



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

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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) Study Glottodidactics on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Reports of the programmes, 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 activities of higher education institutions and university postgraduate study programmes are re-accredited.

Expert Panel is 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 programme,
- 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,
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,
10. Prof. Ljiljana Šarić, University of Oslo, Norway,
11. Prof. Dr. Katrin Boeckh, Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität in Munich, Germany,
12. Prof. Vincent Gaffney, University of Bradford, United Kingdom,
13. Prof. Mika Vahakangas, Lund University, Sweden,
14. Dr. sc. Nicole Butterfield, Marie Curie Fellow, Seged University, Hungary,

15. Anna Meens, Leiden University, Netherlands,
16. Kevin Kenjar, University of California, Berkeley, United States of America,
17. Dr. hab. Elżbieta 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 Mørnesland, University of Oslo, Norway,
23. Dajana Vasiljevicová, Charles University, Prag, Czech Republic,
24. Prof. dr. Christian Neuhäuser, Universitaet Dortmund, Germany,
25. Dr. Dries Bosschaert, KU Leuven, Belgium,
26. Dr. Oliver George Downing, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom,
27. Prof. Hanoch Ben-Yami, Central European University, Hungary,
28. Sonja Kačar, University Toulouse II – Jean Jaurès, France,
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. Nadia Mifka-Profozic, University of York, United Kingdom;
- Prof Vieri Samek Lodovici, Department of Linguistics, University College London, United Kingdom;
- Dr. Catherine MacRobert, Oxford University, United Kingdom;
- Dr. hab. Elżbieta Gajek, Institute of Applied Linguistics, University of Warsaw, Poland;
- Moreno Mitrović, PhD (post-doc), University of Cyprus, Cyprus;
- Kyle Jerro, PhD (post-doc), University of Essex, 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 PROGRAMME

Institution delivering the programmes: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

Institution providing the programmes: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb

Place of delivery: Zagreb

Scientific area and field: Humanities, Philology

Name of the study programme: ***Foreign Language Education (Glottodidactics)***

Number of doctoral candidates: 40

Number of supervisors: 15 appointed, 32 potential supervisors

Number of teachers: 29 (17 funded)

Ratio of officially appointed supervisors and their doctoral candidates: 1:1.27

Taught/research ratio:60:40 (%)

Learning outcomes of the study programme:

LO 1: Sees and is able to interpret the field of second language acquisition, its relationship to other linguistic subfields and disciplines and other related fields and branches of humanities and social sciences.

LO 2: Is able to critically assess certain theoretical and applied linguistic approaches and theories in the field of SLA.

LO 3: Is fully in command of scientific terminology in the field and creates terminology according to the pattern found in the foreign language and knowledge about the term in order to elect their own theoretical-methodological approach to research.

LO 4: Is able to critically assess scientific and expert sources belonging to the field of SLA.

LO 5: Analyses and interprets collected corpora according to the acquired theoretical framework.

LO 6: Independently structures oral and written assignments about his/her scientific/research work based on the rules of scientific communication.

LO 7: Is able to engage in expert communication on scientific/research work.

LO 8: Is able to connect important factors in subfields, disciplines, branches and fields in his/her own research.

LO 9: Elects and applies appropriate methods and technologies in scientific research respecting ethical principles.

LO 10: Plans, organizes and runs his/her own research.

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

Upon the completion of the re-accreditation procedure of the study programme *Foreign Language Education*, 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 renders its opinion in which it recommends to the Accreditation Council of the Agency the following:

issue a letter of expectation for the period of one (1) year in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements. The letter of recommendation includes suspension of student enrolment in the academic year 2018-19.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Changing the name of the Programme to Foreign Language Education (or Applied Linguistics) would ensure international visibility and comparability.
2. Reconsider Learning Outcomes and revise them to meet the requirements of Croatian QF 8.2 level. The current LOs are more appropriate for a Master's level programme (e.g. in the current LOs there is no mention of creation of *new knowledge* and *extending the frontier of knowledge*, which should be the core of any PhD study).
3. Raise the standards of thesis assessment in order to improve the quality of theses produced. When assessing a thesis particular attention should be paid to and checked whether it presents a thorough review of state-of-the-art literature in the field, and whether there has been methodological rigour in planning and conducting research, as well as in the analysis of findings.
4. All theses should be made publicly available, and the most successful ones translated into one of the world languages (if the thesis is written in Croatian).
5. The Panel recommends that the HEI regulation regarding the appointment of supervisors be amended so that the supervisor is assigned to a candidate immediately (or the soonest possible) after the admission.
6. Submission of a research proposal should be made mandatory, and one of the essential criteria for admission to the doctoral programme.
7. The programme should undergo substantial changes in order to achieve the required ratio of 20:80 between taught and research components. All research in the doctoral Programme should be focused on PhD research, and effectively three years should be spent on conducting research related solely to the PhD topic.
8. The Panel strongly recommends that the supervisor should be excluded from thesis assessment and thesis defence, and *independent* international examiners be appointed as external examiners. Doctoral candidates should be allowed to exercise their right to write the thesis in a foreign language if they wish to do so.

9. Mandatory training on ethical issues and data protection regulation should be introduced for all students and staff. From information provided in SER and the links to the HEI Ethics Committee and the Code of Ethics, it can be concluded that there is no awareness of ethical issues involved in research with human participants and data protection regulation. In particular, we wish to emphasise the need for urgent action in relation to the new EU General Data Protection Regulation coming into effect in May 2018, which will have significant implications for all research with human participants.
10. The Panel urges the HEI to provide considerably more support (advisory, administrative and financial planning) to staff in the process of submitting applications for international grants.
11. The Panel also urges the HEI to set up a fund for doctoral students' participation in conferences. Furthermore, the HEI should make full access to online databases available to *all* doctoral students.
12. In order to increase the Programme presence and visibility in international/global environment, more staff outputs should be published in prestigious international journals, more PhD theses should be written in one of the world languages, and selected courses should be taught in a foreign language (especially because the resources already exist at the HEI).
13. The suggested improvements must be implemented by the end of the academic year 2018-19 in order to enrol new students in 2019-20. The failure to meet this condition should automatically result in suspension of the programme.

Note: Considering the current situation and a long-term development of the Programme, the Panel suggests substantial changes to be made in order to achieve a sustainable and internationally competitive doctoral programme in Foreign Language Education/ or Applied Linguistics. Since the first two years of the current programme appear to be very similar to international MA programmes (and they may be needed because of the applicants' lack of prior knowledge), these two years could be transformed into an MSc or Research Master's in FLE, which could be also completed in one year of intensive full-time study. Admission to a PhD programme would then start in the third year for those who completed a two-year MA, or in the second year if the MA was full-time intensive, and would last for three years. Such restructuring would allow for equipping the students with the necessary knowledge in FLE and preparing them for a PhD - which should then be fully research oriented, focused on the PhD topic, and aiming to achieve a high level of quality. The Panel is aware that this would require the time and substantial structural changes, but this seems to be the only sustainable option to solve the currently present issues and weaknesses of the Programme.

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Highly motivated and very enthusiastic students.
2. Generally good or very good working relationship between students and supervisors, which often results in publishing joint papers.
3. Established practice of awarding individual student research activities with ECTS credits.
4. Collaboration among staff from several departments (English, German, Psychology, Phonetics, Linguistics, Information Sciences, etc) which provides for opportunities for interdisciplinary research.

5. High level of multilingual expertise among teachers and supervisors, which makes an immense potential for attracting international candidates (provided the courses were delivered in a foreign language). An added value is the fact that the HEI is located in Zagreb, an attractive destination for international academics and travellers.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. It takes students 5 to 10 years - 7.5 years on average, to complete the programme. Since the Programme began in 2006, most of the candidates have not yet finished their studies (SER, p. 12).
2. A research proposal is not required as one of the criteria for admission; very often it is submitted only in the third year of study.
3. The supervisor is not appointed at admission but much later, when students are already in their third year.
4. Candidates are discouraged from writing their thesis in a foreign language.
5. Involvement of the supervisor in doctoral examination, which raises ethical issues and reduces objectivity and quality that can be achieved only via external examination.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. There were three doctoral dissertations written in English.
2. There is an informal procedure of tracking student progress by the tool 'Gloma'.
3. There was an example of co-supervision by an international researcher. More such practice would benefit the candidates and the Programme itself.
4. There is established practice of doctoral candidates publishing jointly with their supervisors.
5. Some doctoral candidates have presented at well established international conferences (e.g. AAAL).

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

Minimal legal conditions:	YES/NO notes
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.	NO.*
*The HEI theses are not stored either in the repository www.dabar.srce.hr . The Panel found only 10 theses with open access in the HEI - FHSS Library repository (see subsection 2.5)	
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, who submits its decision to the University Senate.	
Additional/ recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council for passing a positive opinion	YES/NO (notes)
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.	Only partly, and only declaratively.
4. The candidate : supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	YES.
5. All supervisors meet the following conditions: 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; 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); c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the candidate (or submission of the proposal); 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; e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-supervisions etc.); f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.	NO.*

<p>*a) YES. b) YES. c) NO. A research plan is not required at admission. Even students in the second year do not have their plans approved. See 2.6 and 2.7 d) NO. Great majority of candidates are self-funded; no candidate is funded from a research project. The funds from supervisors' projects are very limited and usually don't include doctoral students' research. e) NO. There is no training for first-time supervisors. Supervision at Master's level is considered as relevant prior experience - which may be questionable. f) NO. According to SER, only part of the supervisors received positive opinion.</p>	
<p>6. All teachers meet the following conditions: a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position; b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course (table 1, Teachers).</p>	<p>YES YES</p>
<p>7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.</p>	<p>NO. See 2.7</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>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 – no joint programmes.</p>

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

a) RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
1.1. HEI is distinguished by its scientific/ artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The HEI has a long and established tradition among the tertiary institutions in Croatia. The Self-evaluation report provides information about current research and teaching activities, including publishing and citation information for involved teachers and supervisors. There are 29 teachers employed in the Programme, from a range of the HEI departments and other institutions. Their publishing work is recorded in CROSCI (Croatian Scientific Bibliography). According to the information provided there, some teachers (specifically those from the Psychology and Phonetics departments, and to a lesser extent some teachers from English, Linguistics, and Information and Communication Sciences departments) have published papers in the highest ranking journals (CC or SSCI), which is an asset to the Programme. For example, in period 2012-2017, a staff member from the Psychology department published six papers in highest impact journals, and a member from the Phonetics department published four such papers. Seven other teachers have one or two published articles in the first tier journals, while others have published mainly in local/national, regional, or lower ranked international journals. The Panel has also noticed a lack of criteria in CROSCI where, for example, <i>Jezik, casopis za kulturu hrvatskog jezika</i> is classified as a CC journal.</p> <p>Added to the published research articles, there are book chapters and edited books where it is worthy of noticing that several titles have been published with renowned publishers (e.g. Palgrave, Benjamins, De Gruyter) but the majority of books is still within the local or national limits. SER provides a long list of both national and international projects which members of staff have led or participated in, but for many of these projects the essential information (e.g. names of PIs, funders) is missing - so it is difficult to discern to what extent research projects really contribute to the doctoral Programme in Foreign Language Education.</p>

	<p>The same can be said for conferences organised by the staff engaged in the Programme, where in the past some renowned names in the field of applied linguistics were invited as guest lecturers for doctoral students. It seems that the teachers employed in the Programme have good connections with colleagues internationally, which is commendable.</p> <p>Recommendation: More effort invested into increasing the visibility at international/global level would be an advantage.</p>
<p>1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>According to SER, there are 29 teachers involved in teaching on the Programme, 17 among them are employed by the HEI, and come from different departments. External associates are either from other HEIs at the University of Zagreb, or from other universities in Croatia. Most of the teachers are within the limits, as far as their workload is concerned, with a few exceptions where the number of norm hours exceeds the prescribed limits (there is one teacher with the workload of 445 norm hours), but it seems that their teaching overload does not come from the involvement in the doctoral Programme. The ratio between the HEI staff and external associates is satisfactory. Since most of the candidates study part time and work full-time, all teaching is organised during the weekend, which does give an impression that the doctoral programme is an additional burden for teachers and a hobby for students. According to SER, most teachers have 9 norm hours of teaching on the doctoral Programme, which accounts for 6 seminars. The Panel strongly recommends that the workload for all teachers should be adjusted to align with the prescribed limitations.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The teachers are well qualified researchers who are actively engaged with their teaching. Their research activity is documented in the articles, books and the book chapters they publish. They seem to be very enthusiastic and supportive to students, who highly praised the work of their teachers and supervisors, as well as the support they (the students) receive from their supervisors.</p> <p>However, we have not found much evidence proving the</p>

	<p>quality of the doctoral Programme, particularly when it comes to the quality of some theses which in many aspects lack adequate methodological and theoretical rigour. In fact, it may not be surprising because, as we heard from alumni, the methodology of thesis is taught only in the last semester.</p>
<p>1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The candidate:supervisor ratio does not exceed 3:1. The number of supervisors appears to be sufficient for the currently enrolled active candidates. The supervisors' qualifications provide some assurance that doctoral theses in the Programme could be produced at a high level of quality. However, not all the theses that we have seen have attained a desired level of quality. The Panel recommends that more time should be spent on empirical work leading to the writing of theses, and students should be first taught, and then required, to approach their work on the thesis with more depth, scrutiny and precision. Our impression is that some students have been left to work on their own without appropriate guidance.</p>
<p>1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER the HEI has a Quality Assurance Committee that annually carries out surveys about the teachers' work quality. However, from the information provided it was not possible to see what kind of surveys these are, and how they are analysed, i. e. what kind of information is obtained in this way. SER only provides links to the Doctoral Study Programmes Regulations and mentions the reports that supervisors and doctoral candidates are required to submit annually. SER also states that the doctoral Programme has set up its own Quality Assurance Committee whose goal is to analyse the students' anonymous surveys and the teachers' reports. We have heard from students that some of them are now piloting a questionnaire for this purpose so it seems that this practice is only going to be introduced. This is certainly an indication of positive changes. SER also provides information that supervision workshops are being organised for first-time supervisors, but this was not confirmed by the supervisors. The Panel recommends that such workshops/training be organised, because supervision at doctoral level is considerably different from supervision at a Master's level.</p>

<p>1.6. The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The HEI Library is impressive in its modern architectural design and position on the top floor. It provides space for learning and reading, as well as for the storage of books and journals. The library infrastructure is available to PhD students, and we heard much praise from students for the help they receive from librarians. The Panel was told that the Library provides access to all major databases. The Panel also heard from students that they can access the databases and the articles they need, but the information obtained from alumni was different: They did not have access to any databases and did not have any support from the HEI in accessing literature they needed. Based on this information we assume that the improvements have taken place recently.</p>
<p>b) INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The HEI has established regulations on launching and approving doctoral programmes.</p> <p>A thorough analysis of social, academic, economic needs of the community was not presented to the panel. The procedures for delivering effective doctoral education do not seem to be effective as the average time to complete a doctoral theses is almost two times longer than the prescribed doctoral programme (on average 5 years for full time study and 7.5, up to 9 or 10 years for part-time study, instead of: 3 years for full time and 5 year for part-time study).</p>
<p>2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Programme is only partially aligned with the HEI research strategy, and only at the level of declaration. The Panel could not find evidence showing that the delivered Programme really reflects the HEI research mission and vision. For example, the main goals of the Programme, as emphasised in its research strategy (which is based on the HEI research strategy), refer to research excellence, more visibility and research outputs in prestigious international journals, more participation in international projects, raising the quality of thesis supervision, tracking of doctoral students' progress, interdisciplinarity and mobility, teaching transferable skills, etc. However, the</p>

	<p>theses written only in Croatian and some of them of questionable quality; the student slow progression rate; a high rate of dropouts are some of the facts that do not match the declared goals. The Panel recommends that in order to align the Programme with strategic goals, the goals should be framed more realistically, should be broken down to achievable steps, and for each step a clear deadline should be established.</p>
<p>2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to the information presented in the SER, the Programme passed the procedure of periodic internal evaluation of the University of Zagreb in 2013. Such evaluations are carried out every 5 years, so another one is due soon. SER also states that scientific production of supervisors and students is continuously monitored and analysed, and there are forms that both the candidates and the supervisors have to submit on a yearly basis. The Panel was not presented with any such analysis. In this subsection SER also suggests that the taught classes comprise 13% -20% of the Programme, while research and additional activities comprise 80% -87% of the Programme. However, based on the list of modules the Panel was shown, and on the information obtained from alumni, coupled with the information on the timing of submission of a thesis topic and the appointment of supervisors, it is difficult to believe that the ratio of taught and research modules as presented could be realistic. From all the information obtained during the visit, and considering the high rate of dropout as well as the average number of years it takes students to graduate from the Programme, it is clear that improvements are needed to make the current Programme more successful. A thorough analysis of the causes that led to such a situation will have to identify all the threats (some of which have indeed been identified in the Programme SWOT analysis, but we have not seen any attempts to implement the improvements). We recommend that clear deadlines be set up for necessary improvements and a monitoring system established to scrutinise each step of the required changes.</p>
<p>2.4. HEI continuously monitors supervisors' performance and has mechanisms for evaluating supervisors, and, if necessary, changing them and mediating between</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>There are two forms that the HEI has produced, both related to the candidates' yearly progress, - one is to be filled in by the candidate and the other by the supervisor.</p>

<p>the supervisors and the candidates.</p>	<p>The Panel has not seen any document that would relate to supervisors' performance.</p> <p>From the current students we received information that they (the students) worked on piloting a survey questionnaire so it seems that such an instrument will soon be introduced as a measure to monitor supervisors' performance, but this is not sufficient. The Panel recommends that a collegial performance review system be introduced, that would allow for both self-evaluation and peer evaluation of supervisors and teachers on a yearly basis, and for improvements based on the results of such evaluation.</p> <p>The Panel has also noticed that there are no formal mechanisms to be applied in case of problems between supervisors and candidates.</p> <p>The information received from Head of the Programme suggested that if there was a problem, the student could first approach her and she would try to mediate between the two parties. All such instances so far have been satisfactorily resolved, she said.</p>
<p>2.5. HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Students who we interviewed reported that they had just recently had training on ethical issues in research. The Panel members did not obtain any information on whether any similarity checking software is used at the HEI. The issue of plagiarism is not regulated at the level of HEI but by the University of Zagreb.</p> <p>The Panel has serious concerns about the access to doctoral theses produced in the Foreign Language Education doctoral Programme because of the lack of transparency and the lack of access to online theses. The HEI theses are not stored in <www.dabar.srce.hr> repository. When checking via the National and University Library repository which contains theses and dissertations from all faculties and schools that make the University of Zagreb, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences was the only one not present in its repository of theses. In the HEI Library repository we could find no more than 10 theses of the Glottodidactics/Foreign Language Education programme (each stored with a different department since the subject of Glottodidactics or Foreign Language</p>

	<p>Education is non-existent there. The Panel urges the HEI to rectify this problem and make all doctoral theses accessible to public (with possible exceptions for more recent theses if their authors wish to lock them for a period of time, but not more than two years).</p>
<p>2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER, there is a ‘Protocol for the registration of the doctoral research topic, defence of the thesis, and graduation that ensure a visible and clear procedure for the students’. The Programme uses the prescribed University and Faculty forms that are publicly available on the website of the doctoral Programme. However, the Panel was not able to find any information related to the thesis proposal, and the process of its development and defence. It seems that the Programme does not require that the candidates present a thesis proposal that would provide a strong rationale why a particular piece of research is needed, where the insufficiency of the current research is in the particular area, what kind of novelty will the new research bring in, and how does the planned PhD study position itself in the current research. These are some of the most important criteria which any doctoral programme should consider and which are supposed to be elaborated in the research proposal. From the information we could obtain, it seems that the Foreign Language Education doctoral Programme does not require the candidates to elaborate on these points. The Faculty forms that are published on the Programme webpage seem to be rather formal and requesting information to be used for administrative purposes.</p>
<p>2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER, the doctoral thesis is assessed by the Board of Referees for the evaluation of the doctoral thesis. The Board comprises at least three and no more than five members “who hold a research and teaching position or an adequate scientific position”. SER states that each referee is entitled to submit an independent evaluation.</p> <p>The form used to report on the evaluation of a doctoral thesis is very formal in its nature and serves mainly for administrative purposes.</p> <p>SER also states that the student’s supervisor or co-</p>

	<p>supervisor may not be a member of the Board of Referees, but the Dean of the Faculty informed the Panel that this Policy is now going to be changed. It is unclear what is the justification for this change, but the Panel strongly believes that supervisors should not be involved in evaluation of their supervisee's doctoral theses. While the Panel members were told that supervisors are not involved in the examination procedure, the Panel found at least 7 out of 11 doctoral theses involved the supervisor as an examiner of the thesis. The independence of those who assess the theses is crucially important and we urge the HEI to insist on obtaining opinion from independent examiners. SER further mentions that at least one examiner should be external, i. e. from an institution outside the HEI. It should be observed, however, that in a small country such as Croatia is, the fact that one is from a different institution does not guarantee an independent and objective position. Therefore we think that in order to achieve high quality of each thesis, external examiners should be sought internationally, among those researchers who do not have any connection with the HEI. In our opinion this would be the only way to carry out a sound and independent assessment of theses. We consider this to be a crucial requirement because not all of the theses that the Panel was able to see have achieved the level of quality required at the doctoral level. While some theses could be commended, in others we noticed a number of weaknesses and deficiencies: for example, in some theses there are no research questions, some use an excessive amount of secondary sources and rather outdated literature, or literature prevalently authored by Croatian researchers; the theoretical discussion is often too descriptive and lacking the depth of analysis and criticality, in some theses the material that is usually attached in the appendix takes up the central part of the analysis section... and almost none of the theses we have seen has provided strong rationale and arguments as to <i>why</i> this particular research study was necessary to be conducted, and what is its contribution to the world knowledge in the field of either SLA or foreign language education.</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>High level of quality</p> <p>PhD students can find all, or most of the necessary information on the doctoral study programme webpage. The site provides information on the study programme, admissions, available module, etc. There are also forms</p>

	<p>that the students may need to use at a certain point. The current students who we interviewed during the visit all expressed their satisfaction with the availability of information. This is certainly positive, but the Panel would also like to point out that if the Programme had any ambitions to become more internationally recognised, the information would need to be published in English too - because currently the information is not available to other than Croatian speakers.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>There is no funding for doctoral students' research provided by the institution. Only those candidates who are already employed at the HEI as teaching/research assistants and who are considered as full-time students, have their tuition fees paid by the HEI. Overall, depending mostly on student self-funding does not make this Programme sustainable, and this is a major threat. Therefore, we strongly recommend that more efforts, specifically collaborative efforts (among several HEI departments, or in collaboration with other HEIs) should be directed towards attracting international research grants. Further to this, the efforts should also target international PhD candidates who receive scholarships from their governments.</p>
<p>2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER, tuition fees are suggested by the HEI Council on the basis of criteria that have been laid down for doctoral study programmes.</p> <p>A semester of a doctoral study costs 10.000 HRK, so the whole Programme amounts to 60.000 HRK. Most candidates pay the tuition fees on their own. According to the information received from the Head of the Programme, the funds received to pay for the doctoral Programme are distributed so that 20% is retained by the HEI, and the rest is used to pay teachers and supervisors, members of the Board of Referees for thesis evaluation, the purchase of the necessary literature and possible equipment. SER states that the active participation of doctoral students in the research process and participation in conferences is also included in this distribution of funds, which would imply that students can receive some financial assistance for their travel to conferences. However, according to the</p>

	<p>information received from students and alumni, no one has ever received any help in that regard, apart from those few candidates who are employed at the HEI. The Panel strongly recommends that a fixed fund to help students travel to conferences or symposia should be established as a minimum of measures to contribute to the quality of the Programme.</p>
<p>c) SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION</p>	
<p>3.1. The HEI establishes admission quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>All supervisors in the doctoral Programme are formally qualified and their number allows for delivery of a quality programme. Also, an overview of the thesis titles suggests that the supervisors' competencies suit the candidates' research choices (rather than proposals, because candidates do not submit a research proposal prior to admission). The information given to the Panel during the visit contains some assurance that candidates are admitted to the Programme with respect to the teaching and supervision capacities. For example, in academic year 2016/2017 twenty PhD positions were advertised. However, considering a large number of candidates who enrolled in previous years and did not continue with their study suggests that it might be wiser to enrol fewer candidates and make sure they will be the ones who are prepared to complete the programme. For that to happen, a more rigorous process of admission should be introduced, including a proposal that would show the applicant's familiarity with the chosen research area.</p>
<p>3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>In academic year 2016/2017 the HEI's admission quota was 20 students. New enrolments take place every second year. The Panel has not seen any analysis of the social, cultural, or scientific needs that would serve as evidence for establishing admission quotas, so it is difficult to say whether the number of admitted candidates corresponds to the needs of the society and academia. Several facts need to be considered in this respect: Croatian society in general still doesn't have any valid statistics that would show what the needs of the society are in the next 10, 20, or 30 years. Similar to all other areas of education, the admission to this Programme seems to depend more on supply than demand. We are aware that some attempts have been made to change such a situation but there is much more to</p>

	<p>happen in society at large to clearly establish what the needs of the society are. The Panel acknowledges that it is very difficult or impossible to follow certain procedures at the level of institution if such procedures do not exist elsewhere in the society. However, the HEI should at least point to the problem and urge other institutions/organisations/industry, to provide data showing the needs of society in the coming years.</p> <p>Since most of the candidates in the Programme already have their jobs when applying, the problem of finding a position after graduation does not seem to exist here. According to SER, ten researchers who completed Foreign Language Education PhD Programme have positions at universities across Croatia, some work in state agencies, and some have moved abroad. We heard that overall, there is no unemployment problem for candidates who have completed this Programme. It can also be assumed that many of the graduates work as schools teachers since during the visit we heard that the applicants to the Programme are most often FL teachers working in schools.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The number of funded students is low and none of the current students is funded through research projects. SER states that currently, 5 candidates are funded by HEI (the institution where they work as assistants) - 2 of these are partially funded; 13 candidates are funded by their employers and 22 are self-funded. Employer funding certainly has positive connotations, but it is not specified whether the research conducted by these candidates is based on the employer's needs.</p> <p>The fact that no doctoral research is funded by a research project is clearly at the Programme disadvantage. We note that this is, at least partly, related to the fact that PhD supervision in Croatian universities does not make part of the supervisor's workload; thus as long as the situation remains the same (i.e. PhD supervision treated as work external to regular duties of the university staff) there is probably very little or no chance that PhD research will be included as part of project funding. In order for this to happen, significant changes would need to take place in the whole system of higher education funding by the Ministry of Science and Education. This is a problem that can be solved only by changes on the highest level of political</p>

	decision making.
<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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER, the Programme Regulations stipulate that an advisor (supervisor-advisor) is assigned to the student upon the admission. We did not receive a clear answer to whether this really happens. Moreover, in the most recent Regulations published on the Programme website (Pravilnik o doktorskim studijima na Sveucilistu u Zagrebu, 2016) Article 8 states that an advisor <i>may</i> be appointed, which means this is not a mandatory requirement. SER states that the thesis supervisor is assigned by the time the student enrolls into their sixth semester, or by mid-third year of a PhD study. SER also provides information that most thesis proposals are submitted in the fourth or fifth semester (end of second year or beginning of the third year). The Panel was very surprised with such a delay in the process of supervisors being assigned to students, and with far too late submission of the thesis proposal. There is no valid justification for such a timeline of a doctoral study. We point to this problem in 3.9 too. Far too late appointment of a supervisor and late proposal submission make the time for research and writing of the thesis limited to basically one semester, at best two semesters. A sustainable research plan cannot be implemented in such a short period of time. SER states that it is planned to move the deadline for the thesis proposal defence to an earlier stage in the programme; we are surprised that it has not been done yet. Such organisation of work seriously undermines the quality of the Programme and the candidates' chances of completing the research successfully and timely. The Panel urges the HEI to implement the necessary changes regarding the timing of supervisor's appointment and the proposal submission deadline.</p>
<p>3.5. The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The HEI does not appear to ensure that interested and talented candidates are recruited internationally. There are several barriers to this, the most obvious ones being related to language use. Since the Programme is delivered only in Croatian, it is difficult to expect that international students could follow such a programme unless they were proficient in Croatian. Furthermore, theses are written in Croatian and candidates generally are not allowed to write</p>

	<p>in English - although the ordinances published on the University web page clearly state that a thesis can be written in Croatian or in a foreign language. Discouraging students from writing in a foreign language certainly puts the internationalisation of the Programme at a disadvantage. We heard that the justification for this requirement is based on the need to develop Croatian terminology in linguistics and second language acquisition, but such an explanation does not seem to be convincing. Moreover, it is surprising that at the time when other, non-language related programmes in Croatia are opening their doors to international candidates by offering courses in English, the Programme which employs highly proficient experts in English, French, German, etc, insists on delivery of lectures in Croatian and does not allow doctoral students to write their thesis in English (or other foreign languages). In the interviews with alumni, the Panel heard two alumni complaining about this problem - they said they wanted to write their thesis in English but were not allowed to.</p> <p>The Panel did find three theses written in English, but these were either because the candidate was a native English speaker (a Croat born and raised overseas), or the co-supervisor was not Croatian. SER emphasises the fact that many teachers and supervisors have international links and participate in international conferences - but that does not guarantee the internationalisation of the doctoral Programme. The Panel members firmly believe that because of the above issues related to the use of language, the opportunities for Programme internationalisation are being lost.</p>
<p>3.6. The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER, the selection process is public and consists of: submitted documentation, an interview with the doctoral programme committee, and evaluation criteria. The required documentation should include a graduate degree in humanities or social sciences with a GPA of minimum 3.5 (out of 5), two letters of recommendation from university professors and a motivational letter. The motivational letter is deemed to be the key evaluation element, although neither in the advertisement published on the HEI website for 2016/17 intake, nor in the Programme description, the motivational letter is given emphasis, and in these documents the GPA is not specified at all. From interviews with the current</p>

	<p>students and alumni we also did not get the impression that they were required to include in the motivational letter any details of their research interests, and neither any literature.</p> <p>In the interview with the Head of the Programme we heard that four out of five applicants are admitted to the Programme. The Panel consider this rate of acceptance (80%) too high and not really a piece of evidence that only the best candidates are being accepted (particularly if the very high drop-out rate is taken into account). Therefore we recommend that the criteria for admission be made more stringent and an initial research proposal required as a criterion for acceptance. This initial proposal can of course later be fully developed with the supervisor's guidance, but in a much shorter period of time than the current practice shows.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>SER suggests that the selection procedure is clear and transparent, and a list of selected candidates is published. On closer inspection of the HEI web page it was confirmed that the criteria are published timely and potential applicants given information about the procedure. However, the Programme webpage does not specify what the required GPA for admission to the Programme is, so it is possibly a 'grey area' which may have a variety of unwanted consequences. SER states that candidates who have not been accepted may submit an appeal, and explains what steps are taken following the appeal. The Panel did not find any information on the Programme or the HEI website concerning the possibility to lodge a complaint and neither any details of the procedure how to do that.</p> <p>The Panel thus recommends that clear instructions concerning the complaints procedure should be published in conjunction with the invitation to apply for the Programme.</p>
<p>3.8. There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>According to SER, the process of academic recognition of prior learning is regulated by the ordinance on recognition of prior achievements, and via the University ECTS Committee. SER states that the number of credit points assigned for specific recognized activities and the process</p>

	<p>of recognition is performed in accordance with the Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications Act, and the awarded credit points must be approved by the University ECTS Committee.</p> <p>SER provides the links to two web pages where presumably the ordinance on recognition of prior achievement and the ordinance on allocation of ECTS credits to extra-curricular activities are published, but the web pages are not existent. The Panel recommends that the ordinances should be made publicly accessible and the information available to the interested candidates.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The HEI regulations are available on the University website, and doctoral students' rights and obligations are covered in the documents, but in a rather general manner. Supervisors' obligations are also stated there. The documents explain the expected progression through the years of study, and provide a description of the process through the final stages of thesis completion and its defence. The Panel found Article 16 very surprising, as it states that the supervisor should be assigned to the student at earliest in the first semester and at latest at the end of the fifth semester! Too long a period given for appointment of supervisors may be detrimental to the quality of the thesis, ultimately to the quality of the doctoral programme. Such a late appointment of a supervisor does not provide for a high level of supervisory and institutional support to candidates. It seems that the quality of supervision depends only on individual supervisors' engagement and enthusiasm. In conversation with both alumni and the current candidates we heard very positive opinions about their experience and work with the supervisors. All current students highly praised their mentors, but alumni seemed not to expect much support from either the supervisors or the teachers. One alumnus complained about feedback on statistics for which he had to wait for nine months. The Panel recommends that the supervisor be appointed immediately or very soon after the admission so that candidates can receive sufficient support for their research throughout the whole period of study.</p>
<p>3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p>

<p>progression.</p>	<p>SER does not provide any evidence of institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression. In conversation with the current students we were informed that some of them have published their work and participated in conferences, but no one received any financial support from the HEI in that respect. The candidates who are employed at other universities received funds for participation in conferences from their employers. Alumni confirmed they had not received any financial support during their study, they were self-funded in every respect, had to find their own ways to access online journals, had to pay themselves for participation in conferences - but , as they said, they do not regret because they enjoyed working on their research. The Panel recognizes that the institutional support does not concern only financing, but there are other mechanisms too, that should be implemented in order to ensure candidates' successful progression; for example the above mentioned would need to involve supervisors much earlier in the process, and also appoint an advisor; provide candidates with more support in the process of developing and mastering practical research skills; support candidates in producing their research plans with realistic and achievable goals and monitor whether these have been achieved; set clear deadlines with clear requirements as conditions to progress from year to year, and monitor whether the requirements have been met; etc.</p>
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d) PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES

<p>4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Panel finds the structure, desiderata and the implementation of the doctoral programme unaligned with internationally competitive programmes, thus necessary improvements are recommended.</p> <p>The admission standards are low insofar as internationally competitive programmes are concerned: they do not ensure a consistently adequate prerequisite content knowledge. While this is not a disadvantage <i>per se</i>, as evidenced by international programmes which guarantee that all candidates attain the required graduate-level knowledge within the first few years, the panel fails to find any rigorous courses taught or measures in place that would ensure academic sophistication with the state of the art. For instance, candidates are expected to write and</p>
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	<p>publish their academic work in the second semester which is an unreasonable expectation given the amount, and with it rigour, of the taught component in the first semester. The Panel thus strongly recommends that admission criteria be reconsidered: the crucial point in comparison to other internationally recognised programmes with which the Panel is acquainted is the lack of research proposal which forms, and should form, the core criterion according to which success of the candidate may be preliminarily established and, thus, admission should be based. This measure would also directly solve the first issue raised above. While the Panel understands that this may directly impact on the number of admissible students, by virtue of there being a more rigorous admission criterion in place, the Panel finds it critical that this measure be taken in order for the Programme to be based on internationally competitive standards. These, and other, issues are buttressed in the subsection that follow.</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 CroQF. They clearly describe the competencies the candidates will develop during the doctoral programme, including the ethical requirements of doing research.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Related to the central issue of the lack of the high standard and advanced training, as argued elsewhere in the report, the Panel finds the learning outcomes (LOs) not to be evidently aligned with the CroQF.</p> <p>By students' and alumni's admission, the Panel found the level of the taught courses not to differ from the Masters level to the extent that would evidently sanction a level 8.2 approval, as per the CroQF. This is also reasonably evidenced by the structure of the programme where the mandatory taught component does not extend past the first year (i.e., first and second semester). In relation to this point, it is unclear to the Panel why the SER states a modular structure of the programme that is radically different from the official programme structure as stated on the official homepage, <https://www.ffzg.unizg.hr/student/natjecaj/glodidaktika.pdf>. In the former, 7 modules are listed (with 7-13 ECTS awarded for examination in obligatory courses), while the latter states there are 12 modules (with presumably up to 20 ECTS gained via examination in obligatory courses).</p> <p>The inability to teach advanced courses in Linguistics/Psychology/Education is admittedly due to the academic background diversity of the Programme's intake</p>

	<p>(since most candidates who are admitted hold prior degrees from different pre-doctoral programme). While it is reasonable, and even necessary, to introduce students without prior training in linguistics to the core linguistic disciplines, it is vital that the Programme also offer advanced doctoral-level courses. The HEI may implement this improvement by, for instance, designing two-tiered courses: with the first tier providing a condensed (graduate-level) introduction and the second tier furthering the course at an advanced level. This would not only avoid reiterations of content from lower levels of study and allow students with prior knowledge with a structured option to advance directly, but also for the faculty to teach the topics of their own research in the second tier by integrating their research in teaching.</p> <p>At the current time, the faculty are unable to teach the topics of their research, and integrate their research fully into the doctoral teaching, due to the admitted lack of knowledge of the 1st year students. The Panel thus recommends that the LOs be stated in more rigorous terms (which may be achieved after admission criteria are elevated).</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>It is not clear to the Panel how the aforementioned lack of the high-level knowledge, appropriate for doctoral programmes, is connected in a structured fashion to independent work by the candidates. This concern is motivated by at least three issues: examination protocol, level of course literature, and quality of dissertations.</p> <p>The Panel explicates in detail the concerns related to the examination protocol in §4.5.</p> <p>In regard to the level of literature, most of the courses in the doctoral programme (evidenced in the official online document) state introductory textbooks, i. a., as primary bibliography in their coursework, especially in, but not exclusive to, the earlier modules. This is clearly an insufficient standard to be set for a level 8.2 programme. Crucially, recent research as well as doctoral theses are generally lacking from the course bibliography. The Panel members concede the fact that the online course description and catalogue is from 2006, which simultaneously raises the question why an outdated</p>

	<p>official course catalogue would be listed on the official university homepage unless it is current and relevant, contra the SER. The insufficiently advanced level of the taught modules can therefore not be readily considered as supporting the claim that LOs are aligned with the CroQF.</p> <p>Consequently, the Panel finds the quality of the theses not to be of outstanding quality.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Given the insufficiently advanced level of the doctoral courses, it cannot be claimed -- While this may be argued to apply to the taught component alone, the latter underlies the doctoral Programme research component in critical ways. The Panel has also evidenced this in the overall quality of the doctoral theses. The panel thus recommends that the level of courses be elevated so as to encompass cutting-edge recent literature, including other outstanding international doctoral theses (which will set a high standard for the candidates to follow, implicitly at least).</p> <p>As the Panel mentioned in 2.7, supervisors' engagement in the examination procedure was found in 7 out of 11 doctoral reports, which prohibits the thesis from being objectively and externally assessed, hence the standards of the 8.2 level of the CroQF cannot be readily upheld due to this fact.</p> <p>As the Panel explicates in the following subsection, there is another crucial issue in the examination protocol in the doctoral programme that predicates the general issue of achieving LOs in line with 8.2 of the CroQF. To avoid repetition, please refer to §4.5 below.</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>Improvement are necessary</p> <p>The course catalogue lists an impressive array of up to 56 courses or modules, taught either ex cathedra or as research seminars, i.a. While the Panel strongly recommends that ex cathedra teaching be reduced to a minimum, a more pertinent issue has been found which needs urgent improvement as it severely undermined the alleged 8.2 level of the programme.</p> <p>Out of the forty-seven (47) courses offered in the course</p>

	<p>catalogue, ranging from modules One to Nine, thirty-eight (38) courses are examined using written examination (with one course stating oral examination), which amounts to the vast majority of the courses on the doctoral programme. Most of the courses that do not require closed written examination of the doctoral candidate are the six “Glottodidactic implications” (ranging 1 through 6) which summatively, and presumably very effectively, integrate various approaches (linguistic, pedagogical, psychological, etc.) in an inter- and multi-disciplinary manner. With “Glottodidactic implications” excluded, nearly 95% of the doctoral courses admittedly require closed written (or oral) examination, which cannot ensure the achievement of the LOs required for the level of study nor foster in the candidates the crucial skill of analysis and synthesis of the content in an academically written format. Closed examination also prevents the candidates from engaging in a written, and oral, discussion with their teachers as peers, but rather supposes a level and kind of knowledge that needs to be demonstrated in closed examination condition. This examination method, which critically underlies the teaching method, is both insufficient and misguided at the doctoral level. The Panel urges that closed examinations be removed, preferably entirely, and an appropriate advanced-level examination protocol be put in place which would assess candidates as peers on a continuous basis by introducing obligatory Qualifying Papers which should be of publishable quality. This, and presumably only this, would demonstrate a doctoral-level knowledge and synthesis in an objective way, in lieu of an entirely inappropriate mode of closed examination.</p>
<p>4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Programme admittedly equips the candidates with general and transferable skills via <i>academic skills</i> and <i>business and managerial skills</i> seminars and workshops.</p> <p>Related to the issue raised in §4.5, and in contrast to the academic writing workshops, the programme’s examination protocol implicitly prevents the candidates from acquiring and developing strong academic and generally transferable writing skills. The Panel urges the faculty to rectify this structural issue and thus enable their candidates to develop additionally academic writing and argumentational skills on an ongoing basis throughout their programme.</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>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>In line with the observation made in previous subsections, the Panel fails to find evidence that the Programme taught component is adapted to the internationally competitive doctoral training, for reasons stated above.</p> <p>The Panel finds that the personal and professional development plan, i.e. <i>GLOMA</i>, could play an even more effective role as a documentation platform of candidates' research once other changes in teaching and examination methods in place.</p>
<p>4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The University of Zagreb and the relevant departments in the Faculty are evidently engaged in international connections, with mobility programmes, for both students and staff, being in place. Due to the nature of the student body, being 95% part-time, mobility options are not exercised. Thus, no evidence of international engagement, such as programme reviews by international partners/collaborators, was provided to the Panel.</p> <p>The Panel recommends that measures be taken to attract foreign students and full-time students more generally. This could be achieved if the programme took advantage of the impressive array of mobility and cooperations options listed in SER. As it stands, the doctoral programme is tailored to the part-time student body who make up the vast majority of the candidates. The Panel also finds it necessary for the programme head(s) to consider the future of the programme with respect to growth and/or sustainability of an almost exclusively part-time student body. This is a matter that the programme lists briefly in their Strategic plan but does not address in any detail.</p>

*** 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.