



**REPORT  
OF THE EXPERT PANEL  
ON THE REACCREDITATION  
OF THE UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE (DOCTORAL)  
STUDY PROGRAMMES  
*LINGUISTICS*  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,  
UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB**

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**CONTENTS**

***INTRODUCTION..... 3***  
***SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMMES ..... 5***  
***RECOMMENDATION BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION***  
***COUNCIL..... 6***  
***RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME ..... 6***  
***ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME ..... 8***  
***DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME..... 9***  
***EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE ..... 10***  
***COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF A STUDY***  
***PROGRAMME..... 11***  
***QUALITY ASSESSMENT ..... 13***

## INTRODUCTION

The Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) created this Report on the Re-accreditation of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Studies in *Linguistics* on the basis of the self-evaluation report of the programme, other documentation submitted and a visit to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb.

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and a full member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), re-accredits higher education institutions (hereinafter: HEIs) and their study programmes in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10). In this procedure parts of the activities of higher education institutions and university postgraduate study programmes are re-accredited.

The Expert Panel was appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to carry out independent evaluation of post-graduate university study programmes.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Short description of the study programmes,
- The recommendation of the Expert Panel to the Agency's Accreditation Council,
- Recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure),
- A brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- A list of good practices found at the institution,
- Conclusions on compliance with the prescribed conditions of delivery of a study programme,
- Conclusions on compliance with the criteria for quality assessment.

Members of the Expert Panel:

1. Dr. Igor Štiks, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom, the chair,
2. Dr. Ljiljana Reinkowski, Universität Basel, Switzerland,
3. Prof. Dr. Rozita Dimova, Ghent University, Belgium,
4. Dr. Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom,
5. Dr. H. J. M. J. (Harm) Goris, Tilburg University, Netherlands,
6. Prof. David Maxwell, Emmanuel College Cambridge, United Kingdom,
7. Prof. Elzbieta Osewska, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland,
8. Prof. Mikhail Dmitriev, Central European University, Hungary,
9. Prof. Andrej Blatnik, Univerza v Ljubljani, Slovenia,
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11. Prof. Dr. Katrin Boeckh, Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität in Munich, Germany,
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17. Dr. Elzbieta Gajek, University of Warsaw, Poland,
18. Dr. Kyle Jerro, University of Essex, United Kingdom,

19. Dr Nadia Mifka-Profozic, University of York, United Kingdom,
20. Dr. Moreno Mitrović, University of Cyprus, Cyprus,
21. Dr. Catherine MacRobert, Oxford University, United Kingdom,
22. Prof. Emeritus Svein Mønnesland, University of Oslo, Norway,
23. Dajana Vasiljevicová, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic,
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29. Garrett R. Mindt, Central European University, Hungary,
30. Prof. Vieri Samek Lodovici, University College London, United Kingdom,
31. Mišo Petrović, Central European University, Hungary.

Members of the Expert Panel who visited the higher education institution:

- Dr Catherine MacRobert, Oxford University, United Kingdom;
- Dr Kyle Jerro, post-doc., University of Essex, United Kingdom;
- Prof. Vieri Samek Lodovici, Department of Linguistics, University College London, United Kingdom.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report the Panel was supported by:

- Goran Briški, coordinator, interpreter at the site visit, ASHE.

During the visit to the Institution the Expert Panel held meetings with the representatives of the following groups:

- Management,
- Heads of study programmes,
- Doctoral candidates,
- Teachers and supervisors,
- Alumni.

## SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMMES

Name of the study programme	Linguistics
Institution:	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
Scientific area and field	Philology and Linguistics
Number of doctoral candidates	102 (16 with funding; 86 self-funded, or funded by employer)
Number of supervisors	40
Number of teachers	25
Ratio of appointed supervisors and their doctoral candidates:	Currently, 12:20 (1:1.6); cumulatively over past 5 years, 24:63 (1:2.6)
Taught / research ratio	130 / 50 Taught: 130 ECTS or first two years includes 7 mandatory and 9 elective courses and 10 seminars. Research: 50 ECTS for research and consultations with supervisor (only on 3rd year). The HEI's SER states that the ratio is 19.44/80.56, but this is based only on mandatory taught courses. If elective courses are included, the ratio of taught material to research increases significantly. See point 8 of the Additional/Recommended Conditions for ASHE Accreditation on page 16 for further discussion.
Learning outcomes of the study programme	LO 1: Explain the place of each fundamental linguistic discipline in relation to the other (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse analysis) and identify their interrelatedness; LO 2: Critically evaluate individual linguistic schools and trends; LO 3: Evaluate the relationship and the advantages and disadvantages of traditional and modern linguistic schools and trends; LO 4: Integrate fundamental characteristics of individual linguistic schools and trends in a broader linguistic context; LO 5: Analyse and interpret the language corpora according to adopted theoretical frameworks; LO 6: Critically evaluate linguistic literature to enhance one's own theoretical and methodological framework; LO 7: Modify the existing, create one's own and apply appropriate methodology apparatus for one's own scientific-research purposes; LO 8: Independently make verbal and written works on one's own scientific-research based on the rules of scientific communication; LO 9: Professionally present arguments on one's own scientific-research work.

## RECOMMENDATION BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

Upon the completion of the re-accreditation procedure of the study programme *Linguistics*, the examination of the materials submitted (self-evaluation report etc.), the visit to the higher education institution and interviews with HEI members in accordance with the visit protocol, the Expert Panel issues **the following letter of expectation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements. **This letter does not include suspension of student enrolment for the defined period.**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

1. OBLIGATORY COURSES – In the last few years, the doctoral programme has appropriately decreased the number of taught courses required to successfully complete the programme and it has also improved how some of the courses are taught, increasing the number of workshop and seminar based courses. Nevertheless, our conversations with the doctoral students showed that some students who had their UG or MA education at the University of Zagreb had to repeat the same course they had covered during their UG and MA years. We do realize that completely abolishing these courses is unwise, as the diverse competencies and past education of new doctoral candidates make these courses necessary for at least some students. Indeed, some of the students and alumni we spoke to have found the courses extremely useful. In order to safeguard both the students who understandably wish to avoid repeating these courses, as well as those who find them helpful, we **recommend** that students who have covered a course's subject matter during their BA/MA studies be allowed to opt out from them. Students should also be appropriately informed of this opt-out opportunity at the start of their doctoral studies.
2. ELECTIVE COURSES - The Programme Regulations (<https://goo.gl/o4upy2>) do not clearly state that elective courses are considered part of research training (whereas they have clearly been considered as such, otherwise the teaching/research ratio would not satisfy the 20/80 requirement; see point 8 of the Additional/Recommended Conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council, page 16, for further explanation). We therefore recommend that point 4.(1) of the Programme Regulations be revised so as to clearly state that elective courses are considered and delivered as part of research training (i.e. with minimal ex cathedra teaching) so that they do not count towards the maximal threshold of 20% of taught courses allowed in doctoral programmes. To ensure that elective courses truly contribute to research training and don't adversely affect the time spent on research by doctoral candidates, we also recommend that they should be reduced in number, assessed by short research reports or seminar papers rather than by examination, and, possibly, involve just a PASS/FAIL mark. Finally, we recommend that doctoral applicants and students be actively informed that elective courses may be replaced by participation in conferences and summer schools, as stated in article 4.(3) of the Programme Regulations.
3. TEACHERS WORKLOAD – Quality assessment point 1.2 requires member of staff to not go beyond the 360nh workload. As explained in our reply to point 1.2, several members of staff appear to go well beyond this threshold, with potential adverse effects on the quality of their doctoral supervision. Therefore, we **recommend** that members of staff currently shouldering a workload beyond 400nh decrease it accordingly in order to safeguard the quality of their supervision.

4. SUPERVISOR TRAINING – A university-wide training workshop for supervisors was in place but has recently been suspended. We **recommend** that the training workshop should be reinstated at Faculty or University level, or, if that is not possible, at programme level.
5. RESEARCH SCOPE – As pointed out in the Programme Advantages section to follow, many of the dissertations we consulted were impressive, as they appropriately engaged with the latest linguistic analyses and provided original insights by identifying new phenomena that challenged current mainstream analyses. Those same dissertations, though, often seemed to stop short from proposing their own solutions to the problems they identified. We believe supervisors should encourage their students to be more ambitious and not shy away from first exploring and then proposing new theoretical insights (i.e. new principles, or deep-reaching revisions of current theories) when they feel that their research requires them. In a nutshell, since they often have the theoretical and empirical tools to do so, the doctoral students should be encouraged to dare to shape the field's theoretical landscape through their dissertations.
6. IT PROVISION – We have been informed that the email capacity available to individual doctoral candidates might be too low. We **recommend** that this issue is discussed with the current doctoral candidates and, if confirmed, that the email capacity available to each student be increased. We do realize that a successful implementation of this recommendation is not entirely under the control of the programme organizers, but we believe they should at least try to address it by approaching the Faculty about it.
7. SPACE PROVISION – Doctoral candidates do not have offices in which to work. We understand that assigning office space to doctoral students who mostly come to the university at weekends (when teaching and supervision are delivered) is not possible, given the space constraints of the university of Zagreb. However, many offices and classrooms used Monday to Friday for the delivery of undergraduate and master programmes are likely to be empty during weekends. Therefore, we **recommend** that the programme organizers investigate with the Faculty whether some of the spaces normally left empty at weekends could be opened to doctoral students. This would address the doctoral candidates' concern, and also help them meet each other, thus beginning to build the all-important professional network they will need later in their careers, as well as regularly exchange any useful information they might otherwise miss.
8. LIBRARY OPENING HOURS – The Faculty has an excellent recently built library offering a high quality set of services that is highly valued by the doctoral students. At weekends, however, the library is only open Saturdays mornings until 2:00pm. Considering that the doctoral programme is delivered between Friday evening and Sunday, these opening times are problematic, and effectively prevent the doctoral students from accessing the valuable resources provided by the library. The problem is compounded by the fact that doctoral students also use the library as their main studying space due to the lack of dedicated office space mentioned in recommendation 7 above. We **recommend** that the programme organizers approach the library Head and/or the Faculty as necessary with the goal of extending the library's opening hours at least until Saturday evening.
9. ENTRY LEVEL GRADE - We were informed that 12 students dropped out of the programme in the last five years, out of 102 doctoral students, or more than 10%. As an initial measure to decrease the number of students quitting the programme, we **recommend** raising the entry level grade from 3.5 to 4.0, bringing it in line with other linguistics programmes (e.g. Osijek). We also believe the dropped out students, and the inactive ones, should be asked about which factors led to their abandoning/suspending their doctoral studies, so that these factors can be properly identified and, where possible, addressed.

10. PROGRAMME FEES – As pointed out in point 2.9 of the Quality Assessment, since the supervisors’ contributions to the doctoral programme are extra-contractual, the students’ fee must pay for their remuneration as well as for the purchase of study literature, and the equipment for teaching and research, making the cost of the programme relatively high. We **recommend** that the contractual hours of teachers and supervisors be adjusted at University level to include their contributions to doctoral programmes, so that the cost of the programme to applicants can be reduced. We also **recommend** that government should be urged to provide some financial support for doctoral programmes, in the interests of national sustainability of higher education and international academic competitiveness.  
Also, no explicit breakdown of costs was provided to account for the fee of 10,000 Kuna per semester or for the target of 30 students in each intake to this programme. We **recommend** that a more transparent breakdown of costs covered by tuition fees should be developed as an aid to determining sustainable admissions targets, in addition to the admissions criteria outlined in section 3.1 of the Quality Assessment.
11. LEARNING OUTCOMES – Some of the Learning Outcomes LO1-LO9, at least in their English version, are quite weak. LOs 2-4 are excessively similar, while LOs 7-8 are poorly worded. Nowhere is the need for original research stated. We **recommend** revising them accordingly.
12. RESEARCH OUTPUTS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES - We **recommend** that students be actively encouraged to write at least part of their research in one of the world major languages, so that their results become accessible to the international research community. A possible way to do so would be to let students gain ECTS credits by translating their articles/dissertation into such foreign languages. We believe this would profit both the student’s career as well as the international standing of the doctoral programme.

### **ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

1. The taught courses provided in first two years enable students with a philological – rather than linguistic – background to prepare for doctoral research and develop viable topics. Interviews with students and alumni confirmed the relevance of these courses for students lacking a prior purely linguistic education.
2. Many elective courses are taught as workshops or seminars, training the students’ critical and research skills and helping them develop their dissertation topics. Interviews with the students confirmed the high value they assign to these non ex-cathedra courses.
3. The programme produces doctoral dissertations of high standard. Some of those checked by the panel displayed an impressive knowledge of the current literature and also proposed original results by pointing out relevant counterexamples to state-of-the-art analyses of linguistic phenomena. These insights are of interest to the international community, and we hope they will be made accessible also in one of the world’s major languages.
4. The programme’s Head and staff properly closely monitor the programme’s running and evolution. This activity has already led to positive changes, for example in the number of obligatory courses and in the way elective courses are delivered. Our interviews show that these changes have been noticed and appreciated by both current students and alumni. Such monitoring activity sustains both the successful delivery of the programme as well as student satisfaction and we hope it will continue also in future years.
5. The abroad-based doctoral programmes familiar to this panel typically involve courses and supervision delivered Monday to Friday during the day. Some of us were genuinely surprised



when we learned that the Zagreb's linguistic programme, like others in Croatia, runs on Friday evening and at weekends. While this scheduling does lead to some problems (see for example the recommendation on library access), we realize that that this schedule works well for working students, giving them access to a doctoral education they might otherwise forgo.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME**

1. As discussed in our recommendations and in points 5 of the "Additional/Recommended Conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council" (page 15) and 2.9 and 3.3 of the Quality Assessment we view the lack of systematic funding for doctoral candidates as a serious disadvantage.
2. As discussed in our recommendations and in points 2.4 and 2.9 of the Quality Assessment we believe that excluding teaching and supervision for doctoral programmes from the contractual norms of teachers and supervisors has an adverse effect on students' tuition fees.
3. While we believe that the obligatory taught courses in linguistics are helpful to those students lacking prior training in this subject area, we also observe that this training reduces the time available to them for research, potentially forcing them to have to adjust the scope of their topics accordingly.
4. The doctoral programme runs on Friday evening and at weekends, yet the university services, e.g. the library, appear geared for the UG and MA programmes alone, which run on weekdays and during the day. This leaves the doctoral students short-changed as far as their access to university services is concerned.
5. Most dissertations are written in Croatian. While this is positive for the Croatian language, it does reduce the international visibility of the programme research outputs.

### **EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE**

1. The Propaedeutic Workshop on transferable presentational and research skills in the first semester is highly valued by the students. They feel it provides them with crucial training, finesse their academic skills, and teaches them skills that also assist them when identifying their dissertation topic.
2. The offer of elective courses is flexible and adapted to students' interests and needs. The programme's teachers ask students which courses are most desired each year. They also show a good degree of flexibility, occasionally offering electives even to small numbers of interested students when the students' motivation is particularly strong.
3. Supervisors showed helpful flexibility when arranging their meetings with their students, allowing meetings to occur in the weekend (a convenient time for working students), allowing for increased frequency when necessary, and extending their duration when necessary (often exceeding an hour).
4. The programme's organizers have actively monitored the programme's delivery and evolution, implementing improvements where necessary and raising students' satisfaction.
5. In accord with best practice at international doctoral programmes, supervisors are currently not members of the committees which assess the students' dissertations and do not appear to take part in their defence.
6. The research outcomes of the programme are of a high standard.

**COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF A STUDY PROGRAMME**

<b>Minimal legal conditions:</b>	<b>YES/NO notes</b>
1. Higher education institution (HEI) is listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations in the scientific area of the programme, and has a positive reaccreditation decision on performing higher education activities and scientific activity.	YES.
2. HEI delivers programmes in the two cycles leading to the doctoral programme, i.e., first two cycles in the same area and field/fields (for interdisciplinary programmes), and employs a sufficient number of teachers as defined by Article 6 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10).	YES.
3. HEI employs a sufficient number of researchers, as defined by Article 7 of the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (OG 83/2010).	YES.
4. At least 50% of teaching as expressed in norm-hours is delivered by teachers employed at the HEI (full-time, elected into scientific-teaching titles).	YES.
5. Student: teacher ratio at the HEI is below 30:1.	YES.
6. HEI ensures that doctoral theses are public.	YES.
7. HEI launches the procedure of revoking the academic title if it is determined that it has been attained contrary to the conditions stipulated for its attainment, by severe violation of the studying rules or based on a doctoral thesis (dissertation) that has proved to be a plagiarism or a forgery according to provisions of the statute or other enactments.	YES.*
*The revoking of the academic title (PhD) is not in the jurisdiction of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, but the University of Zagreb, which is awarding the academic title. However, the cases of alleged plagiarism are reviewed at the level of the Faculty by an ad hoc appointed Expert Council (appointed by the Doctoral Study Council), comprising at least 1 external member. Their report is submitted to the Faculty Council, which submits its decision to the University Senate.	
<b>Additional/ recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council for passing a positive opinion</b>	<b>YES/NO (notes)</b>
1. HEI (or HEIs in joint programmes) has at least five teachers appointed to scientific-teaching titles in the field, or fields relevant for the programme involved in its delivery.	YES.
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	YES.
3. The doctoral programme is aligned with the HEI's research strategy.	YES. (See 2.2)
4. The candidate : supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	YES.
5. All supervisors meet the following conditions:	a) YES. b) YES.

<p>a) PhD, elected into a scientific title, holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position and/or has at least two years of postdoctoral research experience;</p> <p>b) active researcher in the scientific area of the programme, as evidenced by publications, participation in scientific conferences and/or projects in the past five years (table 2, Supervisors and candidates);</p> <p>c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the candidate (or submission of the proposal);</p> <p>d) ensures the conditions (and funding) necessary to implement the candidate's research (in line with the draft research plan) as a research project leader, co-leader, participant, collaborator or in other ways;</p> <p>e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-supervisions etc.);</p> <p>f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.</p>	<p>c) YES.*</p> <p>d) NO.*</p> <p>e) YES.*</p> <p>f) YES.*</p>
<p>c) During preparation and submission of the proposal, see section 2.6 of Quality Assessment.</p> <p>d) Most supervisors are involved in one or more research projects, but it is not clear how much funding, if any, these projects provide for research assistants. Only 16/102 students on the programme are funded, so this must mean that supervisors are not always in a position to ensure funding through research projects. On generous provision of other support for research, see section 1.4 of Quality Assessment.</p> <p>e) Currently through co-supervision rather than formal training, see section 2.4.</p> <p>f) See sections 1.3 and 1.5 of Quality Assessment.</p>	
<p>6. All teachers meet the following conditions:</p> <p>a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position;</p> <p>b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course (table 1, Teachers).</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.</p>	<p>YES.</p>
<p>8. The programme ensures that all candidates spend at least three years doing independent research (while studying, individually, within or outside courses), which includes writing the thesis, publishing, participating in international conferences, field work, attending courses relevant for research etc.</p>	<p>NO.*</p>
<p>*According to the self-evaluation report 19.44% of programme consists of taught mandatory courses. By implication, the various elective courses count as part of research training rather than as teaching. However, this is questionable: although students' comments during the site visit indicated that they found their elective courses useful in developing their research skills and ideas (see sections 4.5-4.7 of Quality Assessment), most electives are currently taught through the medium of lectures and assessed by written or oral examination, less often through seminar papers.</p>	
<p>9. For joint programmes and doctoral schools (at the university level): cooperation between HEIs is based on adequate contracts; joint programmes are delivered in cooperation with accredited HEIs; the HEI delivers the programme within a doctoral school in line with the regulations and ensures good coordination aimed at supporting the candidates; at least 80% of courses are delivered by teachers employed at HEIs within the consortium.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>

## QUALITY ASSESSMENT

<p><b>1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p>	
<p>1.1. HEI is distinguished by its scientific/ artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The programme avails itself of distinguished academics with significant international relations and experiences, publications in international peer-reviewed journals and book publishers, participation and organization of international conferences, memberships to editorial board of international journals and other scholar associations. The panel has also directly ascertained that the dissertations produced by the programme are generally of high quality, and genuinely examine and apply the latest linguistic theories to produce original insightful results.</p> <p>The indicators of international esteem that the panel was able to individually check include the staff's publications, which include books with established international academic publishers such as John Benjamins, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, Peter Lang Publishing, as well as papers in international journals such as Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics, Zeitschrift fur Dialektologie und Linguistik, Information Processing and Management, Informatica, Lingue e Linguaggio, Tourism Culture and Communication. According to the self-evaluation report, the programme staff also collaborated with leading universities, including Harvard (USA), SOAS (UK), UCL (UK), Freie Universität Berlin (Germany), Leiden (The Netherlands), Delhi (India), Kyoto (Japan).</p> <p>The staff's affiliations include prestigious national and international associations, including the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the Academia Europaea, the European Science Foundation, the European Research Council, and the Deutsches Forschungszentrum für Künstliche Intelligenz (German Research Centre for Artificial Intelligence).</p>
<p>1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.</p>	<p><b>(Minor) Improvements necessary</b></p> <p>The programme is high quality as far as the ratio of courses delivered by the institution's staff (as opposed to external teachers) is concerned, which at 91.5% goes well beyond the required 50%.</p> <p>A few members of staff, though, exceed the workload threshold of 360 norm-hours, with potential adverse effects on the quality of their supervision. The members of staff</p>

	<p>exceeding 400nh in Table 1 need to reduce their teaching duties.</p>
<p>1.3. The teachers are highly qualified researchers who actively engage with the topics they teach, providing a quality doctoral programme.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The teachers involved are highly qualified. There is clear independent evidence of their recent research activity on the topics they teach and, more importantly, provide supervision for. Specifically, almost all members of staff involved in the programme show several publications recorded in their Google Scholar profiles for the last five years, and in several cases these publications have already started attracting citations.</p> <p>According to the self-evaluation report, members of staff also undergo an assessment of their teaching and scientific work every five years. This is a welcome policy, as it safeguards against a potential relaxation of the current high standards of the programme.</p>
<p>1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.</p>	<p><b>(Minor) Improvements necessary</b></p> <p>As mentioned in the preceding points, the high quality of the supervisors' qualifications is amply demonstrated by the scope of their national and international research outputs and relations.</p> <p>Our interviews with current doctoral students, as well as with alumni, revealed a high satisfaction with the quality of the supervision currently provided, as well as with its frequency (often weekly meetings, and occasionally even more frequent), and duration (often more than an hour).</p> <p>The high number of completed doctorates reported in the self-evaluation report for the last five years also attests to the success of the programme.</p> <p>The ratio of at most three students per supervisor is met on average, and it is also met for most supervisors. Table 2 from the self-evaluation report shows that ten supervisors supervised more than 3 students in the last five years, but the information provided is insufficient to attest whether they ever exceeded the three-students threshold in any individual year (as some students might have completed their dissertation and been replaced by new students, while others might have become inactive).</p> <p>Twelve doctoral candidates have quit the programme in the last five years; i.e. about 12% of all 102 doctoral candidates. This is quite a high dropout rate. The panel <b>recommends</b> raising the entry level grade to 4.0, in line with other linguistics programmes (e.g. Osijek). We also invite the programme organizers to contact and speak with the</p>

	<p>dropped out students to better identify what factors led to their quitting the programme.</p>
<p>1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The self-evaluation report lists an appropriate set of offices and procedures to monitor the competencies and performances of teachers and supervisors. These include the Quality Assurance Committee at Faculty level and a second Quality Assurance Committee at programme's level. The quality of studying is reviewed yearly via annual assessment forms submitted by teachers and students listing their courses, publications, and citations, as well as other esteem indicators. The competence of teachers is assessed by the University at the appointment and re-appointment stage.</p> <p>The self-evaluation report also claims that this monitoring and assessment exercise has already led to significant improvements to the programme. Our meeting with the alumni and the current students confirmed that this has indeed been the case, leading to (i) a significant reduction in the number of taught courses during the duration of the PhD (thus extending the time devoted to individual research), (ii) a decrease in the number of courses taught in identical format at MA and PhD level, and (iii) a corresponding increase in the number of workshop/seminar-based courses (which both the alumni and the current students clearly prefer because they can be more effectively tailored towards their research interests). Following the reaccreditation report of 2015, the PhD programme is also going to introduce a peer review scheme concerning teaching and grading as of 2018/19.</p>
<p>1.6. The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b></p> <p>The programme avails itself of the Faculty Library, built in 2009, which provides an excellent service including IT access, e-journals, thesis depository, several databases and electronic resources, and interlibrary loan, to mention just a few. The students we spoke to confirmed the central role played by the library for their research, and praised its services very highly.</p> <p>Considering the current structure of the programme, with taught courses and student-supervisor meetings mostly occurring during the weekend, we find that the current opening hours of the library – open only until 2pm on Saturday and closed on Sunday – do not appropriately serve doctoral students. While we understand that the library's opening hours are not under the control of the PhD</p>

	<p>programme here assessed, we nevertheless think it is our duty to recommend longer opening hours on Saturdays and Sundays (for comparison, the main library of University College London outside holiday periods is open 00:00 to 21:00 on Saturday, and 11:00 to 21:00 on Sunday).</p> <p>Our conversations with alumni and current students also highlighted an insufficient amount of email capacity in their accounts, as well as insufficient office space. Ideally, both should be addressed. We do realize that physical space is often at a premium in many institutions, but we expect email capacity to be improvable and would like to see it improved.</p>
<p><b>2. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME</b></p>	
<p>2.1. The HEI has established and accepted effective procedures for proposing, approving and delivering doctoral education. The procedures include identification of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social and economic needs.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The University of Zagreb has regulations for proposing, approving and delivering doctoral programmes, including a rationale for the programme in terms of academic, social, economic and cultural needs (see section 5 of: <a href="http://www.unizg.hr/fileadmin/rektorat/O_Sveucilistu/Dokumenti_javnost/Propisi/Pravilnici/Pravilnik_o_postupku_vrednovanja_sveucilisnih_doktorskih_programa_5_7_2011.pdf">www.unizg.hr/fileadmin/rektorat/O_Sveucilistu/Dokumenti_javnost/Propisi/Pravilnici/Pravilnik_o_postupku_vrednovanja_sveucilisnih_doktorskih_programa_5_7_2011.pdf</a>).</p> <p>The regulations covering the doctoral programme in Linguistics (at <a href="https://goo.gl/o4upyZ">https://goo.gl/o4upyZ</a>) contain a brief summary of the goals of this programme. These are further elaborated in the relevant section of the HEI's self-evaluation report: they identify academic, cultural, social and economic needs for linguistic expertise in Croatia both on the national level and in its EU and international contexts.</p>
<p>2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The research strategy of this programme is formulated within the framework set out in the strategy document of the University of Zagreb (<a href="http://www.unizg.hr/fileadmin/rektorat/O_Sveucilistu/Dokumenti_javnost/Dokumenti/Strateski_dokumenti/Izvi_esca/Istrazivacka_strategija_verzija.pdf">http://www.unizg.hr/fileadmin/rektorat/O_Sveucilistu/Dokumenti_javnost/Dokumenti/Strateski_dokumenti/Izvi_esca/Istrazivacka_strategija_verzija.pdf</a>) and is based on a SWOT analysis which largely coincides with the observations of the reaccreditation panel. The strategy sets out general strategic goals, in particular academic excellence, research environment, quality assurance, interdisciplinarity, international networking and projects, non-academic partnerships, innovation and visibility. The programme is clearly aligned with these goals. The strategy</p>



	<p>also identifies 8 broad ‘thematic complexes’, some of which are interdisciplinary in character (connexions with Philosophy, Neuroscience, Computation). The themes correspond to the research projects and national/international activities of staff, and so reflect the academic fields within which doctoral research topics are chosen. The topics tend to focus on Croatian data, but a number of recent dissertations have been based on comparative material from other European languages.</p>
<p>2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The programme underwent internal evaluation in 2013/14, with a positive result. More recently the Faculty has proposed modifications, implemented in 2017, to align the programme more closely with the Bologna system. The ratio of taught courses to research has been reduced and the ECT weighting of the Propaedeutic Workshop has been increased; a formal deadline for submission of the dissertation proposal has been defined; evaluative progress reports by students have been introduced at the end of the first and second years of the course, in addition to those provided by supervisors (examples of both were available to the reaccreditation panel). The comments of alumni from earlier generations, as well as current students, confirmed that these are recent improvements.</p> <p>The HEI was able to produce detailed quantitative information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the academic activity of teachers and supervisors, as measured by rates of publication and citation and by leadership/membership of national or international projects;</li> <li>- the numbers of dissertations completed under the programme and of articles published jointly by students and their supervisors;</li> <li>- the success rate of students and their subsequent employment, demonstrating that over the past 5 years out of 52 students who were awarded doctorates, 42 were appointed to positions at universities or research institutions in Croatia or abroad: 4 in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 2 in France (however, the current moratorium on refilling university posts is likely to have a negative effect on employment rates and potentially on intake to the programme).</li> </ul> <p>Over the past 5 years 12 students dropped out of the programme, reportedly for financial reasons or because of pressures arising from part-time study while in</p>

	<p>employment (feedback from them appears not to be collected). Similar factors, or personal circumstances such as illness, apply to the students who are currently inactive.</p>
<p>2.4. HEI continuously monitors supervisors' performance and has mechanisms for evaluating supervisors, and, if necessary, changing them and mediating between the supervisors and the candidates.</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b></p> <p>The regulations of the programme define the duties of study advisors and supervisors (not all staff are aware of this), as well as students' obligations towards them. A university-wide training workshop for supervisors was recently in place, but has recently been suspended. <b>We recommend that the training workshop should be reinstated.</b></p> <p>Informal training of new supervisors is provided through the mechanism of co-supervision, for which there is substantial evidence (at least 8 instances). There is no formal procedure for rewarding successful supervisors, but as teaching and supervision on doctoral programmes are not contractual requirements, those who provide them are paid, and presumably continue to be paid only if they are reasonably successful. For evidence of monitoring through annual feedback forms and of effective supervision, see section 2.3 above.</p> <p>Both current and former students confirmed that their supervisors were readily available and devoted substantial time and effort to consultation and guidance. A single reported instance of an unhelpful supervisor (about a decade ago) had been resolved satisfactorily by replacement. The regulations of the programme allow for a single change of supervisor and indicate the procedure for this.</p> <p>Although the programme is supposed to occupy 3 years of full-time study, currently most students take it on a part-time basis because they are either employed as research/teaching assistants or, in the majority of cases, self-funding and therefore obliged to earn. Consequently the usual completion period is estimated at 5-6 years.</p>
<p>2.5. HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>Academic integrity is assured informally through example and guidance, and formally through the Ethics Committees of the programme, the Faculty and the University; both the latter committees publish Ethical Codes which deal, <i>inter alia</i>, with academic independence and with issues of discrimination, harassment, plagiarism and falsification. Electronic checking for plagiarism is not employed, but would probably be of limited use, since it requires a database in the relevant language, which is usually Croatian. Academic integrity is also guaranteed by the requirement</p>

	for an external member on committees which evaluate proposals for dissertations and the dissertations themselves.
2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>Although some students embark on this programme with a dissertation topic in view, they may well find that it needs to be changed, and often students are not in a position to formulate their research proposals until the second year of the programme (though they must now do so before the third year). This is to be expected: only about 50% of students come to the course with a prior grounding in Linguistics, and even those who are already qualified to work as research or teaching assistants need time to identify a suitable topic and agree with a potential supervisor. As outlined in the regulations of the programme, the study advisor and the prospective supervisor both participate in helping the student to formulate a proposal. The regulations outline the procedures for assessing and defending the proposal, with templates for presentation and assessment which are available online; as indicated under 2.5, the assessment committee includes at least one external member. The reaccreditation panel had the opportunity to see examples of such documentation on its site visit.</p>
2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>The regulations of the programme outline the procedures for assessing the dissertation and for its public defence, with templates for presentation, assessment and recording the defence, all of which are available online; as indicated under 2.5, the assessment committee includes at least one external member, who is sometimes from a foreign university (6 instances in the past 5 years). Candidates are required to have at least one publication in an internationally or nationally competitive journal. The dissertation is in the form of a monograph and is usually in Croatian. Permission may be granted to write in another language, particularly in cases of co-tutelage with a foreign university (2 examples). The regulations do not make provision for other formats than the monograph, and it might not be in candidates' best interests to seek the degree of PhD on the basis of articles, since unpredictable publication dates might well delay the award of the degree. The reaccreditation panel had the opportunity on its site visit to see examples of records from the defence of dissertations, and noted that in one instance, although the</p>

	<p>dissertation was assessed as satisfactory overall, the candidate was advised to adopt a more rigorous system of citation.</p>
<p>2.8. The HEI publishes all necessary information on the study programme, admissions, delivery and conditions for progression and completion, in accessible outlets and media.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b>  Full information about the programme is available online, and current students confirmed that they had no difficulty in finding what they needed online and through circular e-mails about academic and funding opportunities, as well as through a briefing meeting at the start of the programme. However, it was not clear how widely the programme was advertised beyond Croatia. The range of enrolments by foreign students last year, from Bosnia-Herzegovina (1), China (2) and Iraq (1), suggests either that advertisement is not entirely effective, or that the programme is not highly competitive at international level.</p>
<p>2.9. Funds collected for the needs of doctoral education are distributed transparently and in a way that ensures sustainability and further development of doctoral education (ensures that candidates' research is carried out and supported, so that doctoral education can be completed successfully).</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b>  The self-evaluation report attributes the money from tuition fees to the purchase of study literature, equipment for teaching and research, and to payments to teachers and supervisors, since their contributions to the programme are extra-contractual. As long as this is the case, the cost of the programme must be relatively high. <b>We recommend that the contractual hours of teachers and supervisors should be adjusted to include their contributions to doctoral programmes.</b>  Partial or complete exemption from fees is available to research/teaching assistants employed by the HEI (24 over the past 5 years) or working on research projects of HEI staff. However, a reduction in the availability of such assistantships has limited institutional opportunities and resulted in a large number (80%) of self-funding students, since governmental support for doctoral programmes is not available. Access to scholarships for study is restricted, e.g. on a local basis. The HEI endeavours, through the Erasmus scheme and by circulating information about sources of funding, to support students and provides some limited financial assistance with publications and attendance at conferences. <b>We recommend that government should be urged to provide some financial support for doctoral programmes, in the interests of national sustainability of higher education and international academic competitiveness.</b></p>

<p>2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b> A table of tuition fees and associated charges is available online. As indicated in 2.9, the self-evaluation report attributes the money from tuition fees to the real costs of studying, but no explicit breakdown of costs was provided to account for the fee of 10,000 Kuna per semester or for the target of 30 students in each intake to this programme. <b>We recommend that a more transparent breakdown of costs covered by tuition fees should be developed as an aid to determining sustainable admissions targets, in addition to the admissions criteria outlined in section 3 of Quality Assessment.</b></p>
<p><b>3. SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION</b></p>	
<p>3.1. The HEI establishes admission quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b> The programme admits students based on a 3.5/5 GPA as well as letters of reference. Currently there are approximately 30 students enrolled in the programme during each generation, and there are currently 102 students enrolled in all. The programme states the following as admission factors in their self-evaluation report: 1) Number of available teachers; 2) Number of mentors in relation to the current number of enrolled doctoral candidates and their status in the study 3) The ratio of appointed mentors and doctoral candidates must always be below 1:3; 4) Research capacities and number of philological projects at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences; 5) Planned research projects of teachers and mentors. The student-to-supervisor ratio currently averages at around 1:1.6 (12 supervisors for 20 students) and at 1:2.6 in the last five years (24 supervisors for 63 students). Based on these figures, the supervision load for supervisors is appropriate, showing that admission figures have been appropriate.</p>
<p>3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b> The programme provides the following social and cultural factors for determining the admission quotas: 1) Need of scientific community for doctors of linguistics – 43 alumni graduated in the past 5 years working on research and higher education positions in the public sector; 2) Employees’ interest of other constituent units from other scientific areas for study enrolment – currently enrolled</p>

	<p>candidates employed at the Croatian Studies, Faculty of Graphic Arts and Faculty of Transport and Traffic Sciences at the University of Zagreb;</p> <p>3) Monitoring the employment of PhD graduates – there are no unemployed doctors of linguistics at the Croatian Employment Service. Alumni and doctoral candidates, part from scientific institutions, work in public institutions and minority associations.</p>
<p>3.3. The HEI establishes the admission quotas taking into account the funding available to the candidates, that is, on the basis of the absorption potentials of research projects or other sources of funding.</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary.</b></p> <p>Only a small number of students are funded (16 are funded vs. 86 who are self-funded). The programme does not have control over which students get funding. We recommend that the programme looks into finding ways to support more students. This might be done by incentivising professors' applications for external research funding. The department might also consider appointing to the programme's teaching/supervision positions scholars already holding project funding.</p>
<p>3.4. The HEI should pay attention to the number of candidates admitted as to provide each with an advisor (a potential supervisor). From the point of admission to the end of doctoral education, efforts are invested so that each candidate has a sustainable research plan and is able to complete doctoral research successfully.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b></p> <p>Students can be assigned a supervisor as early as the second semester. Until then, each student has guidance from an appointed student advisor.</p>
<p>3.5. The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary.</b></p> <p>The number of international students currently enrolled in the program is small 4/106, with the majority of students coming from Croatia and, in particular, Zagreb. Students are encouraged to write their dissertations in Croatian, though it is possible to write them in another language if the student makes an application to the Faculty. In our interviews, it seemed extremely unlikely that a student would be turned down for writing in another language, but we got the impression that students are encouraged to write in Croatian.</p> <p>We recommend that students be encouraged to write at least part of their research and/or translate their dissertations into one of the major foreign languages.</p>

<p>3.6. The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.</p>	<p><b>(Minor) Improvements necessary</b>  All candidates must have a minimum grade point average of 3.5, a completed philological or equivalent graduate study, and be proficient in at least two foreign languages. All candidates have a motivation interview and are obliged to submit written motivation for the doctoral study along with a description of their research interest. It is also necessary to enclose two recommendations of the university teachers, one of which must be from a potential mentor/study advisor. With respect to these criteria, the best candidates are selected.</p> <p>We are satisfied with the process, but we were informed that the current policies lead to 95% of the applicants being accepted. Considering that we were also informed of a reasonably high dropout rate, we recommend raising the admission point grade to 4.00. See also point 1.4 above of this Quality Assessment.</p>
<p>3.7. The HEI ensures that the selection procedure is transparent and in line with published criteria, and that there is a transparent complaints procedure.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b>  Following the selection of the candidate, a list of the selected candidates is published. There is also a public deadline for appeal for anyone having a complaint, though there is no clear documentation on how this process works.</p> <p>Admission hours of the Head and Deputy-Head of the Study - being the first step in the appeal procedure - are published, after which everything is further reported to the Study Council which responds to the candidate's appeal in written form.</p>
<p>3.8. There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b>  The activities and procedure for the recognition of the various activities are defined at the level of the University of Zagreb by Instructions for the Initiation of the Academic Recognition of a Foreign Higher Education Qualification and Recognition of Periods of Study at Foreign Higher Education Institution for the Purpose of Continuing Education at the University of Zagreb (<a href="https://goo.gl/87XB6e">https://goo.gl/87XB6e</a>) that are in line with the Act on Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications (Official Gazette, No. 158/03, 198/03, 138/06 and 45/11).</p> <p>Recognition of ECTS credits is defined by the Ordinance on Allocation of ECTS Credits to Extra-Curricular Activities of the University of Zagreb (<a href="https://goo.gl/7poFDr">https://goo.gl/7poFDr</a>). The recognition of credits is approved by the Working Group for ECTS credits of the University of Zagreb.</p>

	<p>For candidates who studied under the study system in place before 2005 and obtained a master's degree in science, the PDS Linguistics Council will decide on the extent to which the study can be recognized, or specify the obligations at the doctoral study and accordingly approve the enrolment. If a candidate already studied and completed certain study obligations at the doctoral study of linguistics at another Croatian or foreign higher education institution and has filed an application for the transfer to the PDS Linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb, there is a possibility of recognizing study obligations, about which the PDSL Council decides. Furthermore, the student's published papers and participation in conferences and generic skills acquisition programmes can be recognized as well. The number of ECTS credits to be allocated shall be determined by the Study Council upon the student's application. When enrolling, the students are informed about the recognition of previous achievements.</p> <p>From our interviews with international students, the process for having international credentials recognised was straightforward. Nevertheless we note that the process had to be carried through by the doctoral candidate who had to file the relevant applications, whereas in the doctoral programmes in the UK it is the admitting university that carries out the procedure for the candidate. This could be a more effective policy, less likely to prevent international students from applying. We do realize this improvement is unlikely to be under the control of the programme organizers.</p>
<p>3.9. Candidates' rights and obligations are defined in relevant HEI regulations and a contract on studying that provides for a high level of supervisory and institutional support to the candidates.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality.</b> From the interviews with students, we came to the conclusion that the students are satisfied with respect to the involvement of their respective supervisors. Feedback and consultations with the supervisor happens regularly, and – while the exact number of meetings per month varies for each student at different period of their time in the programme – the number of consultations ranged from 1-2 times a week to minimally once per month, thus in line with the thresholds stated in article 13.(2) of the Programme Regulations.</p>
<p>3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b> Both students and supervisors file annual reports that allow for the monitoring of the students' progression and of the</p>



	supervisors' performance. We view the lack of funding for most doctoral students as the greatest threat to their successful completion.
<b>4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES</b>	
<p>4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b></p> <p>The content and quality of the education received by the students is in line with what we would expect at our respective institutions, though there are various differences in the structure of the programme.</p> <p>The biggest structural difference between the programme at the University of Zagreb and the programmes we are familiar with in the United Kingdom and the USA is that in the latter institutions it is standard for a PhD programme to be full-time. In this way, the students are more incorporated into the structure of the department.</p> <p>Another notable difference is that while USA doctoral programmes have a taught component, in the UK this is not usual, though there may be progression from a Master's course which combines specialist teaching with research orientation. The programme at Zagreb thus has elements in common with both the UK and US systems we are familiar with.</p> <p>Currently, the mandatory taught courses at Zagreb make up 20% of the programme, which is desirable considering the different level of preparation across different applicants. In our interviews, it also became clear that in many of these courses there is an emphasis on preparing students to conduct independent research. Some of the students with previous experience in linguistics, though, found some of these courses to be repeated information. We therefore recommend that students who have already completed an MA degree in linguistics (and especially a degree awarded from the University of Zagreb) have the option to opt out of these courses.</p> <p>We also recommend that the department investigate ways to provide more funding opportunities to their students, as this aspect of the programme is in stark contrast to the kinds of opportunities that students have in PhD programmes in other countries.</p>
<p>4.2. Programme learning outcomes, as well as the learning outcomes of modules and subject units, are aligned with the level 8.2 of the</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b></p> <p>The programme at Zagreb provides the following Learning Outcomes in the self-evaluation report, which they state are developed in accordance with the Level 8.2 of the Croatian</p>

<p>CroQF. They clearly describe the competencies the candidates will develop during the doctoral programme, including the ethical requirements of doing research.</p>	<p>Qualifications Framework and the Level 8 of the European Qualifications Framework (<a href="https://goo.gl/Z1fPFi">https://goo.gl/Z1fPFi</a>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L01: Explain the place of each fundamental linguistic discipline in relation to the other (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse analysis) and identify their interrelatedness;</li> <li>• L02: Critically evaluate individual linguistic schools and trends;</li> <li>• L03: Evaluate the relationship and the advantages and disadvantages of traditional and modern linguistic schools and trends;</li> <li>• L04: Integrate fundamental characteristics of individual linguistic schools and trends in a broader linguistic context;</li> <li>• L05: Analyse and interpret the language corpora according to adopted theoretical frameworks</li> <li>• L06: Critically evaluate linguistic literature to enhance one's own theoretical and methodological framework;</li> <li>• L07: Modify the existing, create one's own and apply appropriate methodology apparatus for one's own scientific-research purposes;</li> <li>• L08: Independently make verbal and written works on one's own scientific-research based on the rules of scientific communication;</li> <li>• L09: Professionally present arguments on one's own scientific research work.</li> </ul> <p>We find these Learning Outcomes to be appropriate, though we feel that L02, L03, and L04 are excessively similar and should be integrated together into a single learning outcome.</p> <p>We also find that there is a slight over-emphasis on the recitation of information from previous literature. In fact, in one of the dissertations we reviewed, nearly half the content of the dissertation was the literature review. We would encourage that the summarisation of previous work should be less central, and instead the emphasis should be placed on original results and/or novelty of the analysis.</p> <p>From interviews with the students, we observed that the content of some of the doctoral programme courses did overlap with that of MA courses. As already mentioned, we</p>
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	<p>recommend that students who have already taken these courses, or acquired the same content through similar courses elsewhere, have the option to opt out.</p> <p>As for the discussion of ethics, it is included in the highly valuable propaedeutic course that takes place in the first semester.</p>
<p>4.3. Programme learning outcomes are logically and clearly connected with teaching contents, as well as the contents included in supervision and research.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b> The taught content appears to be appropriate and is relevant, advanced and recent.</p>
<p>4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.</p>	<p><b>(Minor) Improvements necessary</b> During the visit, we were able to read through various dissertations, though only a subset of these were accessible to the members of the panel not speaking Croatian. We feel that writing dissertation in Croatian alone limits the potential for reaching an international audience. We discussed this with the programme Head as well as supervisors, and were told that there is an intentional goal to contribute to the development of the scientific vocabulary of the Croatian language and to the students' ability to write on academic subjects in that language. While we understand this goal, we believe that students should also be encouraged to make their work accessible in one of the world's major languages in order to further their career and increase the international competitiveness of the institution. One suggestion is to require that the article that students must submit to a journal before graduation be in English or equivalent language. Another suggestion is that students can gain ECTS credits by translating their articles/dissertation into a foreign language. We were overall satisfied with the quality of the dissertations and found most of them to be of high quality. As mentioned, a couple of the dissertations we surveyed over-relied on expansive literature reviews. This is a mild concern, in that such dissertations were more focused on summarising previous literature than contributing novel ideas. But ultimately, all of the learning outcomes were present in the dissertations that we surveyed, though we recommend that more emphasis be put on learning outcomes LO7 and LO8.</p>

<p>4.5. Teaching methods (and ECTS, if applicable) are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Improvements necessary</b>  We found the teaching methods to be of the appropriate type and at the appropriate level for doctoral instruction. During the interviews we were able to ascertain that there has been a recent shift to move from ex-cathedra courses to workshop/seminar courses with discussion and original student research. However the description of elective courses indicates that many are still delivered at least in part through the medium of lectures, and most are assessed by written or oral examination, less often by seminar paper. We recommend that as far as possible elective courses should be assessed by short research reports or seminar papers rather than by examination, possibly involve a PASS/FAIL mark, and be reduced in number.  As we already mentioned, we also recommend that students be allowed to opt out from course similar in content to courses they have already taken elsewhere.</p>
<p>4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b>  This programme has a clear emphasis on providing students with transferable skills. One way this program in particular focuses on this aspect is by the offering of a Propaedeutic Workshop in the first semester which focuses on giving the students the tools for conducting academic research, training in academic writing, and how to run an academic project.  In our interviews, we observed that the course is highly valued by the students because it provides them with the research skills they need for identifying their dissertation topic and conducting their research.</p>
<p>4.7. Teaching content is adapted to the needs of current and future research and candidates' training (individual course plans, generic skills etc.).</p>	<p><b>High level of quality</b>  The majority (though we did not have a clear numerical breakdown of how many) of the courses in the degree program are stated to be elective in the self-evaluation report, which means that the students are able to choose which courses best fit their own research programme.  Further, each student is provided the tools for developing their own individual research programme in the first semester's Propaedeutic Workshop.  Finally, the seminar courses involve a research paper as the final assessment and this encourages the individual student's development of their unique research program.</p>
<p>4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.</p>	<p><b>(Minor) Improvements necessary</b>  The number of international students is low, with two from China, one from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and one from Iraq.</p>

	<p>There are few instructors from outside of Croatia, though there are links with external mentors. According to the self-evaluation report, in the last 5 years there have been 4 foreign scholars appointed as mentors (approximately 10%). Further, two dual doctoral dissertations (dissertations that involve a second co-supervisor at an international institution) have been defended within the same period. Given the goals of the ASHE to internationalise PhD programs, we believe that the programme should encourage a larger number of international mentors and dual doctoral dissertations.</p> <p>We also note that while students can write their dissertations in another language, the majority of dissertations were in Croatian. We discuss this in detail in point 4.4.</p> <p>While the self-evaluation report states that 336 ERASMUS contracts have been signed, it is not clear how many PhD students have taken advantage of such an opportunity. We recommend that in the future as many students as possible are encouraged to take up this opportunity.</p> <p>The self-evaluation report also emphasises that students and staff are regularly made aware of mobility opportunities, though it is not clear that this has been fully taken advantage of. We suggest that this expands in the future and that more of an effort is made to have staff and students participate in exchange programs internationally.</p>
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**\* NOTE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AND QUALITY LABEL**

The role of the Expert Panel in the re-accreditation of doctoral study programmes is manifold. The Expert Panel or part of the Expert Panel visiting a higher education institution drafts a report on the basis of a self-evaluation report, the accompanying relevant documentation, and a site visit to HEI. The draft report is adopted by all members of the Cluster Expert Panel, while the president of the Cluster Expert Panel is responsible for coordinating the assessment levels.

The report contains an assessment on whether a doctoral study programme delivered at a higher education institution complies with the prescribed laws and by-laws, as well as any additional/recommended requirements defined by the Agency's Accreditation Council, and whether a higher education institution can obtain a positive, i.e. satisfactory quality assessment according to the criteria set out in this document. Moreover, the Expert Panel must make recommendations for quality improvement.

Based on the assessment of all these elements, the Expert Panel may propose to the Accreditation Council of the Agency to issue either a confirmation on compliance, a letter of expectation for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should eliminate the identified deficiencies, or to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel has assessed that a doctoral study programme delivered by a higher education institution does not meet legal and other requirements or that the quality of a study programme is not ensured (i.e. that HEI does not meet additional requirements or recommendations made by the Accreditation Council, or has a very poor quality assessment), they should propose to the Accreditation Council to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel considers that the relevant laws and bylaws have been met by a higher education institution, but that certain elements mentioned above do not meet the quality requirements, while they consider that the identified shortcomings can be corrected within a time frame of three years, they should issue a letter of expectation.

If the Expert Panel considers that all legal and additional/recommended requirements have been met and the quality assessment is satisfactory, i.e. that a study programme fulfils the learning outcomes appropriately defined for that level and scientific area, they may propose the issuance of a certificate and have a HEI commit to quality improvement and reporting to the Agency during the follow-up period.

Finally, if the Expert Panel has, in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, proposed issuing the certificate of compliance and assessed that, in addition to meeting the minimum quality requirements – i.e. the qualification framework level - for a study programme, the programme should be identified as a doctoral programme of a 'high level of quality', the Expert Panel may propose to the Agency's Accreditation Council that such a doctoral study programme be awarded the 'high quality label'. Thus the Agency, with the consent of the Accreditation Council, grants a higher education institution the right to use the label for their academic and promotional purposes.

The 'high quality label' cannot be proposed or awarded to a programme or a higher education institution that does not comply with the requirements laid down by the laws and bylaws mentioned in this document, and any additional requirements recommended by the Accreditation Council. Moreover, the quality assessment awarded to a study programme should reflect a high level of quality inasmuch that at least half of the sub-criteria in each of the quality assessment criteria are assessed as being of high quality. The Accreditation Council of the Agency issues a final opinion on the label awarded. The content and form of the quality labels shall be prescribed by the Agency in a relevant general act.

The Accreditation Council of the Agency discusses the final report with all recommendations and suggestions, and issues their opinion on the report. Based on a prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation to the minister responsible for science and higher education, and upon receipt of the minister's final decision on the outcome of the procedure, awards the 'high quality label' to a higher education institution.