



ZIDEK

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

DIRECTIVE ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION

2011

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ZİDEK

Directive on Policies and Procedures for Evaluation and Accreditation

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Directive on Policies and Procedures for Accreditation and Evaluation

ARTICLE 1 Grounds and Purpose

This directive has been issued in accordance with the Charter of the “Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Agricultural Engineering Educational Programs (ZİDEK)” and the ZİDEK Operational Regulations.

The purpose of this directive is to define the principles for ZİDEK’s program evaluation and accreditation practices.

ARTICLE 2 Definitions

In this directive, the following terms shall have the following meaning:

- (a) **ZİDEK** shall stand for the Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Agricultural Engineering Educational Programs
- (b) **Executive Board** shall stand for ZİDEK Executive Board,
- (c) **ZAK** shall stand for the Agricultural Engineering Programs Accreditation Board
- (d) **Criteria** shall stand for the ZİDEK Evaluation Criteria to be used for the evaluation of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering educational programs for accreditation
- (e) **Institution** shall stand for the academic institution (university, higher technology institute) to which the program applying for accreditation is connected

ARTICLE 3 Objectives of ZİDEK Accreditation

The accreditation of the programs in agricultural, forestry and aquacultural faculties by ZİDEK is a voluntary process; ZİDEK evaluates only programs that apply for accreditation. ZİDEK accreditation aims to achieve the following goals in order to contribute to enhancing the quality of educational programs in faculties of agriculture, forestry and aquaculture that give agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering education in Türkiye:

- (a) Among educational programs applying for accreditation, identify those that comply with the evaluation criteria.
- (b) Inform all relevant parties (society, future students, student advisors, students’ parents, educational institutions, professional organizations and possible employers and state institutions) about the programs that meet ZİDEK evaluation criteria by publishing the list of accredited programs.
- (c) Lead continuous improvement of existing education programs and development of new programs in the field of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering.

ARTICLE 4 Programs Eligible to Apply for Accreditation and their Institutions

- (a) Undergraduate and graduate educational programs in the field of agricultural, forestry and aquacultural engineering and related fields of the higher educational institutions in Türkiye and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus recognized by the Council of Higher Education of Türkiye may apply ZİDEK for an evaluation.
- (b) Applying programs should offer education in **Agricultural, Forestry or Aquacultural Engineering or** related fields
- (c) Any program applying for the first time should have graduated students before the date of application.
- (d) If an applying program provides different options to the students to complete the program, then each such option should meet all the evaluation criteria.

- (e) If an institution that seeks ZIDEK accreditation for its programs has multiple campuses, each campus with different physical and administrative characteristics shall be considered as a different institution during the evaluation process.
- (f) The programs already accredited by other accreditation agencies, which have mutual recognition agreement with ZIDEK, may not apply for ZIDEK accreditation until the accreditation period of the other agency terminates.

ARTICLE 5 Application for Accreditation

5.1. Programs Applying for Initial Accreditation

- (a) An institution that intends to request evaluation aimed at initial accreditation for one or more programs shall submit its request to ZIDEK, in writing, not later than end- January of the year when the evaluation shall take place. The institution specifies the programs for which it intends to apply and sends introductory information containing a brief explanation of these programs.
- (b) ZAK examines the accreditation request of the institution and analyzes the timing and conformity to the conditions stated in Article 4. ZAK may ask the institution to provide additional information if needed.
- (c) ZIDEK informs the institution about whether the programs for which accreditation has been requested can be evaluated or not, as well as about the total accreditation fee and terms of payment determined for the programs to be evaluated, by the end of February at the latest.
- (d) The accreditation request shall be finalized by submitting the confirmation letter to ZIDEK by end of March, acknowledging the acceptance of ZIDEK's notification and conditions. Any institution that fails to send the letter of acknowledgment by this date shall be considered as having withdrawn its application. Any paid fees shall not be refunded.
- (e) ZAK begins to form evaluation teams for programs with finalized accreditation requests.
- (f) The institution prepares a self-assessment report in the format and content determined by ZIDEK, for each program accreditation request has been accepted, and sends electronic and printed copies of the self-assessment report and its attachments to ZIDEK, no later than the first week of July of the year when the evaluation shall take place. Institutions that fail to send their self-assessment reports shall be considered as having withdrawn their applications.
- (g) The self-assessment reports that the institution sends to ZIDEK are pre-inspected by ZAK in terms of their content and conformity to the required format.
- (h) For those self-assessment reports that have only problems of nonconformity with the format or inadequacy of reporting, ZAK may inform the related institution by end of August and ask them to make the necessary corrections within 15 days. A program that fails to respond and address the missing aspects in the self-assessment reports within 15 days following ZIDEK's notice shall be considered as having withdrawn their application.
- (i) During the pre-inspection of the self-assessment reports by ZAK, if a self-assessment report is found to contain severe reporting and/or criteria related shortcomings that may restrain accreditation of the related program, the accreditation evaluation process for this program is terminated. ZIDEK informs the relevant institution about the action by end of September together with the reasons justifying this action. The institution is informed that it can reapply to ZIDEK for evaluation in the coming evaluation period at the earliest, after overcoming the indicated shortcomings. Not reporting any criteria related shortcomings after the pre-inspection does not mean that the evaluation team will not be reporting any criteria related shortcomings after conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the program.
- (j) ZAK will initiate the accreditation evaluation of those programs with self-assessment reports found to comply with the required format and has no shortcomings related to reporting and/or criteria, and for those which have addressed the requested corrections within 15 days.

- (k) In case there is a high number of applications, ZİDEK may implement a second evaluation period during the same evaluation year.

5.2. Programs with Expired Accreditation Period

- (a) ZİDEK sends a reminder to those programs whose accreditation period will expire, by the end of December, one year prior to the expiration of the accreditation period.
- (b) In the application, the process as described in Article 5.1 for programs which will apply for the first time for accreditation shall be applied considering the differences stated below:
 - (1) An institution that requests a general Accreditation review or an interim evaluation by ZİDEK for a program whose accreditation period is about to expire, submits a request to ZİDEK, in writing, by the end of January of the year prior to the year of accreditation period expiration. In this request letter, the institution specifies the programs for which it intends to get accreditation. Institutions are assumed not to have applied for accreditation process of their programs if no request for evaluation is received by ZİDEK until end of January.
 - (2) The programs for which an interim report or interim visit for evaluation shall take place, will present an interim report focused only on weaknesses, concerns, and observations of the former general review, rather than a comprehensive self-assessment report. The programs shall electronically submit such a report and its attachments to ZİDEK, not later than by the end of July of the year of evaluation. The programs, which fail to submit their interim reports by this date, shall be considered as not having applied for evaluation.
- (c) For show cause with report and show cause through visit evaluation, the institution shall submit the written evaluation request to ZİDEK by the end of September of the year of the accreditation decision. Institutions which fail to submit their request for evaluation shall be considered as not having applied for evaluation. The programs, which are going to be evaluated by show cause through visit evaluation, will prepare a report focusing on the weaknesses in last evaluation and submit electronically the report and its attachments to ZİDEK by the end of November of the year that the evaluation will take place. Institutions, which fail to submit their interim reports until this date shall be considered as not having applied for evaluation.

ARTICLE 6 Program Evaluation Teams

- (a) The teams evaluating the engineering programs consist of a team chair appointed by ZAK and of program evaluators who are also appointed by ZAK from the available program evaluators' pool.
- (b) The evaluation team shall include one student evaluator in case a general review is to be conducted by that team.
- (c) The team chair is selected from the members who are serving or have served on ZAK or if needed, from experienced program evaluators who have served as ZİDEK evaluators for a minimum of two evaluation periods.
- (d) If considered as necessary, a team co-chair and/or co-evaluator may also be appointed.
- (e) Evaluation teams which shall conduct a general review shall consist of minimum four members while the other evaluation teams shall consist of a minimum of three members.
- (f) In cases where the focus of the evaluation is very limited and a considerable overlap exists between the programs to be evaluated, the teams, which do not conduct a general review, may have less members in the team.
- (g) While selecting the evaluation team members, the following parameters shall be taken into consideration:

- (1) Possibility of conflict of interest with the relevant institution,
 - (2) in the composition of the team:
 - i. institutional distribution,
 - ii. balance of academy and industry representation,
 - iii. balance in gender through the number of female and male team members,
 - (3) the need for a co-chair and/or co-evaluator, and
 - (4) the transportation requirements of the program evaluators and the student evaluator.
- (h) Formation of evaluation teams shall be finalized not later than end of September and the relevant institution shall be informed for approval by ZAK. Institutions shall be asked to deliver the electronic copies of the self-assessment or interim reports and their annexes to the ZIDEK office. ZIDEK office shall distribute the reports electronically to the relevant team members.
- (i) From this point on, all communications of the team with the institution and all arrangements shall be provided under the joint responsibility and cooperation of the team chair and the dean of the faculty implementing the programs.
- (j) The transportation and accommodation need of the team shall be provided by the ZIDEK office under the coordination of the team chair.

ARTICLE 7 Evaluating Programs and Interpreting the Evaluation Criteria

Programs applying for accreditation are evaluated in order to find out whether they meet the evaluation criteria or not. The following points need to be taken into consideration during the evaluation and while evaluating against a criteria.

- (a) Although the institutions may use a different terminology, the terms they use shall be in accordance with the definition given in “definitions” section of ZIDEK Evaluation Criteria document.
- (b) Institutions are free to select and arrange the courses and course contents included in the educational programs. Qualitative factors are more important than quantitative factors (such as credit hours). It should be carefully checked whether the educational program meets the general principles of the evaluation criteria or not.
- (c) Teaching methods and their application are constantly developing. Methods for the assessment of learning also undergo through continuous evolution process. Regardless of using a traditional or innovative teaching methods used for a course or for an entire program, it is necessary to assess the level of learning by the most reliable and updated methods in order to ensure successful program outcomes.
- (d) In principle, a program to be evaluated by ZIDEK should be an agriculture, forestry or aquaculture education program, regardless of whether the name of the program includes an emphasis of specialty or not; thus, while evaluating an engineering education program, the following should be considered in particular:
 - (1) whether it is qualified as an agricultural, forestry or aquacultural engineering education program, regardless of the wording and emphasis of the program name and
 - (2) whether or not the program or the program option refers to a particular discipline in its name.
- (e) If the name of a program is associated with one or more disciplines having discipline-specific criteria, the program shall meet the criteria for all these disciplines.
- (f) In case a program for which no discipline-specific criteria are defined, applies for accreditation, the evaluation may be carried out without using discipline-specific criteria, subject to the decision to be made by ZAK, based on the reason of the absence of such program criteria.

- (g) In the criteria, words such as “should” and “must” point to the clearly defined minimum requirements that must be met by the program to be accredited; the term “expected” is used for suggestions of a less restrictive nature. The words “may,” “can,” and “might” are used to provide freedom of choice.

ARTICLE 8 Stages of the Program Evaluation Process

The program evaluation process, which includes the evaluation of quantitative and qualitative factors, and a decision for accreditation at the end, consists of three stages:

(a) ***Examination of the institution’s self-assessment report:***

The self-assessment report is an introductory document prepared by the institution itself in a predetermined format; it explains and evaluates the institution’s programs for which accreditation are sought, the implementation of these programs, as well as all the relevant information for the academic and administrative units. Any additional information and documentation found necessary for pre-visit evaluation by the evaluation team members during the examination of the self-assessment report shall be requested from the institution before the visit. The institution shall send to the evaluation team the transcripts of the graduates selected randomly determined by the evaluator for each program, for analysis before the visit.

(b) ***Visit to the Institution:***

The evaluation team visits the institution and carries out an on-site survey in addition to examining the self-assessment report and the additional documentation and information requested from the institution. There are three purposes for visiting the institution for the evaluation team:

- (1) Evaluating issues that cannot be adequately explained in the self-assessment report. These include, for example, the academic atmosphere; the motivation, attendance and resolving of the academic staff and the students; the qualifications of staff and students; the students’ academic work on which the educational outcomes are measured; and other factors that are difficult to prove in writing in the self-assessment report.
- (2) Helping the institution in determining its strengths as well as issues open to further development.
- (3) Examining the information and documentation prepared by the institution in order to prove that ZIDEK’s evaluation criteria are met and visiting the physical facilities on site.

(c) ***Report to be issued by the evaluation team:***

The evaluation team issues a draft report within sixty (60) days following the visit or after the Report on Explanation of Shortcomings and Observations is sent to the institution if the evaluation was carried out without a visit. This draft is prepared by considering the self-assessment report of the institution, the information and documentation requested from the institution, the meetings held during the visit, the physical facilities visited, the documentation and information examined, and the 30-day response of the institution addressing the exit statement of visit, or of the Report on for Explanation of Shortcomings and Observations. The evaluation team then delivers this draft report to ZAK.

(d) If institution visit cannot be conducted due to any compelling reasons (pandemic, natural disasters, security etc.), the following steps shall be taken:

- (1) For programs having an existing accreditation, ZAK asks the opinion of the evaluation team and the management of the institution regarding the possibility of remote evaluation. According to these opinions, one of the following steps shall be taken:
 - i. If remote evaluation is deemed possible, team chair and the dean of the institution manage together the remote evaluation process according to this directive.

- ii. If remote evaluation is not possible, the existing accreditation of relevant institutions may be extended for one (1) year at maximum with a decision by ZAK according to Article 9 (a) regarding the duration in this directive. If the compelling reason continues to exist at the end of this period, remote evaluation is conducted. If the remote evaluation still is not possible, the decision shall be made by ZAK after asking opinions of the evaluation team and the institution.
- (2) If evaluation visit is a more appropriate method, the evaluation of the relevant institutions may be postponed to the following year by ZAK. However, if accreditation is granted after the evaluation, retroactive accreditation may be granted to prevent loss of rights to graduates, however, only the period after the application date shall be considered. If the compelling reason continues to exist, remote evaluation may be conducted. This decision shall be made by ZAK after asking opinions of the evaluation team and the institution.
 - (3) ZAK may ask for a self-assessment report addendum according to the form and content determined by ZİDEK regarding the education process and the quality assurance processes through the period of the compelling reason.
 - (4) Remote evaluation applications shall be conducted according to all definitions and methods of this directive except the ones regarding institution visit.
 - (5) Remote evaluation is conducted according to ZİDEK Remote Evaluation Manual

ARTICLE 9 Details of the Evaluation Process

A detailed inspection is needed in order to decide on the initial accreditation of a program or the general or interim accreditation evaluation of an accredited program. Such an inspection is carried out by an evaluation team according to the principles given in the “ZİDEK Evaluation Manual.” Important details of the evaluation process are provided below:

- (a) A detailed evaluation should be carried out for each program every five (5) years for renewal of accreditation. Such detailed evaluation, called “general evaluation,” is carried out by ZİDEK, to the extent possible, simultaneously for all accredited programs of the same institution. Timing is arranged so that the period between evaluations of any program will not exceed six (6) years. Accreditation period may be held shorter than five (5) years for some programs in order to synchronize their evaluation with other programs of the same institution which will be subjected to general review in the near future. Such changes in timing of the evaluation are made with the approval of the respective institution.
- (b) If a program is not accredited or if an existing accreditation is cancelled because of an evaluation, the institution may appeal such a decision and ask for immediate re-evaluation, as detailed in Article 13. If such a request for re-evaluation is approved by ZİDEK Executive Board, the re-evaluation is carried out by ZAK in the form of a general review.
- (c) If weaknesses or deficiencies are found during a general evaluation, an interim evaluation should be made, without waiting for the periodical general evaluation. Interim evaluations are focused solely on the observations, concerns, weaknesses, and deficiencies found during the previous general review, as well as on the measures taken and the improvements made by the institution in order to overcome these. An interim evaluation may also include a focused visit to the institution, depending on the shortcomings observed during the previous evaluation. In case the information and documentation submitted by the institution for an interim evaluation and/or the documentation and information provided by the institution during the meetings and site visits reveal any further observations and shortcomings not reported during the previous evaluation, then these new observations and shortcomings will be included in the evaluation report under a separate section. Of such shortcomings, those which are found to be developed after the previous evaluation shall be considered under article 14 and taken into consideration during the accreditation decision; all others will have no impact on the accreditation decision.
- (d) For evaluations based on interim report only and do not necessitate an interim visit, the interim report sent by the program is evaluated by the evaluation team formed in accordance with

Article 6 of this directive if no other programs requiring a visit to the institution shall be evaluated during the same period. The team prepares the Report on Explanation of Shortcomings and Observations and sends it to the institution. If the institution responds to this document in 30 days, the evaluation team prepares the draft report based on 30-day response of the institution and evaluations of the team on this response, and electronically sends it to the chairperson of ZAK. The reports are submitted to the ZAK members for approval after the consistency check and editorial controls, in accordance with the ZAK evaluation and accreditation calendar. The report approved by the ZAK is the final report to be sent to the institution.

- (e) The date on which the evaluation team shall visit the institution is decided jointly by the team chair and the authorized representative of the institution (generally the dean or vice dean), under conditions that will suit both the team members and the institution.
- (f) The details of the evaluation team's inquiries and activities during the visit are planned jointly by the team chair and the authorized representative of the institution before the visit, in such a way as to cover the visiting team's requests for additional information, additional documentation, meetings, and inquiries. The details of the program evaluators' requests concerning the visit schedule shall be planned jointly by the person in charge of the relevant program (generally the chair or vice chair of the department) and the evaluator; the dean and the team chair shall be informed accordingly. The work plan that will be carried out by the student evaluator during the visit is constructed by the team chair and student evaluator and communicated to the dean by the team chair.
- (g) Observers may participate in the evaluation team only upon the approval of the team chair and the institution.
- (h) Matters related to general institutional functions, such as administration, registrar's services, library, computer and informatics infrastructure, the support of academic units such as other departments and faculties, and the like, shall only be taken into consideration in so far as they provide services to the evaluated programs.
- (i) Presentation of the findings of the visit:
 - (1) The visiting team shall orally present the factual findings to the university president, or a person designated by the university president, as well as to a group consisting of the institution's faculty, as considered appropriate by the university president, as the last activity of the visit to the institution. Such a statement is called the "Exit Statement," and the meeting during which the exit statement is presented is called the "Exit Interview."
 - (2) The exit statement should reflect the evaluations based on findings during the visit. These evaluations may be altered by ZAK during the process of preparing the final report to be issued to the institution.
 - (3) At the end of the exit interview, the visiting team submits to the institution an exit statement, a written document about the shortcomings of the programs evaluated which is presented orally during the exit interview.
 - (4) The institution may respond to the evaluation team's written explanation of its shortcomings, in writing, within the following thirty (30) days. If ZIDEK receives no response from the institution within this period, then the institution will be considered to have agreed with the evaluation contained in the exit statement and to have waived the right to appeal such an evaluation.
 - (5) The primary purpose of the 30-day response for the institution is to correct any "factual errors" in the information and impressions stated in the exit statement submitted during the exit interview. However, the institution may also submit additional information in the 30-day response, to be taken into consideration for the preparation of the evaluation team report. However, any shortcomings found during the visit shall be considered as improved,

if the necessary corrections or changes have been made, if implementation of these changes has begun within the time frame of 30 days following the visit, and if they have been proven by means of official documentation signed by authorized persons. If an attempt is made and measures are taken to fix a problem, but the effects of these measures are not fully observable yet, or if there are only signs of good faith, then ZAK, during the next planned interim visit or interim report, shall take into consideration the effects of the corrective measures.

- (6) After each visit to the institution, the visiting team shall prepare a draft report containing the basic findings and accreditation recommendations. The draft report is expected to contain a section addressing the faculty implementing the programs in general and a separate section for each program. In case the visited institution responds to the exit statement, then the draft report should include the 30-day response of the institution and the team's evaluation of this response. The draft report issued is delivered electronically to ZAK's chair, by the team chair. After consistency controls and editing, the report is submitted for approval by the ZAK members according to the ZAK evaluation schedule. The approved reports are the final reports to be submitted to the institution.
- (7) The written exit statement submitted to the institution usually contains statements of the following type:
 - i. **Statement of strength** - example: The educational background and expertise of the faculty of the department implementing the program cover all the program's fields in a balanced and qualified manner.
 - ii. **Statement of concern** - A concern shows that a criterion is satisfied, but there is potential for a negative change in this situation in the near future and the criterion may not be satisfied then. Thus, it is beneficial for the institution to attempt to guarantee the maintenance of the criterion.
 - iii. **Statement of weakness** - A weakness shows that the criterion is partially satisfied, but only with difficulty and that there is no guarantee that the quality of the program will not deteriorate until the next general review. Thus, the institution should take corrective measures so that the criterion can be satisfied completely.
 - iv. **Statement of deficiency** - A deficiency shows that a criterion is not satisfied. Thus, the program does not comply with the criterion. The institution should take immediate measures in order to satisfy this criterion.
 - v. **Statement of observation** - An observation is an impression, interpretation or suggestion that may or may not be directly relevant to the criteria used in the evaluation; it is stated in order to help the institution's constant efforts to improve its programs.

ARTICLE 10 Consistency and Editorial Controls

The statements to be reported to the institution as a result of the accreditation evaluation of its program(s) should be consistent in terms of content and format and free of any spelling mistakes. Before the draft reports are evaluated by ZAK, due care should be exercised to ensure evaluation consistency at following three levels.

- (a) **Intra-team consistency:** In case of a team evaluating different programs of one institution, the evaluation of similar shortcomings in relation to the same criterion should be consistent. All team members are responsible for ensuring consistency, but the chair shall have the primary responsibility. Consistency within the team should be ensured before the exit interview takes place on the last day of the visit.
- (b) **Inter-team consistency:** In evaluations carried out for programs of different institutions during a given evaluation period, the evaluation of similar shortcomings related to the same criterion should be consistent. The chairs of the evaluation teams visiting these institutions are primarily responsible for ensuring consistency in this regard. However, in order to guarantee consistency

a Consistency Control Committee which is made up of ZAK members who have not served as team chairs during that period or experienced ZİDEK evaluators selected by ZAK, also carries out consistency controls. Any possible inconsistencies are eliminated by contacting with the team chair and if necessary, through coordination with the relevant program evaluators by the team chair.

- (c) **Consistency over the years:** Unless there is a finalized ZİDEK decision on a different evaluation of any particular type of shortcoming, then the evaluation for similar shortcomings of a criterion should be consistent over the years. Each year, the team chairs are primarily responsible for ensuring consistency. However, the Consistency Control Committee to be created during that period will also provide consistency control over the years.

Draft reports that have undergone consistency control are reviewed and corrected in terms of format, spelling mistakes and style, by ZAK members or editors appointed by ZAK. The corrections are coordinated with the chairs of the related teams in a way that the reports are made ready to be submitted to ZAK. In case of a disagreement, the final decision is made by ZAK.

ARTICLE 11 Accreditation Decisions

- (a) ZAK is the final authority in any accreditation decision. This decision is based on the suggestions of the visiting team forwarded to ZAK.
- (b) ZİDEK does not rank programs according to their qualifications. Programs are either accredited or not. Accreditation decisions specify only the type and the date of the following evaluation. The accredited programs are given appropriate accreditation certificates covering the accredited period.
- (c) If it is concluded in a general review and evaluation that a program meets all the minimum requirements defined in ZİDEK's criteria, the accreditation shall be provided for five (5) years. In case of interim evaluations, the accreditation could be valid only 5 years starting from the date of previous general review evaluation date. If there is no "deficiency" related to any criterion in the general review of a program, but there is a "weakness" related to one or more criteria, then the accreditation is provided for two (2) years only. The interim evaluation for any program with an accreditation of two (2) years shall be made during the last (second) year of the valid accreditation period. The interim evaluation focuses on those criteria for which a "weakness" and/or "concern" evaluation were reported during the general review. Any "deficiency" or "weakness" reported for any criterion during an interim evaluation shall be considered a "deficiency," and a "show cause" interim evaluation focused on these criteria will be required within one (1) year after the date of the interim evaluation. If the result of this focused "show-cause" evaluation shows that the "deficiencies" regarding the relevant criteria are still persisting, then the program's accreditation shall not be extended. This decision is open to appeal. However, the accreditation period of programs for which no "deficiency" or "weakness" has been found in any criterion during the interim evaluation shall be extended by a maximum of three (3) years, until the next general review date. For the programs which are evaluated for "show cause" evaluation following interim evaluations and for which all previously reported weaknesses have been found to be improved, the accreditation period shall be extended by a maximum of two (2) years, until the next general review date.
- (d) During the general review of a program, if an evaluation of "deficiency" is made because one or more criterion/criteria is/are not met, then this program shall not be accredited. This decision may be appealed.
- (e) If an accredited program has "deficiency" reported during their general review on one or more criteria, a "show cause" interim evaluation focused on these criteria shall be required within one (1) year after the date of the result. If the result of this focused "show cause" evaluation shows that the "deficiencies" regarding the relevant criteria are still persisting, then the program's accreditation shall not be extended. This decision is open to appeal. The accreditation of the

program continues until the date of the decision of not extending the accreditation because of “show cause” interim evaluation. For the programs in which all previously reported weaknesses have been found to be improved, the accreditation period shall be extended by a maximum of four (4) years, until the next general review date.

- (f) If ZIDEK is informed that a program no longer satisfies the criteria during its accreditation period, then the institution shall be informed immediately and asked to respond to ZIDEK within thirty (30) days. In case there is no response from the institution, or in case the response received is not found to be sufficient by ZAK, then ZIDEK may initiate proceedings for cancellation with justification. Such proceedings shall start when the institution is informed about the reasons for implementing a cancellation with justification. A visit to the institution can be organized to collect data, and a report detailing the reasons for cancellation is issued and delivered to the institution for examining and responding within thirty (30) days. If the institution fails to respond or if the response is not found to be sufficient by ZAK, then the accreditation shall be cancelled. The institution is immediately informed about this decision, with an explanation for its reasons. This decision is open to appeal.
- (g) ZAK may take the following decisions
- (1) **NGR (Next General Review):** This decision means that the program fully meets the applicable criteria. This decision may only be made after a general review and is usually valid for five (5) years.
 - (2) **IR (Interim Report):** This decision shows that the criteria for which “weaknesses” have been reported need improvement, however the quality of the program shall not deteriorate until the next general review. The nature of the weakness does not necessitate a visit to the institution for a further review of the corrective measures to be taken by the institution. However, the institution needs to deliver an interim report detailing the corrective measures taken. This decision may only be made during a general review and is usually valid for two (2) years.
 - (3) **IV (Interim Visit):** This decision shows that the criteria for which “weaknesses” have been reported need improvement, so that the quality of the program shall not deteriorate until the next general review. The nature of the weakness necessitates a visit to the institution for a further review of the corrective measures to be taken by the institution. The institution also needs to deliver an interim report detailing the corrective measures taken before the visit. This decision may only be made during a general review and is usually valid for two (2) years.
 - (4) **RE (Report Extended):** This decision shows that the institution has taken sufficient measures to improve any weaknesses specified in the previous IR decision. This decision may only be made during an IR evaluation. This decision extends accreditation until the next general review and, thus, is usually valid for three (3) years.
 - (5) **VE (Visit Extended):** This decision shows that the institution has taken sufficient measures to remedy any weaknesses specified in the previous IV decision. This decision may only be made during an IV evaluation. This decision extends accreditation until the next general review and, thus, is usually valid for three (3) years.
 - (6) **SCR (Show Cause with Report):** This decision shows that deficiencies have been found in an accredited program, or that the weaknesses found during the previous evaluation are still persisting. The nature of these deficiencies or persisting weaknesses do not necessitate a visit to the institution to assess the measures taken by the institution to improve them. On the other hand, the institution is expected to submit an interim report focused on the corrective actions taken. This decision may only be made during a general review or IR or IV evaluation and is usually valid for one (1) year.
 - (7) **SCV (Show Cause with Visit):** This decision shows that deficiencies have been found in an accredited program, or that the weaknesses found during the previous evaluation are still

persisting. The nature of these deficiencies or persisting weaknesses necessitate a visit to the institution to assess the measures taken by the institution to remedy them. Prior to this visit, the institution is expected to submit an interim report focused on the corrective actions taken. This decision may only be made during a general review or IR or IV evaluation and is usually valid for one (1) year.

- (8) **SE (Show Cause Extended):** This decision shows that the institution has taken sufficient measures to overcome any shortcomings specified in the previous SCR or SCV decision. This decision may only be made after an SCR or SCV evaluation. This decision extends accreditation until the next general review and, thus, is usually valid for two (2) to four (4) years.
 - (9) **NA (Not to Accredite):** This decision may be made after the first general review of program that is not yet accredited or SCR or SCV evaluation of a program. The decision shows that a program that underwent a first general evaluation has exhibited deficiencies in its general review, resulting in failure to meet the criteria. If made after an SCR or SVR evaluation, this decision shows that the weaknesses found during the general review and the ongoing weaknesses found during its interim evaluation continue to persist after SCR and SCV evaluation.
 - (10) **T (Terminate):** This decision is usually made in response to a request for the extension of the accreditation of a program which will be terminated following the expiration of the accreditation. The purpose of this decision is to cover those students who are currently attending the program to be terminated. The period for this decision is usually one (1) year. Accreditation may be extended for no more than three (3) times, based on the annual reports to be delivered by the institution. This decision cannot be made after SCR or SCV evaluation.
- (h) A “Not to Accredite” decision based on “show cause” evaluations become effective at the beginning of the academic year following the “not to accredit” decision by ZAK (or by the ZIDEK Executive Board in case of an appeal). If the accreditation that ZAK has provided for such a program previously is cancelled and if the institution does not appeal such a cancellation or if the decision is approved by the ZIDEK Executive Board the accreditation for this program shall be terminated.
 - (i) When an institution terminates a program, ZIDEK may ensure, in cooperation with the institution that, the accreditation is valid until the program is terminated, provided that:
 - (1) The accreditation of a program terminated within the period of a granted accreditation shall be considered valid as of the date when the decision to terminate is communicated and until the date of actual termination, on the condition that a report to be delivered by the institution shall be accepted by ZAK.
 - (2) The accreditation of a program which will be terminated no later than three (3) years following the expiry date of an existing accreditation may be extended for one (1), two (2) or a maximum of three (3) years, until the date of termination specified in ZAK’s “Termination” decision, based on the report issued by the institution. If necessary, ZAK may demand a brief visit to the institution, which usually takes one (1) day and involves a team chair only.
 - (3) For those programs for which a “Termination” decision has been made ZIDEK enters a notice regarding the termination date in the list of accredited programs.
 - (j) ZIDEK accredits the programs approved by ZAK, communicates the accreditation decisions and the evaluation reports finalized by ZAK to the related institution and the team chair, and issues and archives the list of accredited programs annually.
 - (k) The evaluation reports issued for the programs evaluated by ZIDEK shall not be disclosed to any parties other than the relevant institution, except for cases required under relevant law.

ARTICLE 12 Public Release of Accreditation Decisions

- (a) The updated version of the list of programs accredited by ZIDEK is published on ZIDEK's website. This list specifies the names of the accredited programs and the period of the accreditation. The format to be used and the particulars to be disclosed in the list of accredited programs to be published on ZIDEK's website shall be determined by the decision of the Executive Board.
- (b) The following programs are kept in ZIDEK accredited programs list on the website without changing the previously issued accreditation period:
 - (1) programs which have not applied for reaccreditation by the end of January of the year immediately prior to the year when the accreditation period will expire,
 - (2) programs which are considered to have withdrawn their applications for accreditation according to Articles 5.1(d), (f), (h), 5.2(b-2) or 5.2(c),
 - (3) programs which are considered as not having applied for accreditation according to Articles 5.2(b-1), or 5.2(c),
 - (4) programs of which accreditations were ended in accordance with Article 11(g)(10),
 - (5) programs of which accreditations were terminated in accordance with Article 11(i).

ARTICLE 13 Appeals

- (a) Appeals can be made against "accreditation" decisions. Such an appeal or request can only be based on the opinion that the decision has been made inappropriately, because of either ZIDEK having collected incorrect information, or because of an evaluation result which conflicts with ZIDEK's published criteria, regulations, or directives. For any appeals, only the conditions known to ZIDEK at the time when decision was made shall be taken into consideration.
- (b) Appeals should be delivered to ZIDEK, in writing, within thirty (30) days following the date on which "not to accredit" decision or the refusal of the request for re-evaluation or revisit is communicated to the relevant institution.
- (c) Evaluation of appeals:
 - (1) In every evaluation period, ZIDEK's Executive Board appoints Appeals Committee in case of appeals, consisting of at least five members. At least one member of this committee should have former ZAK membership experience. ZIDEK's Executive Board appoints one of the committee members to serve as committee chair.
 - (2) Copies of all documents delivered to the institution during various phases of the evaluation process, the institution's response, and any other documentation delivered by the institution or ZAK shall be handed over to the Appeals Committee.
 - (3) The institution is expected to respond to ZIDEK's evaluation on which the accreditation decision is based. The institution may also present any material supporting the appeal. However, all such materials provided by the institution to ZIDEK should be valid during the process of program evaluation on which the decision was made. Any material that has not been handed to the ZIDEK Evaluation Team during the evaluation process shall not be taken into consideration.
 - (4) Any program improvements made after ZIDEK evaluation, and the 30 day reply of the institution shall not be taken into consideration by the Appeals Committee.
 - (5) Per the request of the Appeals Committee, ZAK may also provide other written documentation in addition to the response to the institution, explaining ZAK's opinions and the evaluation on which the accreditation decision is based.
 - (6) The recommendation decision to be made during the meeting of the Appeals Committee should only consider the written documentation provided by the institution and ZAK. The representatives of the institution or ZAK may not attend this meeting. The decision to be

made by the Appeals Committee is limited to the decision options available to ZAK. The decision of the Appeals Committee is communicated to ZİDEK's Executive Board within thirty (30) days after assignment is received, in the form of a written report. The decision made by ZİDEK's Executive Board shall be the final.

- (7) The decision and the reasons for the decision shall be communicated by ZİDEK to the institution and to ZAK no later than within fifteen (15) days of the date on which such a decision is made.

ARTICLE 14 Changes during the Period of Accreditation

- (a) It is the responsibility of the institution's authorized representative to inform ZİDEK about any changes to a program accredited by ZİDEK, which may have an impact on the accreditation status of the said program. Significant changes may include the following:
- (1) Program name
 - (2) Faculty
 - (3) Educational objectives
 - (4) Curricular content
 - (5) Student body
 - (6) Administration
 - (7) Institutional facilities
 - (8) Institutional value of the program
 - (9) Institutional financial status
- (b) An evaluation process shall be initiated as a result of the notification to ZİDEK by the institution or by a third party of any significant changes that might affect the accreditation status of an accredited program. The first step to be taken by the institution in such an evaluation process is to inform ZİDEK, by responding to any claims or decisions.
- (c) The information provided by the institution should not be extensively detailed but should be specific enough to enable the assessment of the effect of the change to the accredited program.
- (d) ZAK reviews the information provided by the institution and decides whether a change to the applicable accreditation decision is necessary or not. This decision depends on how exactly the changes influence the program's continuation of satisfying the relevant evaluation criteria.
- (e) After a notice announcing significant change to an accredited program has been received by ZİDEK, ZAK's Chair sends copies of the information provided by the institution to two ZAK members.
- (f) These two ZAK members are asked to evaluate the information provided to them and to inform ZAK about any suggestions that they may have within thirty (30) days. They may ask for additional information through ZİDEK's Secretariat. The suggestion may either consist of extending the program's accreditation period until the end of the current evaluation period or of recommending the institution to request a revisit, with the intention to determine the program's accreditation status.
- (g) ZAK considers the suggestion and makes a final decision immediately.
- (h) ZİDEK immediately communicates this final decision to the institution.
- (i) Rejection of the revisit by the institution is the reason for the cancellation of the accreditation of the program.
- (j) ZİDEK should be updated regularly about the termination of an accredited program, any important changes to the faculty, facilities, structural organization, enrolled students, or other relevant factors. If an accredited program is terminated, then ZİDEK's accreditation for such

program shall automatically expire, unless the process defined in Article 11(i) is followed

ARTICLE 15 Amendments to the Directive

Any suggestions for amendments to this directive can be submitted to the Executive Board by ZAK or by a committee to be appointed by the Executive Board. Suggestions prepared shall be included in the agenda of and resolved during the first meeting of the Executive Board to follow.

ARTICLE 16 Enforcement

These regulations are effective as of the date of approval by the Executive Board.

