

Date of the site visit: 19th-20th of March, 2013

#### **COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT PANEL**

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- Prof. Julian Hoseason, Glion Institute of Higher Education and Les Roches-Gruyère, University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland
- Prof. Enni Mertanen Ph.D., School of Business and Services Management JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Finland
- Prof. Han Verheijden, Breda University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands

## Expert panel was supported by:

- Goran Briški, interpreter, Agency for Science and Higher Education
- Marko Hrvatin, interpreter
- Vlatka Šušnjak Kuljiš, coordinator, Agency for Science and Higher Education

## **Contents**

IN	TRODUCTION	4
SHO	ORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED INSTITUTION	4
	WORK OF THE EXPERT PANEL	
DE	TAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION	7
1.	INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE	7
2.	STUDY PROGRAMMES	
3.	STUDENTS	10
4.	TEACHERS	11
5.		
6.	INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND MOBILITY	12
7.	RESOURCES: ADMINISTRATION, SPACE, EQUIPMENT AND FINANCES	13
FIN	IAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE ACCREDITATION	
СО	UNCIL	15
AD	VANTAGES (STRONG POINTS)	15
	SADVANTAGES (WEAK POINTS)	
RF	COMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY	17

## INTRODUCTION

## Short description of the evaluated institution

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Business College with Public Rights

ADDRESS: Istarska 23, Višnjan, Croatia

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Founder: Professor Robin Boško Paulovič. Dean: Professor Zdenko Tomčić, Ph.D.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE: Governing Council (responsible for strategy and management of the College; five members of which three representatives appointed by the Founder and two appointed by the Expert Council); Expert Council (responsible for the programmes and academic provision of the College chaired by the Dean with membership comprising all teachers plus two students); Dean, Associate Dean; Head of Professional Study Programme; Head of Specialist Study Programme; and Student Council.

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES (and levels): Professional Study Programme in Tourism Management; Specialist Graduate Professional Programme in Tourism Management

NUMBER OF STUDENTS (part-time/full-time/final-year): 219 of which Professional Study Programme 77; specialist graduate programe 142.

Breakdown by year:

Professional Study Programme Year: 1, 35; Year 2, 12; year 3, 30. Specialist Graduate Professional Programme: Year 4, 91; Year 5, 51.

NUMBER OF TEACHERS (full-time, external associates): 12 full-time (1 full professor; 3 senior lecturers; 4 lecturers; 4 College professors); 2 external associates (1 assistant professor; 1 College professor). These figures were provided by the management and are not consistent with those given in the Self-Evaluation Document.

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS (doctors of science, elected to grades, full-time): no

TOTAL BUDGET: 2.234.771,00 kn (300.000 EUR)

MSES FUNDING: no state budget

OWN FUNDING: only tution fee

#### SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

Business College with Public Rights (hereinafter: Business College) is a private higher education institution established in 2000 as a provider of full-time and part-time professional study programmes in tourism management. In order to harmonise its programmes with the principles of the Bologna Declaration, but also as a result of the wish to create a contemporary professional study programme, since the academic year 2005/2006, based on the Licence, the Business College started implementing the professional study programme in tourism management. Based on the Licence granted by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in academic year 2009/10, the Business College started implementing the specialist graduate professional programme named: "Tourism Management".

Since 14 September 2011, professional and specialist specialist study programmes have been fostered by adopting the new Studying Ordinance, identical to most similar study programmes in EU countries.

## The work of the Expert Panel

For its work the Panel drew upon the Self-Evaluation Report, prepared by the Business College with Public Rights. A site visit was carried out on 19 and 20 March 2013. During the visit to the College the Expert Panel held meetings with the representatives of the following groups:

- The Management: the Founder and the Dean;
- The Quality Assurance Team who also oversaw the work of the small committee that that compiled the Self-Evaluation;
- The students, i.e., a self-selected set of students present at the interview;
- The teachers: 12 in total;
- The Vice-Dean for Teaching and Students' Affairs, programme co-ordinators and teachers;
- The Vice-Dean for Scientific Activity and International Cooperaion and research projects' leaders;
- Administrative staff.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk, and the administrative offices and the classrooms at the Business College, where they held a brief question and answer session with the students who were present. They also visited the Institute for Agriculture and Tourism, Poreč where they held a meeting with the management of the Institute and saw the library and food laboratories. They visited and held discussions with the management of three organisations that provide work experience placements for the students including one accounting company and two hotels.

## DETAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

## 1. Institutional management and quality assurance

- 1.1 The management of the College described the strategy to provide a three year professional study programme and a two year specialist graduate professional programme, both in Tourism Management, designed to meet the needs of small and medium size enterprises in the area. They were also aware of the opportunities for meeting the needs of a rather wider international tourism area after Croatia joins the European Union. The College has prepared a strategy document 2009-2014. The strategy is not clearly articulated in the Self-Evaluation Document and little attention is paid to the systematic engagement with stakeholders or with alumni although in both cases, it is recognised that stakeholders and alumni both play a part in the work of the College as for example visiting teachers and involvement in student placements. Also the student experience does not figure prominently in the strategy. It is recommended that that there is a more systematic and regular engagement with stakeholders and alumni in the continuous development of the strategy for the College and that the strategy should give attention to the development of the student experience.
- 1.2 The organizational structures and processes are set out in the documents produced by the College. These structures and processes generally appear to be effective, with the overall governance being the responsibility of the Governing Council and the academic governance lying with the Expert Council. However, the position of the Student Council is not clear and the students had little knowledge of its purpose. It is recommended that the position and role of the Student Council should be clarified and the students should better informed about its functions.
- 1.3 The two study programmes are aligned with the broad mission of the College to prepare students for positions in the tourism and hospitality sectors of the region. Alignment is a matter for consideration by the Expert Council. However, the College does not appear to maintain a clear distinction between the professional programme and the specialist graduate programme each with clearly different learning outcomes. Indeed in the teachers' talk and in the curricula the two study programmes are presented as a continuity and defined by years (1st, 2nd etc) with no difference shown between the levels. Also the distinction between full-time and part-time students, in terms, for example, of expected attendance and length of study programme, is very unclear. There needs to be a clear distinction between the professional and specialist graduate programmes with clearly different learning outcomes. A clearer distinction needs to be made between the full-time and part-time modes of provision.
- 1.4 The College has an appropriately documented quality policy and connected procedures for quality assurance. This includes regular student evaluation that is reported to the Quality Improvement Committee established by the Expert Council and led by the Dean as well as a Quality Committee that coordinates all quality-related activities. Students are represented on the Committees. Quality issues are considered at the meetings of the Expert

Council. While these arrangements effectively cover the teaching provided by the College, the quality assurance arrangements for the assessment of students is currently less well provided for, with no peer or external scrutiny arrangements. The quality assurance arrangements for the assessment of students, both in setting and marking students' work needs to be strengthened.

- 1.5 The College collects, analyses and uses relevant information. Students are involved in this process both through the completion of course evaluations and through engagement with and membership of College bodies. It is less apparent how other other stakeholders are involved in providing information and advice to the College. **The process of involving external stakeholders in providing information and advice to the College should be formalised.**
- 1.6 There are formal mechanisms for monitoring teaching quality through the student course evaluation process which is reported to the Expert Council. However, the reports to the Expert Council are mainly in the form of raw data with very little analysis. It is recommended that the reports of the student evaluations to the Expert Council be more fully and clearly analysed so as to provide the Council with useful management information.
- 1.7 The Instutution has a documented Code of Ethics for students and staff that provides a basis for ensuring high standards of ethical behaviour. The students are very aware of the code.

## 2. Study programmes

- 2.1 Formal mechanisms are in place for the proposal of new study programmes through the Expert Council. In the past proposals have been rejected on the basis of there being inadequate demand. There was little evidence of course review and evaluation driving change. As the College matures, it is recommended that course review and evaluations 'drive' changes to the existing programmes to meet contemporary needs and be attractive to both domestic and international students for the professional and specialist graduate programmes.
- 2.2 Data provided by the College indicate that it conforms to its enrolment quota and to the needs of the domestic hospitality and tourism market. It was reported that most students were in or gained appropriate employment. It is recommended that the College monitors graduate students/ alumni employment and adjusts the study programme to include hospitality-based modules to meet domestic needs.
- 2.3 Data provided by the College and from discussion with students indicate its enrolment quotas are generally in line with the institutional resources although there are limitations in library resources. The distinct needs of the professional and the specialist graduate programmes are not clearly identified It is recommended that the enrolment and continuation data separately distinguish between the professional and specialist graduate programmes to ensure that they most effectively inform resource requirements.

- 2.4 The College has learning outcomes set by the teachers and stated at the level of a study programme. The courses clearly describe the knowledge and skills of the graduates although as noted in 1.3 and 2.5 these do not clearly distinguish between the professional and the specialist graduate levels.
- 2.5 At course/module level there is evidence of assessment based on learning outcomes. However, the reliance on numeric grades with no descriptive criteria means that it is difficult to ensure consistency of grading. This also relates to the grading differentiation between the professional and the specialist graduate programmes which is not entirely clear. Additionally the Expert Panel were concerned about the quality and structure of the professional and specialist graduate dissertations, notably in relation to the range of literature used to support the work and the clarity of the research questions and objectives. Descriptive grading criteria need to be developed to support numeric grades based upon programmatic learning outcomes differentiating the professional and the specialist graduate programmes. The College needs to review the structure and content of the dissertations at professional and specialist graduate levels to conform to recognised standards.
- 2.6 The allocation of ECTS is stated on course reference sheets/syllabi and at programme level and is generally appropriate. However, at syllabus/course level there are a number of inconsistencies in the ECTS allocations. Also the differentiation between the professional and the specialist graduate levels is not entirely clear. The College needs to ensure that the allocation of ECTS properly reflects the student work load in all elements of the programmes and further that there is appropriate differentiation in class contact/teaching hours between the professional and the specialist graduate programmes. The ECTS system should be used instead of teaching hours in planning student workload. The EQF levels should be implemented to define the learning outcomes and differentiate the two study programmes.
- 2.7 Overall the content and quality of each study programme matches international standards although as already noted the distinction between the professional and the specialist graduate programmes is not always clear. The College has a process in place through the Expert Council to monitor standards. However, given the focus on tourism, the amount of tourism content in the early stages of the programmes is relatively limited. Greater distinction needs to be made between the professional and the specialist graduate level achievement and consideration should be given to the balance in the specific tourism content at different stages of the programme.
- 2.8 There is good evidence of a wide range of teaching and learning strategies employed by faculty to develop autonomous learning. However, there is scope to increase the extent to which the students are encouraged to devote more energies to independent information search. The restrictions presented by the library and virtual learning resources in achieving this are identified in paragraphs 7.1, 7.5, 7.6. It is recommended that strategies are developed further to encourage students to carry out independent information searches and become autonomous, responsible learners.
- 2.9 The faculty make resources available at course level to aid the teaching and learning strategies although as noted later in paragraphs 7.1, 7.5, 7.6 this is limited by the relatively

restricted library and virutal learning resources. It is recommended that appropriate library resources, particularly access to electronic databases become prioritised to support student learning on the professional and specialist graduate programmes to support autonomous learning.

2.10 There is good evidence of collaborative curriculum-based projects to support student learning within the regional community. There is good evidence of internships and training opportunities in appropriate local organizations and that students are appropriately monitored and challenged during these experiences. It is recommended a more formal process is put in place for fulltime students.

### 3. Students

- 3.1 The admissions process consists of interview and recommendation and the most important criteria is the level of motivation detected in the candidate. Data provided by the College indicate that there is no formal process of admission, no formal mechanism and everyone who applies is enrolled. The Expert Panel learned that some entrants needed additional support after arrival. It is recommended that a formal process of admission be adopted and that the effectiveness of admission criteria are regularly reviewed.
- 3.2 The Expert Panel learned from the students that their extracurricular activities were not supported by the College. It is recommended that the College devotes more attention to and provides more support for students' extracurricular activities.
- 3.3 The College offers counselling, mentorship and professional orientation for students. Every student is given a mentor and if a student is falling behind, teachers give free tutoring.
- 3.4 The College provides little, if any additional support for the students. For example there is no accommodation or transport provided, students are required to make additional payments for their final thesis, and the onsite library is very limited. It is recommended that additional support is organised for accommodation for students who live outside Istra and that he library resources are strengthened.
- 3.5 The College publishes its methods and procedures for student assessment and offers students a formal possibility of appeal but there is no descriptive common grading criteria and no verification or second marking of the examinations. There needs to be descriptive grading criteria to support numeric grades as well as the possibility of verifying examinations.
- 3.6 The Dean and teachers keep contact with alumni but in not in a formal way, there is no Alumni Club and the College has no formal method for keeping track of the employability of its graduates. The College needs to develop more formal methods for keeping contact with alumni and establish an Alumni Club.
- 3.7 Students are given opportunity to participate in decision-making process and the students met by the panel recognised this. However there should be clarification of the role and purpose of the Student Council as the students were not aware of this body and its functions.

- 3.8 The College does not regularly inform the public about its study programmes, learning outcomes, qualifications and employment opportunities. **Greater attention should be devoted to informing the public and the web page should contain the curricula and be updated regularly.**
- 3.9 There is good evidence that students can express their opinions and proposals and they feel that the College takes into account their opinions and values their comments.
- 3.10. Students are informed about the measures implemented on the basis of their suggestions and opinions. It appears that the students are very satisfied with this aspect of their experience at the college.

### 4. Teachers

- 4.1 According to the Self-Evaluation Document the number and qualifications of the teachers are now in line with the strategic goals of the College and adequately cover core disciplines. The College has hired more full-time teachers after since the 2009 evaluation.
- 4.2 Both the Self-Evaluation Document as well as information provided at meetings with the Expert Panel indicate that the College carries out a policy of growth and development of human resources. The potential retirements were not discussed but according to the Self-Evaluation Document most of the teaching staff are far from the retirement age, although external associates are older. The sustainability of the study programmes and scientific activities seems to be secured by devoted teaching staff.
- 4.3 The College demonstrates the employment of a sufficient number of full-time teachers. However, probably because the differences between the two study programmes were not clear, it was not possible clearly to match the teachers' qualitfications with the level of course being taught. It would be helpful for the College to clarify this. According to the Self-Evaluation Document, external associates conduct only 3-4 % of teaching activity and it is all in specialist graduate programme.
- 4.4 The Expert Panel found it difficult to get precise information about the actual number of students. Nevertheless the indications are that although the ratio between students and full-time teachers seems to have risen, it still appears to be at an approprite level. However, for the future, with increased student numbers and the likely significantly increased demands on teachers' time in the supervision of students' theses this is likely to put pressure on the teaching resource.
- 4.5 The College has well-developed policies for teaching staff that ensure their development as needed to advance the College's mission. According to the Self-Evaluation Document "academic freedom is a prerequisite and a feature of the teaching process as well as scientific and professional research".
- 4.6 The College has developed its own method of assessing the qualifications and expertise of its teaching staff which follows the national criteria for employment and promotion.

4.7 Based on information provided in the Self-Evaluation Document, teaching hours per full-time teacher stand at about 380 per year. The teachers indicated that this was within the national limit although it is low by international standards. However, it was noted that teachers' workloads were expressed in class contact hours rather than in ECTS. This provides a very restictive interpretation of the use of teachers' time. The specialist group also learned of some wide variations in the time devoted to the supervision of dissertations. It is recommended that the College defines the teacher's workload per ECTS instead of in class contact time and defines more clearly and separately the resources of supervision of theses in both study programmes.

4.8 According the Self-Evaluation Document the College ensures and takes care that its teachers hold a substantial commitment to their teaching and research responsibilities and that obligations are not compromised by a teacher's commitments external to the College. According to the Self-Evaluation Document the external teaching activities should not exceed 30% of a teacher's regular teaching activity.

## 5. Scientific and professional activity

5.1 The College encourages faculty to conduct research for their professional development with the approval of the Dean with additional consultation through the Expert Council. Monitoring is informal through the Dean and may be included in appraisal processes. It is recommended that more formal processes are embedded into the appraisal and research agenda/policy and that clearer priorities are established to guide such activities.

5.2 The College has appropriate mechanisms, through the approval of the Dean, to ensure that appropriate activities are carried out and that they are performed efficiently. The College is involved with collaborative research within the local business community and the Institute of Agriculture and Tourism in Poreč. Much of the activity is based upon curriculum-driven projects or case studies supported by faculty.

5.3 The College is involved with local and regional research projects many of which are are curriculum-based case studies for local industry and institutions. Its involvement beyond Croatia is very limited. It is recommended to develop clearer policy and practices for scientific and professional activities including to separate curriculum-based research from institutional research in order for clarity in funding a research agenda. It is recommended a formal 3-5 year strategy for research is established with goals set to achieve the accreditation requirements.

5.4 The College clearly supports professional activity through publication and presentations of research to conferences.

## 6. International cooperation and mobility

6.1 While the College reports having arrangments for internal and international mobility, in reality there has only been very limited development of such mobility of students from other institutions. One recent development for students from Bangladesh had very limited success, partly as a result of language problems. It is recommended that the College

ensures that its arrangements for inward mobility are sufficiently well developed to provide any incoming students with adequate support.

- 6.2 Although the College is aware of the advantages of students being able to have opportunities to study abroad, at present, mainly for financial reasons, students do not have such opportunities. Within the context of financial constraints and the stated international ambitions of the the College, it is recommended that efforts are made to develop opportunites for students to have international experience.
- 6.3 The teachers are very aware of the Bologna process and of EU initatives such as ERASMUS but mainly for reasons of finance, international mobility of teachers is very limited in extent or duration. Two teachers are named in the Self-Evaluation Document as having spent time abroad in connection with their studies and a few have spent short periods abroad. Within the context of financial constraints and the stated international ambitions of the the College, it is recommended that further opportunities should be sought for the teachers to gain international experience.
- 6.4 The College has very limited involvement in international associations of similar institutions except for some cooperation with individual similar institutions in the immediate neighbouring countries. **The College needs to develop an involvement with international associations.**
- 6.5 The College has not ensured conditions for attracting students from abroad. At a functional level the lack of arrangements for student accommodation or student transport would detract from the conditions. It is recommended that the College review the conditions for attracting students from abroad to ensure that they do not unnecessarily deter students.
- 6.6 Although the College is aware of the possibilities of developing international links with its neighbouring countries as a part of the European Union, so far its international links are very limited to individual institutions in such countries. It reports having concluded two bilateral agreements within ERASMUS but so far these have not led to any action. It is recommended that the College explores further possible links through ERASMUS and similar agreements with other institutions and endeavours to implement these.

## 7. Resources: administration, space, equipment and finances

7.1 According to the Self-Evaluation Document the College provides appropriate resources for enrolled students sufficient to support their effective learning. During the reaccreditation visit the Expert Panel group learned that quite a number of students were actually part-timers and did not attend all classroom sessions. The library resources are still not adequate, including the library in the Institute of Agriculture and Tourism in Poreč. The College has purchased computers for the students. Individual and group study spaces are very limited. The biggest weakness, particularly considering the needs of non-local part-time students is the lack of a virtual learning environment. Although, according to the students they can receive material by email the Expert Panel do is not consider this to be an effective or efficient method of dissemination. It is recommended that the College

implement a virtual learning environment. The library also needs to be strengthened to include virtual materials as well as access to scientific journals.

- 7.2 According the Self-Evaluation Document the College now has a favourable ratio of teaching to non-teaching staff. During the re-acceditation visit the team learned that the number of students in the professional programme had risen rapidly. This is likely to add to pressure on teaching staff, especially for supervision as well as for non-teaching staff. The College is recommended to maintain a favourable ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff, and make sure the resources are adequate to the students' need.
- 7.3 According to meetings with the Expert Panel the College has well-developed policies for non-teaching staff that ensure their development as needed to advance the College's mission.
- 7.4. The College does not have any laboratories nor any plans for them.
- 7.5 The Expert Panel saw during the re-accreditation visit that the College provides equipment for students, but the internet connection is poor and does not support the needs of the students. The technical support was not seen. There are evident problems with the internet connection, lack of virtual learning environment and with library resources. The College does not make current and varied technologies available. It is recommended that the internet connection problem be solved as a priority to provide the basis for establishing a programme to develop the current learning technologies in a way that will secure the College's future.
- 7.6 According the earlier accreditation report the College's library was inadequate and the College was recommended to provide adequate literature for all courses. The self-evaluation report says the library is still "undergoing the phase of collecting professional literature for student requirements". The size, usability and availability of the library as well as the level of equipment could ensure adequate student support in their learning if there were good virtual connections to a good library. The specialist group visited also the library of the Institute of Agriculture and Tourism Poreč, with which the College has an agreement. However, this library provides minimal help for students. When asked they coud not provide any access to scientific journals and do not even have any library personnel.

The Expert Panel strongly recommends solving the library issue by moving to virtual and scientific literature and the most advanced equipment in learning.

7.7 According the Self–Evaluation Document the College faces a tight financial situation. However, during the re-accreditation visit the Expert Panel learned that, given current enrolment figures, the situation not so difficult. The financial stability of the College seems to be harmonised with its mission and should enable all students to graduate from their programmes. With current enrolments the sources of finance and all conditions related to financing seem to be transparent and do not limit institutional autonomy when making decisions about teaching, professional activity and research. When seeking future EU funding the College will also need its own funding.

7.8 The College is a family business, so its own funds are used to raise the quality of teaching and scientific activity in line with the mission and other formal documents.

# FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

The Business College with Public Rights in Višnjan is a small, privately-owned institution that offers a three year professional programme and a two year specialist graduate programme, both aimed at meeting the needs of hospitality and tourism enterprises, especially in the Istrian region of Croatia. It generally achieves this successfully. It has developed good links with local industry and its graduates are reported to gain appropriate employment. The College has an appropriate number and range of well qualified academic and support staff.

The College has sought to adapt its provision to the European standards and to meet the needs of modern practices of education. However, it still faces a number of important challenges. Notably the available learning resources are limited, especially in relation to library resources and online materials. This limits the students' learning experiences. Further, the work to bring the College in line with European standards in relation to learning outcomes, the EQF and ECTS needs further attention. Notably, it is very important that clear distinctions are made between the professional and the specialist graduate programmes and between the part-time and full-time provision and that all the work of the students are properly judged against clear and consistent learning outcomes.

## **ADVANTAGES (STRONG POINTS)**

- 1. For a relatively small, privately owned institution the College has an appropriate strategy to provide fairly precisely targeted programmes to meet the needs of tourism and hospitality enterprises in a major tourism destination in Croatia.
- 2. The links of the College with local industry are good and these provide support for the students' learning experience in the form, for example, of placements.
- 3. Graduate employment is reported to be strong.
- 4. The College has invested in the recruitment and development of their teaching staff such that teachers can provide very good support for the students.

## **DISADVANTAGES (WEAK POINTS)**

1. The distinction between the professional and the specialist graduate programmes is unclear in terms of learning outcomes.

- 2. The distinction between the full-time and part-time modes of provision are unclear in terms of expected student attendance and in the duration of the programmes.
- 3. While the College has made moves to bring its provision in line with Bologna, at present the programmes are not clearly aligned with the EQF and activities are not always clearly based on ECTS.
- 4. The grading criteria, based on numeric values are inadequate to ensure consistency in the assessment of student performance across different programmes and levels.
- 5. The structure and content of the dissertations suggests that the levels do not always conform to recognised standards.
- 6. The learning resources, especially the library and the absence of a virtual learning environment and access to online material means that the students' ability to develop their independent learning skills is restricted.
- 7. The College's international links are very limited.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY

## 1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

- It is recommended that there is a more systematic and regular engagement with stakeholders and alumni in the continuous development of the strategy for the College.
- The strategy should give attention to the development of the student experience.
- The position and role of the Student Council should be clarified and the students should better informed about its functions.
- There needs to be a clear distinction between the professional and specialist graduate programmes with clearly different learning outcomes.
- A clearer distinction needs to be made between the full-time and part-time modes of provision.
- The quality assurance arrangements for the assessment of students, both in setting and marking students' work needs to be strengthened.
- The process of involving external stakeholders in providing information and advice to the College should be formalised.
- The reports of the student evaluations to the Expert Council need to be more fully and clearly analysed so as to provide the Council with useful management information.

#### 2. Study Programmes

- It is recommended that course review and evaluations increasinly 'drive' changes to the existing bachelor and professional programmes to meet contemporary needs and to make them attractive to both domestic and international students.
- It is recommended that the College monitors graduate students/alumni employment and adjusts the study programme to include hospitality-based modules to meet domestic needs.
- It is recommended that the student enrolment and continuation data separately distinguish between the professional and specialist graduate programmes to ensure that they most effectively inform resource requirements.

- Descriptive grading criteria need to be developed to support numeric grades based upon programmatic learning outcomes differentiating professional and the specialist graduate programmes.
- The College needs to review the structure and content of dissertations at the professional and the specialist graduate levels to conform to recognised standards.
- The College needs to ensure that the allocation of ECTS properly reflects the student work load in all elements of the programmes and further that there is appropriate differentiation in class contact/teaching hours between the professional and the specialist graduate programmes.
- The ECTS system should be used instead of teaching hours in planning student workload.
- The EQF levels should be implemented to define the learning outcomes and differentiate the two study programmes.
- Greater distinction needs to be made between the professional and the specialist graduate level achievement.
- Consideration should be given to the balance in the specific tourism content at different stages of the programme.
- It is recommended that strategies are developed further to encourage students to carry out independent information searches.
- It is recommended that appropriate library resources, particularly access to electronic databases become prioritised to support student learning on the professional and the specialist graduate programmes to support autonomous learning.

#### 3. Students

- It is recommended that a formal process of admission be adopted and that the effectiveness of admission criteria are regularly reviewed.
- It is recommended that the College devotes more attention to and provides more support for students' extracurricular activities.
- It is recommended that additional support is organised for accommodation for students who live outside Istra and that the library resources are strengthened.
- There needs to be descriptive grading criteria to support numeric grades.
- Arrangements should be made for the verification of examinations.

- The College needs to develop more formal methods for keeping contact with alumni and establish an Alumni Club.
- There should be clarification of the role and purpose of the Student Council as the students were not aware of this body and its functions.
- Greater attention should be devoted to informing the public and the web page should contain the curricula and be updated regularly.

#### 4. Teachers

- It is recommended that the College defines the teacher's workload per ECTS instead of class contact.
- It is recommended that the College defines more clearly and separately the resources of supervision of theses in both study programmes.

### 5. Scientific and Professional Activity

- It is recommended that more formal processes are embedded into the appraisal and research agenda / policy and that clearer priorities are established to guide such activities.
- It is recommended to develop clearer policy and practices for scientific and professional activities including to separate curriculum-based research from institutional research in order for clarity in funding a research agenda.
- It is recommended a formal 3-5 year strategy for research is established with goals set to achieve the accreditation requirements.

## 6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- It is recommended that the College ensures that its arrangements for inward mobility are sufficiently well developed to provide any incoming students with adequate support.
- Within the context of financial constraints and the stated international ambitions of the the College, it is recommended that efforts are made to develop opportunites for students to have international experience.
- Also within the above context the College should seek further opportunities for the teachers to gain international experience.

- The College needs to develop an involvement with international associations.
- It is recommended that the College review the conditions for attracting students from abroad to ensure that they do not unnecessarily deter students.
- There is a need for the College to explore further possible links through ERASMUS and similar agreements with other institutions and to endeavour to implement these.

## 7. Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

- It is recommended that the College implement a virtual learning environment.
- The library also needs to be strengthened to include virtual materials as well as access to scientific journals.
- The College is recommended to maintain a favourable ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff, and make sure the resources are adequate to the students' need.
- It is recommended that the internet connection problem be solved as a priority to provide the basis for establishing a programme to develop the current learning technologies in a way that will secure the College's future.
- The Expert Panel strongly recommends solving the library issue by moving to virtual and scientific literature and the most advanced equipment in learning.