



**Report
of the Expert Panel
on the REACCREDITATION
of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme
Philosophy
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) Programme *Philosophy* 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 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:

- President of the Expert Panel, Dr. Igor Štiks, University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom,
- Dr. Ljiljana Reinkowski, Universität Basel, Switzerland,
- Prof. dr. Rozita Dimova, Ghent University, Belgium,
- Dr. Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom,
- Dr. H. J. M. J. (Harm) Goris, Tilburg University, Netherlands,
- Prof. David Maxwell, Emmanuel College Cambridge, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Elzbieta Osewska, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Poland,
- Prof. Mikhail Dmitriev, Central European University, Hungary,
- Prof. Andrej Blatnik, Univerza v Ljubljani, Slovenia,
- Prof. Ljiljana Šarić, University of Oslo, Norway,
- Prof. Dr Katrin Boeckh, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Germany,
- Prof. Vincent Gaffney, University of Bradford, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Mika Vahakangas, Lund University, Sweden,

- Dr sc. Nicole Butterfield, Marie Curie Fellow, Szeged University, Hungary,
- Anna Meens, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands,
- Kevin Kenjar, University of California, Berkeley, United States of America,
- Dr Elżbieta Gajek, University of Warsaw, Poland,
- Dr Kyle Jerro, University of Essex, United Kingdom,
- Dr Nadia Mifka-Profozic, University of York, United Kingdom,
- Dr Moreno Mitrović, University of Cyprus, Cyprus,
- Dr Catherine MacRobert, Oxford University, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Emeritus Svein Mønnesland, University of Oslo, Norway,
- Dajana Vasiljevicová, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic,
- Prof. Dr Christian Neuhäuser, Universität Dortmund, Germany,
- Dr Dries Bosschaert, KU Leuven, Belgium,
- Dr Oliver George Downing, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom,
- Prof. Hanoch Ben-Yami, Central European University, Hungary,
- Sonja Kačar, University Toulouse II – Jean Jaurès, France,
- Garrett R. Mindt, Central European University, Hungary,
- Prof. Vieri Samek Lodovici, University College London, United Kingdom,
- Mišo Petrović, Central European University, Hungary.

The higher education institution was visited by the following Expert Panel members:

- Prof. Hanoch Ben-Yami, Central European University, Hungary,
- Oliver George Downing, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom,
- Garrett R. Mindt, Central European University, Hungary,
- Prof. Dr Christian Neuhäuser, Universität Dortmund, Germany.

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

- Maja Šegvić, coordinator, ASHE,
- Aleksandar Šušnjar, interpreter at the site visit,
- Ivana Rončević, translator of the Report, ASHE.

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

- Management,
- Study programme coordinators,
- Doctoral candidates,
- Teachers and supervisors,
- Alumni.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library and the IT rooms.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme contained in the licence: Postgraduate (doctoral) university study programme Philosophy

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

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

Place of delivery: Zagreb, Ivana Lučića 3

Scientific area and field: Humanities, Philosophy

Number of doctoral candidates: according to the SER table, "Number of doctoral candidates (all)", 29 doctoral candidates were enrolled in 2016–17; the two next lines are based on that table. However, according to the table "Tab. 2: Supervisors and doctoral candidates" in the same document, there are 33 doctoral candidates who haven't submitted (presented) or defended. The Expert Panel couldn't explain the discrepancy.

Number of funded doctoral candidates: 3 (3 assistants), 1 partially

Number of self-funded and those funded by employer: 25 (2 payed by other institutions)

Number of supervisors: 20 officially appointed supervisors

Number of teachers: 15 employed and 17 external associates

Ratio of officially appointed supervisors and their doctoral candidates: 20 officially appointed supervisors and 33 candidates who haven't submitted.

Taught / research ratio: 60/120

Taught component: 60 ECTS (courses, papers, languages)

Research component: 120 ECTS

Learning outcomes of the study programme:

- Acquisition of the capacity for philosophical auto-reflection in the idea-historical perspective and for reflection on the relation of philosophy to other forms of discursive rationality (particularly philosophical and scientific-theoretical).
- Acquisition of specialist competencies of the highest level in logics and related domains as well as in the philosophy of science and methodology of scientific research; development of an analytical approach to philosophy in general.
- Development of the capacity for unifying and deepening the general theoretical and conceptual-critical perspective of philosophy with concrete research fields; to stimulate research which is directed at identification, illumination, interpretation and reconceptualization of the relationship between the various sectors of science and their contributions to the understanding of trans-epistemological aspects of human relations (expression, inner-subjective recognition, freedom, emancipation).
- Acquisition of the prerequisites for philosophical research in the domain of theoretical philosophy, so that students will be able to make their way in the very heterogeneous recent and

current philosophical production, recognizing types of orientations and acquiring the ability for critical comparison and mutual translation of various philosophical jargons.

- Ability of using the contents, methods, and themes of theoretical philosophy in interdisciplinary research.
- Development of the skills of insight and critical formulation of problems as well as methodological competencies necessary for interdisciplinary research.
- Development of the familiarity with interdisciplinary and multi-perspectival approaches to moral questions which arise from the scientific-technological progress of contemporary civilization, with focusing on the category of life as a whole, based on the independent argumentation, orientation and research in the key dilemmas of contemporary humankind.
- Development of the competencies necessary for understanding the assumptions and consequences of the modern understanding of society in relation to man as a social being, law and the essence of politics, that is, in the philosophical knowledge of the history of the idea of community and various, historically changed practices of replacing the collectiveness of people, as well as to set the student population towards acquisition of the methodological and intellectual knowledge necessary for independent research work within the framework of the subject matter of practical philosophy.
- Acquirement of the prerequisites for research work dedicated to current problems of the philosophy of history and the relevant orientations of a philosophical approach to history, as well as the ability for independent research and deliberation of issues, as for an interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach to the themes of the philosophy of history.
- Development of the capacity for the unification of general theoretical and conceptual-historical perspectives of aesthetics in concrete research domains; stimulation of research oriented towards the identification, interpretation and reconceptualization of the relationship between various paradigms of aesthetic reflection and their contributions to the understanding of aspects of human relations outside of aesthetics such as culture, media, politics, war, etc.
- Ability of the conceptualization and reconsideration of the problem of cultural and gender identity, as well as for philosophical research of multiculturalism, interculturalism, and gender issues.

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

Upon the completion of the re-accreditation procedure and 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:

3. Issue a letter of expectation for the period up to two (2) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Despite many commendable features of the programme, one main drawback is its lack of international involvement. Our recommendations:
 - a. Encourage talented students to apply to good programmes worldwide for their MA and Doctoral studies. The department shouldn't in any way discourage students from studying for their degrees abroad, and it should offer positions also to people who received their degrees outside the department and Croatia.
 - This is not strictly a recommendation for the improvement of the *doctoral* programme, since it does not relate to the department's doctoral students. But such an approach will gradually contribute to the doctoral programme as well, for instance, if some doctoral students will have studied for the Master's degree abroad and then returned for their doctoral studies to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the UZ.
 - b. The department should sign international agreements, such as Erasmus+, which will enable its doctoral students to visit other departments during their studies. Several universities in Europe and elsewhere also offer research grants for a specific period for visiting students. We understand that the department already has a few such agreements; however, from our interviews we understood that little use is made of them. The doctoral students should be encouraged to make good use of these agreements. Such agreements may also enable the department to invite lecturers from other departments in Europe to deliver talks or concentrated courses at UZ, in this way also increasing the international exposure of its students.
 - c. The department should encourage students to present their work-in-progress, either in the form of talks or posters, at prestigious conferences abroad. The department should aim at providing financial aid to students for this purpose. In case of a conference relevant to a student's work, the department should aim that the student can get support for attending the conference even if the student does not present at it.
 - d. An indirect contribution to the internationalisation of the doctoral programme should be provided by encouraging the participation of professors at prestigious international events, also outside the region. The department should aim at establishing a budget for this purpose.

- e. We also understand that only faculty members with the rank of associate professor or higher can take a sabbatical. This is apparently a university- or faculty policy. We request the unit in whose authority these regulations are to reconsider them, so that faculty at the rank of assistant professor also be eligible for sabbatical, in this early, formative stage of their career.
 - f. Dissertations should not be written only in Croatian. In case the subject of the dissertation is of international interest, as many of the dissertations we saw were, students should be encouraged to write their work in the language in which most of the research is being done (English, German, French...). An effort should then be made that an international member, preferably from outside the region, participate in the thesis defence committee (viva assessment committee). Cost and schedule difficulties can be reduced if the international member participates in the viva through a communication software.
2. The program does not provide enough skill-oriented learning opportunities of importance for writing a PhD, pursuing an academic career or a career outside of academia that is nonetheless related to academic skills. Our recommendations:
 - a. Create a number of skill-based classes that are offered to PhD-students at different stages of their PhD. At first this can be voluntary, but later – if successful – it could become mandatory.
 - b. According to discussions with students and faculty the classes should focus on the following topics: 1. academic writing; 2. publication strategy; 3. project management (like pursuing a PhD, which is a project); 4. fund raising, including proposal writing; 5. presentation skills.
 - c. Those classes should get a high number of ECTS-points in order to encourage students to take them. They should be aligned with the faculty and university, however there might be a need to design them specifically for PhD-students in philosophy since each discipline has its own traditions and standards.
 3. The interaction of students after their first year with the department should be amplified.
 - a. There are no routine meetings of students with their supervisors after the first year. There should be a monthly meeting to check progress, suggest readings, give feedback on work etc.
 - b. From the second year on, there should be mandatory doctoral work-in-progress seminars, in which doctoral students present their work and get feedback from faculty and peers. Since most doctoral students work to support their studies, the seminar should be at a convenient time, probably late afternoon.
 4. Students should be clearly informed that they can ask their supervisor, the director of the programme or the head of the department to order for the library books needed for their research.
 5. Monitoring mechanisms should be formalised or, in some cases, developed. These should include – but not be limited to: anonymous and periodic student surveys (at least once a year) in which the students are asked to appraise all aspects of their experience whilst studying; and, the creation of a complaints procedure through which students can make complaints anonymously.

6. Despite the variety of areas covered by the faculty, there is very little representation to Analytic Philosophy. The department being the largest philosophy department in Croatia, and Analytic Philosophy being one of the most influential approaches in contemporary philosophy, this creates an imbalance in the exposure to contemporary philosophy that students receive. This is primarily a disadvantage for undergraduate programmes, in which students should be exposed, as much as possible, to all influential contemporary approaches; but also on postgraduate level, it significantly limits the options for advanced study and research. The department would benefit from a gradual increase in the proportion of faculty with analytic orientation, in both theoretical and practical philosophy.
7. As is common nowadays, some anti-plagiarism software (e.g. Turnitin) should be routinely used and its use should be mentioned in the student's record.

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. The supervisors cover a wide area in their expertise and consequently candidates can conduct research in many areas
2. The supervisors are committed to their research and teaching
3. The structure of the programme is logical and clear
4. Students are well-informed of the programme structure
5. Students have good interaction with their supervisors and with the programme director
6. The library provides a pleasant, up-to-date study space, it has a good collection of philosophy books and journals, its staff is professional, and they are responsive to the needs of the department and candidates.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. There are no professors at the department who have studied for their degree abroad.
2. Underrepresentation of Analytic Philosophy – see recommendations.
3. Most students have little if any study or research experience outside the region, and hardly attend philosophy events outside Croatia or at best outside the region.
4. The contact with the department is insufficient for candidates from their second year on who are not assistants at the department.
5. Occasionally, the standards are not imposed on dissertations and a few unsatisfactory dissertations have been approved.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The relationships between the candidates and their supervisors seem satisfactory.
2. The procedure of choosing and appointing supervisors seems satisfactory.
3. The library has professional, committed staff who is responsive to departmental needs.

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

| Minimal legal conditions: | YES/NO notes |
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| 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 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. | <p>NO</p> <p>Although legal provisions require that all theses be published through the national repository DABAR in free internet access, we were informed that there is a disagreement between copyrights and the mentioned legal provision and that copyrights have legal priority. This disagreement should be resolved and all theses should be made available online.</p> <p>Due to language limitations, the committee couldn't check the availability of theses at https://koha.ffzg.hr</p> |

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| <p>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.</p> | <p>YES The revoking of the academic title (PhD) is in the jurisdiction not of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences but of 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 one external member. Their report is submitted to the Faculty Council, which submits its decision to the University Senate.</p> |
| <p>Additional/ recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council for passing a positive opinion</p> | <p>YES/NO (notes)</p> |
| <p>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.</p> | <p>YES</p> |
| <p>2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).</p> | <p>YES</p> |
| <p>3. The doctoral programme is aligned with the HEI's research strategy.</p> | <p>YES</p> |
| <p>4. The candidate : supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.</p> | <p>YES Although the average conforms with the regulations, the number of supervisees per supervisor seems not to be limited. One of the professors, for instance, currently has 11 supervisees, which is too many. The number of supervisees that have not <i>presented</i> per supervisor should be limited to 5 (five).</p> |
| <p>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</p> | <p>a) YES b) YES, but see 6b c) YES Based on input from other units, it seems a research plan is not required upon admission.</p> |

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| <p>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>However, as a condition for enrolment into the second year of study, the student must show progress in the formulation of the draft of doctoral research. We assume that this is done based on consultations with the supervisor, which are also such a condition.</p> <p>d) NO</p> <p>In 2016/17, only 5 out of 29 students were funded by the department or other institutions. But it is unlikely that without additional resources this could be changed.</p> <p>e) NO</p> <p>This should be introduced, at least in the form of accompanying an experienced supervisor in the process of their supervision.</p> <p>f) NO</p> <p>According to SER, YES, but no data are provided. The HEI should specify in its regulations a standard procedure for providing supervisors with such feedback, and the steps taken towards improvement in case of negative feedback.</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>a) YES</p> <p>b) YES</p> <p>However, most teachers publish only on local and regional platforms, even when the publications are not in Croatian. This is a limitation that should be addressed: see recommendations above. This cannot change overnight, but an effort should be made for a gradual change.</p> |
| <p>7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.</p> | <p>NO</p> <p>The supervisor can participate in the committee, but not as president. The expert panel finds this acceptable.</p> |

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| <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>YES</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

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| | <p>Quality assessment: “high level of quality (HLQ)” or “improvements are necessary (IN)” explanation of the Expert Panel</p> |
| <p>1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE</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>Improvements necessary The members of the department publish mainly in Croatian, and even the publications in other languages, of which there aren't many, are often by Croatian publishers (e.g. <i>Synthesis philosophica</i>, a journal of the Croatian Philosophical Society). This being the largest philosophy department in Croatia, the international presence is unsatisfactory.</p> |
| <p>1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary Overall, the workload, according to the two tables, is fine, namely, not too many Norm Hours per teacher. There are a few exceptions, though, of too many Norm Hours, so more attention should be given to this to ensure that all teachers are allotted an appropriate workload of Norm Hours.</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 necessary See remark on point 1.1. In addition, the panel regrets that the information on international activities of the academic staff was not included in the SER. We understand that some teachers do actively participate in international discussions. Regardless, the institution should encourage such participation for all teachers, and wherever possible also encourage periods of study or research abroad. Also, the nature of research projects in which professors are involved is never specified in the document.</p> |
| <p>1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary See comments on 1.1 and 1.2 above.</p> |
| <p>1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary No mechanism is specified in the SER. It should be made explicit in the department's regulations. The committee was informed that the quality of the programme is assured through the work of Committee for Doctoral Programs at the university level; through the</p> |

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| | work of the Professional Council appointing supervisors; and through the work of Council of Postgraduate Studies, which selects teachers for work on the doctoral programme. In addition, we were informed that there is a system of anonymous evaluations made by students. |
| 1.6. The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline. | High level of quality The library provides a pleasant, high-quality work space, with books and journals available online as well. Doctoral students can ask faculty to order the books they need (although they should be better informed on this possibility). |
| 2. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME | |
| 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. | High level of quality The committee was informed that this procedure exists at the level of the HEI. |
| 2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy. | Improvements necessary As was expressed by the Vice-dean for Science and International Cooperation in the meeting with management, the HEI (i.e. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) is currently undergoing a restructuring following the appointment of a new board in the previous two months. More precisely, the board is currently running a consultation process, with all its various departments, regarding the development of research strategies on both faculty and departmental levels. The deadline for the completion of the process is the end of February 2018. Given the democratic nature of this process, it is expected that both faculty and departmental research strategies will be in alignment upon their completion. |
| 2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements. | Improvements necessary Although the internal report list monitoring measures taken periodically (every two years), no instance is mentioned of changes introduced following these reviews. For instance, there is no mentioning of measures taken to prevent recurrence of theses on unsatisfactory level, as those mentioned in 2.1. Most supervisors with whom the expert panel met weren't even familiar with these theses, and none mentioned revisions introduced following internal periodical reviews. |

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| <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>Improvements necessary: INSUFFICIENT DATA The expert committee wasn't provided with enough information to evaluate this. In particular, it was not informed of the existence of student satisfaction surveys, or of any case of negative evaluation of a supervisor. Neither was it informed whether there are any means to enable students to complain on the work of supervisor without being stigmatised. The expert committee strongly recommends the formalisation – or, in some cases, the development – of monitoring mechanisms. See point 5 in the Recommendations for the Improvement of the Study Programme.</p> |
| <p>2.5. HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary Not all theses are publicly available – see remark above on point 6 of the minimal legal conditions. No anti-plagiarism software is used. However, in relation to anti-plagiarism procedures, it was brought to the attention of the expert committee that the efficacy of anti-plagiarism software is limited when theses are written in Croatian or other languages with a small academic constituency. For instance, anti-plagiarism software cannot protect against the translation of a previously published work of scholarship into Croatian and presenting it as the student's original work. Given the limitations of detecting plagiarism of this kind, the expert committee points to this as an additional reason for recommending that – where possible – doctoral theses be written in languages more conducive to international dissemination of research.</p> |
| <p>2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.</p> | <p>High level of quality</p> |
| <p>2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary The expert committee was not provided with data on how the defence assessment committee is appointed. However, as a rule, the participation of international experts in the committee is unsatisfactory. Almost always, such participation is impossible because the thesis is written in Croatian.</p> |
| <p>2.8. The HEI publishes all necessary information on the study programme, admissions, delivery and conditions for progression and completion, in</p> | <p>High level of quality The students were well-informed. The programme, taught in Croatian, is accessible only to students from the region, and indeed there are students from other countries in the</p> |

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| accessible outlets and media. | region enrolled in it. |
| 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>Improvements necessary: INSUFFICIENT DATA</p> <p>The expert committee was not provided with data on this, nor does the internal report provide any. The expert committee wasn't informed, for instance, what are the criteria for appointing doctoral students as assistants.</p> <p>However, even if funds are primarily used to pay the salaries of academic and administrative staff (as is to be expected), the committee strongly recommends that at least a fixed percentage be earmarked for students' international conference presentations, and possibly other academic activities. A transparent procedure with clear criteria should be established for this purpose and made available to students.</p> |
| 2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying). | <p>Improvements necessary: INSUFFICIENT DATA</p> <p>The expert committee was not provided with data on this.</p> |
| 3. SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION | |
| 3.1. The HEI establishes admission quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities. | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>The average number of supervisees per supervisor is fine. However, the supervision of doctoral candidates was not equitably spread across the possible supervisors. While one of the professors has had 10 supervisees (of whom 8 already defended) and another has had 15 (4 defended), of other professors one has had 7 supervisees, one 5, three 4, and seventeen have had only 1 or 2. While it is inevitable that some potential supervisors will have more supervisees than others, the current distribution might be too large an imbalance.</p> |
| 3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs. | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>What is meant by such needs is rather vague. However, although according to the internal report, almost all <i>alumni</i> are employed in research and universities etc., the programme has a dropout rate of more than 33% (see next section). This suggests that the admission quotas are not decided based on perceived needs, otherwise lower dropout rates would be expected. Particularly, if needs are reflected by funding opportunities, then the admission quotas far exceed these.</p> <p>Given availability of academic and administrative</p> |

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| | <p>personnel, admission quotas that exceed scientific, artistic, cultural and other <i>societal</i> needs are acceptable, as long as they serve <i>personal</i> needs, do not compromise the level of the programme, and <i>most of the students admitted complete their studies</i>. However, given the mentioned dropout rate, this seems not to be the case. Accordingly, the admission quotas should be reconsidered. See also next section.</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 necessary About a third of enrolled doctoral students drop out: in 2011–17, 14 dropped out, 36 enrolled. In the last five years, only three to five doctoral students’ fees were covered per year either by their being employed as assistants or by other institutions. This might indicate that many enrolled students misjudge the difficulty involved in working while studying, either financially or due to the time remaining for academic research. This might justify reducing the number of students admitted every second year, by raising the admission criteria. The difficulties of self-funding their studies should also be clarified to applicants, to prevent misinformed expectations.</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>Improvements necessary Although each candidate is provided with advisor, the large number of supervisees that some professors have probably compromises the level of supervision. In addition, the lack of sufficient interaction between most candidates and their supervisors and programme generally following the first year also hinders successful completion.</p> |
| <p>3.5. The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.</p> | <p>High level of quality The internal report says that ‘the call for applications published also internationally’. Students from other countries in the region are also enrolled in the programme. Since the language of teaching is Croatian, it is unrealistic that the programme’s catchment area will be larger.</p> |
| <p>3.6. The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.</p> | <p>High level of quality, based on the procedure described in the internal report.</p> <p>The expert committee had no independent information or data on the percentage of applicants admitted.</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 necessary The internal report does not specify that the selection criteria are published in advance of the selection procedure. This might be the case, but the expert</p> |

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| | <p>committee has no data confirming this. Applicants should be informed well in advance what the selection criteria are, so that they can prepare their applications accordingly.</p> <p>Complaints: The internal report did not specify how much time since they are informed that their application failed do the applicants have to submit a complaint or appeal. The deadline for this submission should be set so that the complaint is not prepared in a rush. In addition, appealing students should be able to receive a report explaining their rejection in a timely way while preparing their complaint. It is possible that these procedures are already implemented and that the internal report did not list them. If so, then this section is HLQ.</p> |
| <p>3.8. There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>The doctoral candidates should be clearly informed that they can receive recognition for prior learning to count towards their ECTS points. Our impression from the meeting with the PhD students was that some were not aware of this possibility.</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 necessary</p> <p>From the internal report and meeting with students the expert panel had the impression that candidates' rights and obligations are clearly defined and that the candidates are well-informed about them. According to the internal report, the department 'has a contract on studying which is signed by each candidate'. The candidates were also satisfied with the availability of their supervisors and the feedback they receive on their work.</p> <p>Candidates can also ask for books and papers relevant to their research to be ordered to the library, but they should be informed about it in a more orderly way.</p> <p>However, the funding for participation at events outside the region is scant, and an effort should be made to increase it. In addition, students were not well-informed about mobility possibilities available to doctoral candidates at the department. This should be made easily accessible, preferably through an internet page as well.</p> |
| <p>3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>After their first year of study, the doctoral candidates which are not employed at the university are insufficiently involved in the department's life and the programme</p> |

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| | <p>should create frameworks that amplify their involvement. See the expert committee's recommendations under 'interaction of students after their first year'. This insufficient involvement might be partly responsible for student drop out.</p> |
| <p>4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES</p> | |
| <p>4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.</p> | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>Although the programme is in many respects well-structured and on high level, there are a few issues that should be addressed to align it with international standards. See the list 'Recommendations for the Improvement of the Study Programme' above. Primarily, the involvement of the students with the international research community – and from the PhD level on, academic research is primarily international – is insufficient. Students rarely participate at international events outside the region, and the international events at Zagreb often have hardly any contributor from outside the region. The expert committee has made several recommendations on how to address this problem in its Recommendations above.</p> <p>The Scheme of Progress of the programme attempts to secure some international experience by having as a condition for enrolment into 2nd and 3rd years of study, participation with own paper at scientific conferences; and as a condition for the degree, at least one paper accepted by an internationally recognised journal.</p> <p>It should be made mandatory that at least one of the conferences will be an international one, if in the region then with a substantial percentage of participants from outside the region.</p> <p>In addition, the expert committee noted that the journal in which many or even most students publish and is considered as the required internationally recognised journal is <i>Synthesis Philosophica</i>. This is a respectable journal, but it is the journal of the Croatian Philosophical Society, based in Zagreb University, read mainly in Croatia and the region. This cannot be considered an international publication, even if the paper is written in English, German, or another language widely used in philosophy. Accordingly, the expert committee recommends replacing the condition of at least one paper accepted by an internationally recognised journal. Instead, students should be required either to have a paper accepted by an</p> |

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| | internationally recognised journal of a list of top 50 or so international philosophy journals; or present their work in another international conference as described above. |
| 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>Improvements necessary</p> <p>The intended learning outcomes of the study programme as described by the HEI are satisfactory, and in line with the Croatian Qualifications Framework Act, Level 8.</p> <p>As can be gathered from the Expert Committee's recommendations and from input on other points in this table, the committee was of the opinion that these intended outcomes are not always satisfactorily realised.</p> <p>Ethical requirements related to empirical work are usually irrelevant to philosophical research. However, ethical cases related to plagiarism might arise. While clear cases of plagiarism are in obvious breach of the ethical standards of research, grey areas of use of others' ideas without proper references or quotation might arise. The standards of proper acknowledgment of intellectual debt should be discussed with students and the expectations should be formalised and made available online.</p> <p>The internal report is not helpful on this section and the following ones generally. In fact, it mainly contains the instructions on how to fill the report, rather than a report.</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>Improvements necessary</p> <p>The structure of the programme in general aims towards the stated learning outcomes. Ensuring HLQ in other respects – see especially §4.1 – would ensure achieving these aims too.</p> |
| 4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF. | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>The expert committee could not read the dissertations, which were all written in Croatian. The English abstracts and bibliographies generally seemed satisfactory, but there were a few cases in which this clearly wasn't the case. At least two dissertations were unacceptable as doctoral dissertations, one on Quantum Mechanics and one on Heidegger and his relevance to deconstruction. Accordingly, the procedures taken were insufficient to guarantee minimal quality in these cases. The reasons for these failures should be checked by the department and proper revisions of procedures should be implemented. The programme should generally impose the dissertation</p> |

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| | criteria equally in all cases, to avoid such lapses. |
| 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>Improvements necessary</p> <p>Although the general structure and methods are high-level quality, the faults in internationalisation, application of criteria, and the other issues mentioned above make it impossible to assure that in all cases the outcomes will be achieved.</p> |
| 4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills. | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>PhD students do acquire some generic/transferable academic and business skills. However, they acquire those skills in a process of learning by doing. Someone who managed to finalise a PhD in philosophy in a decent time and with a satisfactory result simply is able to run complicated projects and manage difficult circumstances. It would be suitable to augment this process of learning-by-doing with a number of skill-oriented classes. See recommendations above.</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>Improvements necessary</p> <p>The variety of areas covered by the supervisors' expertise ensures that doctoral candidates can conduct research and obtain supervision in a wide variety of areas, also according to their intended future career. However, as mentioned above in the Recommendations for Improvements, the program does not provide enough skill-oriented learning opportunities (point 2); in addition, an important under-represented area of contemporary philosophy is analytic philosophy (point 5).</p> |
| 4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility. | <p>Improvements necessary</p> <p>This might be the weakest point of the programme. There are beginnings of internationalisation, of both teacher and candidate mobility, but the options are still unsatisfactory and those existing are insufficiently used or advertised among candidates. See detailed comments above.</p> <p>It is desirable that the department will aim at a future state in which most instructors will have spent study and research periods abroad; in which all instructors will be involved in international research; in which at least the strongest candidates will spend a study period abroad; and in which all candidates present their work and participate in international events outside the region. This will require securing the necessary funding, and should be addressed on both departmental and faculty level.</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.