZIDEK student evaluator training program.

5.4. Observers

- (a) If necessary, ZIDEK members, evaluator nominees, and representatives from domestic and foreign accreditation organizations may join the evaluation teams as observers upon ZAK's decision, provided that the approval of the team chair and the relevant bodies has been obtained.
- (b) Within the scope of the cooperation of ZIDEK with foreign accreditation organizations, a representative from one of these organizations can join at least one of the program evaluation teams every year as an external observer. The organizations to be asked for sending external observers and the relevant arrangements shall be taken over by the Executive Board.
- (c) External observers submit their report to the Executive Board at the end of the visit. The Executive Board will be responsible for considering such reports and referring them for improvement.

ARTICLE 6. Nominating Committee (ABK)

- a) The Nominating Committee (ABK) is made up of four (4) members who will help with the election of the ZAK members, and the General Secretary is created as follows:
 - 1) Previous chair of ZAK who will be the chair of ABK, or in case of the first creation of ABK, the chair of the ZIDEK Executive Board.
 - 2) Chair of ZAK in the first creation of ABK
 - 3) Vice-chair of ZAK
 - 4) The representative of the Executive Board providing a liaison between ZAK and the Executive Board.
- b) Following rules are used in case of withdrawal from ABK membership before the expiration of the relevant term:
 - 1) No election is made in case of withdrawal from membership of ZAK's immediate past chair or the General Secretary who is supposed to serve as the chair of ABK. The ABK membership reserved for him/her is to remain vacant until the end of the relevant term. In this case, ABK operates with three members and chaired by the member who is ZAK chair.
 - 2) In case of withdrawal of ZAK chair or ZAK vice-chair, the procedure to be followed is conducted in accordance with the rules defined in Article 4.7.
- c) The duties, powers and responsibilities of ABK are determined by the ABK Directive approved and published by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 7. ZİDEK Trainings

- (1) Principles regarding ZİDEK trainings are as follows:
 - (a) Training is required for all new ZAK members. In this training, all new ZAK members are informed about ZİDEK policies, the structure and organization of ZAK, and the accreditation process.
 - (b) All new members of the Executive Board and the Auditing Board of ZİDEK are informed about ZİDEK policies and the operation of ZİDEK.
 - (c) Training is required for all new evaluators included in the pool of program evaluators. Prospective evaluators who do not serve as evaluator for a period of three years after receiving program evaluator training are required to undergo evaluator training again before serving as evaluator. This training will ensure that all members of the visiting teams are knowledgeable about ZİDEK evaluation criteria and also have the skills and attitudes expected from evaluation team members.
 - (d) ZİDEK may organize briefing and training programs for the staff of the institutions intending to apply for accreditation evaluation.
 - (e) The Training Committee formed by the Executive Board is responsible for the organization of ZİDEK training programs. The structure of the training committee, the appointment of the members, the terms of duty, and the operational principles are set out by the Training Committee Directive approved and published by the Executive Board.
 - (f) Student evaluators have to participate in a training program before they can serve in a ZİDEK evaluation team.

ARTICLE 8. ZİDEK Evaluation Criteria

- (1) The criteria used by ZİDEK in evaluating programs determine the minimum accreditation requirements to be met by the applicant engineering program.
- (2) The Criteria Committee is formed by the Executive Board for periodical revision and update of the criteria, for determining specific criteria for a new discipline to be introduced and to undertake similar procedures regarding criteria.
- (3) For any changes to the ZİDEK evaluation criteria, the opinions of related faculties of universities shall be sought. For discipline specific criteria, the opinions of relevant departments, relevant professional societies, representatives of engineering students, similar external stakeholders and of internal stakeholders such as the members of ZAK, ZİDEK, and ZİDEK evaluators shall be sought.
- (4) Changes to the criteria shall be put into effect upon the decision of the Executive Board and become effective as of the next evaluation period.
- (5) The structure, election, and term of office of its members, the operational principles of the Criteria Committee, and the procedures to change the criteria are determined by the

Directive on the Procedures for Determining Evaluation Criteria approved and published by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 9. Conflict of Interest

The principles and practices related to real or evident conflicts of interest of evaluation team chairs and evaluators regarding the institutions or persons related to the program which they will evaluate are regulated and executed by the Executive Board in accordance with the principles defined in the ZİDEK Code of Ethics.

ARTICLE 10. Confidentiality

- (1) The information provided by the institutions is strictly for the confidential use of the members of ZİDEK's boards, ZİDEK employees and program evaluators and shall not be disclosed without obtaining a specific written authorization of the institution concerned.
- (2) All documents obtained for review and discussion purposes during the meetings of ZİDEK's Executive Board as well as ZAK are considered confidential documents and their contents as confidential information.
- (3) The contents of such documents and any accreditation decisions may be disclosed only by the staff in charge and under defined conditions.
- (4) Members of ZİDEK boards, ZİDEK employees, and program evaluators shall sign a Confidentiality and Ethics Statement, stating that they understand and respect these principles of confidentiality.

ARTICLE 11. Appeals

- a) Appeals are submitted in writing to the ZİDEK Executive Board by the authorities of relevant institution.
- b) Appeals to the accreditation decisions made by ZİDEK may be made against **all accreditation decisions**
- c) Such appeals or claims may be based only upon the grounds that the **accreditation decision was inappropriate** because of errors of fact or failure to conform to the published criteria, policies or directives of ZİDEK.
- d) Only the conditions known to ZİDEK at the time of the decision will be considered by ZİDEK during the evaluation of appeals.
- e) Evaluation and due decision about appeals shall be subject to the Directive on Policies and Procedures for Evaluation and Accreditation.

ARTICLE 12. Internal Auditing and Quality Assurance

12.1 Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement

- a) ZİDEK's quality policies are defined by ZİDEK's Executive Board. ZİDEK's Executive Board shall issue a Quality Policy document summarizing such quality policies.
- b) A Continuous Improvement Committee is established by the ZİDEK Executive Board in order to ensure the proper operation and continuous improvement of all ZİDEK activities, especially those relating to evaluation and accreditation, and to coordinate all activities performed for this purpose.
- c) The structure, election and period of appointment of its members, the operational principles of the Continuous Improvement Committee and quality assurance procedures are determined by the Continuous Improvement Committee Directive approved and published by the Executive Board.

12.2. External Auditing

In addition to internal quality auditing, ZİDEK is also evaluated by an external quality organization at least once every 5 years. The agencies to be employed with such evaluation and the timing of the evaluations shall be decided by the Executive Board, under consideration of the requirements for ZİDEK's national and international recognition.

ARTICLE 13. Transparency and Accountability

(1) ZİDEK is responsible for informing all stakeholders and the public about its program evaluation and accreditation activities. Hence, the following information and documents are published on ZİDEK's web page (www.zidek.org.tr/en):

- a) The charter, regulation, and directives determining the purposes and operation of ZİDEK,
- b) The ZİDEK Evaluation Criteria used for evaluation and accreditation,
- c) The format of the self-assessment report, the evaluation processes and procedures, and similar documentation which clearly describes the evaluation and accreditation process and the scope thereof, for institutions of higher education applying to ZİDEK for program evaluation and accreditation,
- d) The Annual Operation Report summarizing the annual operations of ZİDEK, including evaluation and accreditation activities,
- e) The list of the engineering programs accredited by ZİDEK as well as accreditation information. This information contains the accreditation period and the terms of the accreditation granted.

ARTICLE 14. Archiving of ZİDEK Documents

- (1) The documents and reports related to ZİDEK's activities are regularly archived.
- (2) ZİDEK keeps a record of the list of the programs accredited, the types of the accreditations granted and their period of validity.

(3) The methods and periods for the archiving of the documents and reports regarding ZİDEK's activities, including the documents and reports related to the accreditation process and the results thereof, shall be subject to the Archiving Directive, to be approved and published by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 15. ZİDEK Headquarters

15.1 Vice-chair of Executive Board

The Vice-chair of ZİDEK Executive Board conducts representation and coordination activities whose scope is determined by the Executive Board of ZİDEK. The vice-chair reports to the Executive Board.

15.2 ZİDEK Economic Enterprise

The Economic Enterprise conducts activities and all sorts of financial transactions with regard to these activities whose scope is determined by the ZİDEK Executive Board in compliance with the ZİDEK Charter. The Economic Enterprise is governed by one or more managers appointed by the Executive Board. Managers of the Economic Enterprise report to the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 16. Amendments to the Regulation

(a) Proposals for an amendment to the regulation shall be submitted by the Executive Board to the General Assembly. Such proposals should also include a suggested date on which the amendment shall become effective. Proposed amendments to regulation that require an amendment to the Charter shall be submitted to the General Assembly together with the required changes in the Charter.

(b) Proposals for amendment to this regulation issued by the Executive Board shall be included in the meeting agenda and resolved in the first meeting of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 17. Enforcement

(1) This regulation are effective as of the date of adoption by the General Assembly.

ARTICLE 18. Execution

(1) ZİDEK Executive Board executes the provisions of this directive.