



**REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
Evangelical Theological Seminary Osijek**

**Date of on-line re-accreditation:
10 – 11 May 2022**

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INTRODUCTION

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (the Agency) is an independent legal entity with public authority, registered in the court register, and a full member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

All public and private higher education institutions are subject to re-accreditation, which is conducted in five-year cycles by the Agency, in accordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and subordinate regulations, and by following *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) and good international practice in quality assurance of higher education and science.

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent Expert Panel for the evaluation of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek.

Members of the Expert Panel:

1. Univ. – Prof. Dr. Dr. Pablo Argárate, University of Graz, Faculty of Theology, the Republic of Austria,
2. Doc. dr. Benas Ulevičius, Vytauto Didžiojo Universitetas, the Republic of Lithuania,
3. Dr. sc. Branko Sekulić, lecturer, the University Center for Protestant Theology Matthias Flacius Illyricus, University of Zagreb, the Republic of Croatia,
4. Asst. prof. Dalibor Renić, Faculty of Philosophy and Religious Studies University of Zagreb, the Republic of Croatia,
5. Ms Petra Vorih, a student, the University Center for Protestant Theology Matthias Flacius Illyricus, University of Zagreb, the Republic of Croatia.

During the on-line re-accreditation, the Expert Panel held meetings with the following stakeholders:

- Management,
- Vice-Dean for teaching and Vice-Dean for student affairs,
- Students,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- External associates,

- Representatives of the business sector, potential employers,
- Alumni.

Expert Panel members had a virtual tour of the Faculty premises.

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek on the basis of Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek self-evaluation report, other relevant documents and online meetings.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Short description of the evaluated higher education institution,
- Brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- List of institutional good practices,
- Analysis of each assessment area, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each assessment area,
- Detailed analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard,
- Appendices (quality assessment summary by each assessment area and standard, and protocol),
- Summary.

In the analysis of the documentation and online meetings and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Vlatka Šušnjak Kuljiš, coordinator, ASHE,
- Irena Škarica, interpreter during online meetings,
- Ivana Rončević, translator of the Report, ASHE.

On the basis of the re-accreditation procedure conducted, and with the prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues a following accreditation recommendation to the Minister for Higher Education and Science:

1. **issuance of a confirmation on compliance with the requirements** for performing the activities, or parts of the activities
2. **denial of license** for performing the activities, or parts of the activities
3. **issuance of a letter of expectation** with the deadline for resolving deficiencies of up to three years. A letter of expectation can include the suspension of student enrolment within a set period.

The accreditation recommendation also includes a quality grade of a higher education institution, and recommendations for quality improvement.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

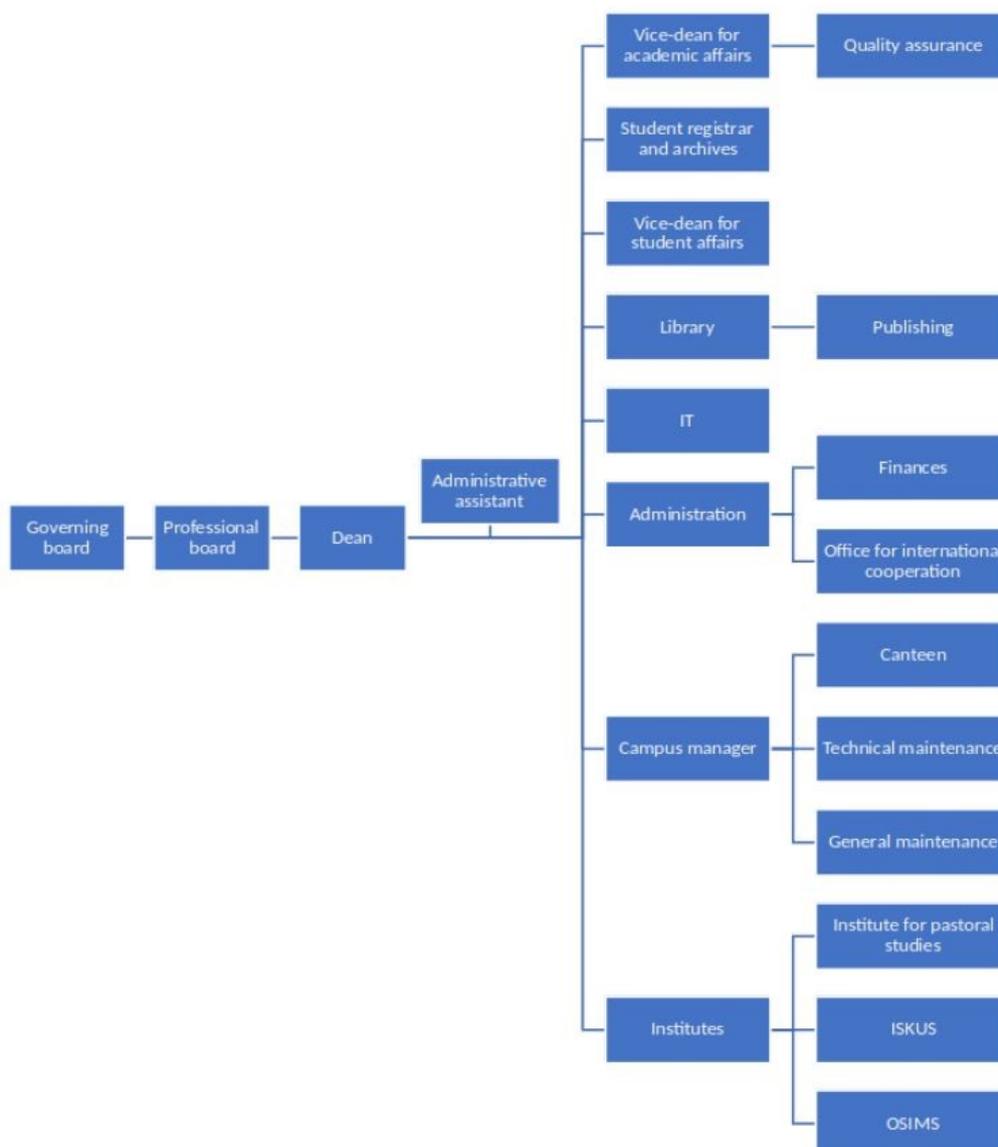
NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek

ADDRESS: Cvjetkova 32, Osijek

DEAN: Ph. D. Peter Kuzmič

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:

Based on Self-evaluation document



STUDY PROGRAMMES:

- Undergraduate (professional) study of theology
- Graduate (specialist) study of theology with four majors: Biblical theology, Christian pedagogy (catechesis), Pastoral counseling, Missiology

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:

Based on Self-evaluation document

Full-time students: 9

Part-time students: 21

NUMBER OF TEACHERS:

Based on Self-evaluation document

Lectures: 7

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

The history of our theological seminary began on October 1st, 1972, when the Biblical Theological Institute in Zagreb.

A decade later, in 1983, a decision was made to establish a school in Osijek, and the Evangelical Theological Seminary began full-time studies, which in the meantime developed into a significant, internationally recognized, interdenominational, theological school.

Based on the Conclusion of the National Council for Higher Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia, with a permit from 2003, enabled the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek to conduct professional undergraduate and postgraduate studies in theology connected to the sciences.

The next round of accreditation was held from 2014 to 2018, when finally, based on the opinion of the Accreditation Council of the Agency, the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Croatia issued a permit to ETS for undergraduate professional study of theology and a permit for specialist graduate study of theology.

MISSION

The mission of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek is to promote the value of theological higher education and spiritual growth for service and mission in the church in the midst of the challenges of modern society. The vocation and mission of the Church in the conditions that characterize the modern world, especially urban society, is becoming more and more complex. The need for excellent education and professional training of

future church workers and ministers is becoming a condition without which the Church is no longer able to effectively proclaim the gospel message in the modern context of the following mega-trends: globalization of cultures, democratization, population growth and migration, knowledge explosion, available information, communication and technology, global polarization of wealth and knowledge, the concentration of world centers of decision-making and governance, urbanization, moral crisis, local and regional conflicts and wars, and exponential intensification of life rhythm. Such a modern social context poses additional and very serious challenges to the Church and all followers of Christ in their effective execution of their mission in carrying out the last commandment of Christ: Go and make disciples of all nations...

VISION

The vision of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek is to be the leading evangelical center for learning and research of the Christo-centric mission in Eastern and Central Europe and the world. ETS is an international, interdenominational, scientific and higher education institution in the field of theological sciences. The purpose of the seminary is to provide theological education, nurture and promote theological scientific disciplines and perform other related activities to help God's people to strengthen their faith.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. The only Protestant school in the region with a unique mission, long-standing tradition and great social, cultural and religious impact.
2. The Institution meets national standards and legal requirements.
3. Outstanding quality of infrastructure with an exceptionally richly equipped library.
4. High financial stability thanks to the support of the benefactors.
5. High competence of the staff, strong international dimension of the Institution.
6. Good atmosphere and collegial relationships between administration, teaching staff and students.
7. Well-connected and supportive community of external stakeholders.
8. Excellent support for students, especially those from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Low number of full-time students, increasing student drop-out rate.
2. Foreign and older students have difficulties with the *matura* requirements.
3. Language problem when teaching mixed groups of foreign and local students.
4. Some teachers are overloaded with the amount of teaching and administration.
5. Lack of employed full-time teachers for some majors (Ch. Education, Ch. Counselling).
6. More attention should be paid to the Biblical languages (*in undergraduate studies?*).
7. Low scientific publishing rate of teachers.
8. Lack of full-time teachers with higher academic titles.
9. Four graduate specializations (majors) for a small number of students.
10. Lack of state funding.
11. Absence of the fundamental documents in English on the ETS website (Statute, Strategy, Regulation for studies, etc.).

LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

1. Good implementation of previous reaccreditation recommendations.
2. Good management of internal quality assurance procedures.
3. Excellent cooperation between the management, teaching staff and external stakeholders.
4. Great attention to the needs of students.
5. Involvement in the local community.
6. Turning the problem of a small number of students into an opportunity for greater personal approach and individualization of studies.

ANALYSIS OF EACH ASSESSMENT AREA, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH ASSESSMENT AREA

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution

Analysis

Internal quality assurance is highlighted as one of the main goals of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek. The institution has established an internal quality assurance system that encompasses and evaluates all activities of the institution and is based on underlying documentation. The task of quality assurance is well perceived by the staff, students and external stakeholders. The institution uses various tools to obtain the information needed for quality improvement. Surveys are used as the main tool to obtain feedback from faculty, students, alumni, and other stakeholders. In addition, the institution utilizes many collegial and friendly relationships with various stakeholders (internal and external) to ensure facilitating of quality-related feedback. Although ETS has not established a specific body for quality assurance (e.g., a quality assurance committee), the functions that such a body normally performs are effectively carried out by members of management and staff. It is significant that ETS has taken seriously the panel's recommendations from the previous assessment. It has developed an action plan for quality improvement, prepared and adopted a number of relevant documents and regulations, made significant improvements in the areas of material base, communication, study procedures, faculty recruitment and training, international mobility, etc. The institution adheres to the standards of Christian ethics, such as the value of human dignity, honesty, justice, respect, dialogue, equality and solidarity. It supports academic integrity and freedom and prevents all kinds of unethical behavior, intolerance and discrimination. All serious ethical problems are analyzed and resolved by the Ethics Committee, which operates in accordance with the ETS Code of Ethics.

ETS recognizes the importance of communication in fulfilling its mission and uses various formal and non-formal tools to disseminate information about its activities and programmes of study. The institution has a good understanding of its social role, which has evolved since the 1990s. ETS has played and continues to play a significant role in the training of church leaders and workers for Croatia and other Southeastern European countries. Thanks to the influence of ETS, a number of educational institutions have been established in Southeast European countries, working according to its model. ETS continues to fulfill its social role by organizing numerous academic, professional and cultural events, encouraging active participation of students and teachers in research and

social activities, providing space and resources for various educational, academic and social initiatives and events. In 2020, ETS launched its first lifelong learning programme focused on biblical and theological topics. The institution is considering the creation of additional lifelong learning programmes in the areas of Christian mission, Christian counselling, and religious education.

Recommendations for improvement

Although ETS is a rather small institution and the responsibilities for monitoring and assuring quality are clearly defined, consideration should be given to establishing a dedicated quality assurance committee composed of staff, students, and external stakeholders.

The institution should find a formal way to involve students and external stakeholders in monitoring programs of study and other important aspects of life at ETS. This can be accomplished by including students, alumni, and partners on the appropriate committees.

The institution plans to create more lifelong learning programs and is developing a strategic framework for this purpose. Given the importance of the institution's social role and the declining number of full-time students, this seems to be a timely and important direction that should be maintained. It is strongly recommended to continue with this task.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

II. Study programmes

Analysis

The mission of the Evangelical Theological Seminary is to promote higher theological education and spiritual growth for the purpose of missions and church ministry in the midst of the challenges of modern society. The vision of the institution is to become a leading evangelical center of learning and research for Christocentric mission in Eastern & Central Europe and the world. The programs of the Seminary are in line with the mission and vision as well as with the strategic goals of the Seminary in general. The Seminary clearly recognizes and defines the different profiles of its students and sets learning outcomes that meet these different profiles. As a unique institution in the large region, with an impressive theological library and qualified staff, it is evident that

delivering study programmes is clearly justified, taking into account social and economic needs. To this end, the seminary includes an analysis of the resources of the higher education institution necessary for delivering study programmes. Evangelical Christians, who are a minority in the Balkans (among Roman Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims), certainly need a center for theological higher education and the training of their ministers and laity. Efforts are being made to provide both within the framework of the cultural diversity of the Balkans.

Problematic is, however, the reduced number of teachers, who are also entrusted with three institutes and four majors. It is unclear to us, even after our discussions, how these institutes can operate with such reduced resources. While there is a strategy in this regard, the evidence is lacking concerning the justification of these institutes given the (very) limited human resources.

It is clear from the highly precise syllabi, praised by students as being of great assistance in understanding the different subjects, that the seminary checks and ensures that the learning outcomes at the course level match the learning outcomes at the programme level. Indeed, in those syllabi, course objectives and learning outcomes (along with content, forms of instruction, student responsibilities, grading criteria and bibliography) are visibly established. These learning outcomes of the programme are aligned with the Croatian Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. The SER has provided a highly-detailed analysis of those outcomes in general, in the different programmes and even for each study year. Furthermore, the qualifications to be acquired are defined and presented in detail.

The Seminary, being a small institution, has a strong and close relationship not only with its students but also with various stakeholders such as churches from different evangelical traditions, professional organizations, alumni, ONGs, among other institutions. This interaction facilitates the existence of mechanisms for providing continuous feedback on the outcomes of the education process at the seminary, on the necessity of changes in its programmes or even on the creation of a new programme. In student practice, students internalize and apply what they have learned in the classroom and experience their future professional life and its challenges in advance. This practicum is particularly successful in the case of the seminary as we have learned from our discussions with various and diverse stakeholders as well as with the students. It is carried out in a systematic and responsible manner, ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcomes regarding student practice. The breadth of this internship in its various forms and areas is certainly an asset in the training of these professionals. We encourage the Seminary to further expand the areas where the internship could be realized, taking into account the evolving labour market.

Recommendations for improvement

Hire more teachers that would be able to carry out the operation of the institutes and majors.

Emphasize even better the Croatian and Balkan context in the programmes' approaches. Keep track of the labour market in order to better adapt your programmes and outcomes for the sake of the employability of graduates.

Continue to provide clarity not only regarding learning outcomes and courses' objectives, but also concerning the way in which their achievements are to be evidenced.

Take explicit feedback on diverse teaching methods.

Review and compare the number of ECTS in some courses. This needs to be done especially at the graduate level. The allocation and the criteria on which it is based need to be better justified.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

III. Teaching process and student support

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek is an international, interdenominational institution with ecumenical and multicultural characteristics. There are many different groups of students at the Institution – regular students, part-time students, pastors, missionaries, international students, students with special needs, etc. This diversity works well at the Institution, because various students studying at the same programme get international, interdenominational and multicultural experience and (most importantly) learn from each other. During the meetings with the panel, students expressed great satisfaction with their studies. There are many positive aspects worth mentioning in this respect. The rules and regulations for various aspects of studies are in line with requirements. They are well defined, clear and available on the ETS website both in Croatian and in English. Assessment and grading procedures are also clearly defined and are in line with national requirements. The Institution uses various means to gather and analyse information on student progress in order to make needed improvements. Surveys are used to get feedback from all stakeholders. Yet, no less important is feedback received thanks to collegial relationships that flourish at the Seminary. During the

meeting with panel, students confirmed that their teachers encourage student autonomy, creativity and responsibility. The reduced number of candidates is seen both by teaching staff and students as an opportunity for more personal approach to studies and monitoring of progress. There is almost familiar atmosphere at the Seminary in which students feel encouraged and taken care of. Teachers use various teaching methods and attend training events on teaching and professional advancement. Students are well supported at the Seminary. They have access to guidance, psychological and legal counselling, financial support, international exchange opportunities, good material base, excellent library. Many relationships of the Institution with numerous local and international partners ensure rich study and practice experience and open better career opportunities. The Seminary supports its students from vulnerable and under-represented groups. All relevant facilities and services are adapted for use by students with disabilities. The Seminary also ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students by making all information available in English, teaching in foreign languages, helping with application and routine studies procedures.

It can be concluded, that an inspiring mission and vision of the institution, the orderly legal base, dedicated teachers, and motivated students are the reason for the unique familiar atmosphere which inspires members of the Evangelical Theological Seminary community to reach for the best achievements and excel.

Recommendations for improvement

Since the Seminary introduced its current programmes and divisions of study only a few years ago, a continuous analysis of the processes involved is highly recommended in order to achieve the greatest success in the implementation of these programmes.

Advantage should be taken of every opportunity provided by Erasmus+ programmes.

The Seminary should consider new programmes and continuously improve existing programmes to attract new students and enhance their employability.

Quality grade

High level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Analysis

While the institutional capacities of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek have a long and well-established tradition, its teaching capacities are relatively young, with a

new start some three years ago, when the current full-time teacher body was employed. The ETS has successfully responded to the requirements of the previous reaccreditation procedure regarding this topic. However, the current evaluation takes into account that several practices have just been introduced and their results and continuation will have to be observed in the coming years.

The ETS has 6 full-time employed teachers, all with the title of lecturer, 4 with a doctor degree. The number and qualifications of teaching staff meet the requirements. Nevertheless, the ETS needs to continue to support and encourage teachers to improve their level of performance through research and publishing. This will also be reflected through acquisition of higher academic and professional titles in line with the official system. The ETS will also have to pay attention to the danger of work overload of some teachers who teach over the limit and have administrative duties at the same time. In addition to full-time teachers, ETS relies on a large number (22) of external collaborators. They come both from academic and professional working sector, which is in line with the purpose of the ETS as a professional ministry-directed school, and with its strategic goals.

The teachers' recruitment process is objective and in accordance with legislation and internal regulations. The methods of selection of candidates follows the regulation on the conditions and procedures for election to titles and ranking, which guarantees that the competitive standards are met. In accordance with the ETS's intention to be an interdenominational and ecumenical school of theology, it should be encouraged to engage in greater institutional cooperation, including the exchange of teaching staff, with the major religious communities that are historically more established and more numerous in this region of Europe.

One of the most praised qualities of the ETS is the attention it pays to improving teaching and professional competences of its staff. It provides opportunities for the improvement of teaching competencies by organizing and sponsoring seminars of pedagogical, psychological, and didactic training. It also financially supports participation of its staff at conferences, seminars, and professional training outside of the institution, often in the international environment abroad. This is done through paid fees, paid leave for professional meetings and conferences, financial and institutional support for publishing books, etc. The Erasmus+ program at ETS is at the initial stage, but the ETS has other long-standing international links that are used to facilitate international mobility for teachers.

The ETS has its own campus in the city of Osijek, which satisfies the modern requirements for its teaching and strategic purposes. This campus includes modern lecture halls, teachers' offices, multimedia hall, and office space. Students have access to a library, a private student dormitory, a professional kitchen with a dining room and recreation

space. There is a sufficient number of classrooms of different sizes, adequate to the number of students the ETS expects to enrol in the long term. The school premises are adequately equipped with IT infrastructure and services for the work of staff, teachers and students.

The ETS library is considered one of the best equipped theological libraries in this part of Europe. The library is adequately staffed. It is open 8 hours daily. It has a reading room and computers that can be used by the students. It has a good selection of periodicals, but also access to internet databases for theological journals. Its catalogue can be accessed online. Students can use the library and borrow books easily and free of charge but they can also use the interlibrary loan service if they need something from other libraries.

The ETS has a reliable service for a transparent and efficient management of its financial resources. It does not receive regular State funding. Hence, almost all income comes from the ETS's own activities. With a rather small number of students and a staff mainly involved in teaching, it cannot rely on funding from fees nor from larger projects or economic activities. The main income comes from the ETS's own endowment and fundraising, which they have been doing successfully for many years. Both the management and the stakeholders of the ETS are convinced that the finances of the Seminary are stable, and they are sure that they will receive the necessary support from their donors, despite the current low number of students. The financial system of the ETS is stable now, but it is vulnerable as the normal functioning of the ETS depends on fundraising from year to year.

Recommendations for improvement

It would be desirable that the ETS ensure among its staff a stable source of leadership for the future.

The ETS should address the work overload of some teachers, allocate sufficient time for research activity and consider whether it is viable to have 3 institutes and 4 graduate majors with this number of full-time teachers.

The ETS is encouraged to give more space to ecumenical and interreligious dialogue through institutional collaboration and teaching exchange with other major religious communities and theological schools in the region.

The ETS is recommended to further strengthen its long-term endowment as a reliable source of funding for ordinary functioning of the institution.

The ETS should continue to seek State funding through projects and grants. It also has a potential for increased international student exchange, and privately, corporately, and internationally funded projects, which should be pursued through its well-established historical connections.

Quality grade

High level of quality

V. Professional and/or scientific activity

Analysis

Although the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek is currently classified as a professionally oriented institution that does not have permission to perform scientific activities, it should be noted that some progress in the past several years in the scientific field has been noticeable. This kind of progress is still not prominent enough to conclude that the scientific aspect of the Seminary has concretely come to the fore. Still, it is undoubtedly important to point out that these capacities do exist within the Seminary and should be continuously promoted in the future. This will enable further development of the Seminary in the direction in which it has not yet realized its potential and will also contribute to a more vigorous growth of the professional qualities that this Seminary currently possesses. Accordingly, the Seminary is encouraged to continue fostering “high professional and scientific productivity in teaching, theological, professional and scientific research as well as the implementation of theological, professional and scientific projects” (SER, 75).

Indeed, it is an undeniable fact that “instructors and associates of the seminary are associates of various scientific and professional forums, symposia, seminars and other conferences in the country and abroad, which speaks to the continuous quality work of our instructors as well as to the transfer of knowledge to students” (SER, 74). It is also a fact that “instructors, that is, researchers of the seminary, publish their work mostly in their own journal *Kairos* [...] articles from biblical, systematic, historical and applied theology, ethics, Church history, sociology of religion, philosophy and life of the Church” (SER, 74). What must not go unnoticed, however, is that a significant part of these forums, symposia, seminars, conferences, and publications lack a higher level of professional and scientific relevance. Of course, this does not undermine the overall quality of these events but calls into question the academic level that each of these events and publications has.

It is obvious that certain events and publications belong to the high level of the profession and science. However, most of those mentioned above belong to the domain in which a particular academic moment is missing or is not included at all, whether they are journals and events of lower academic rank, whether they are works that foster, for instance, a journalistic or essayistic approach to the topic, or gatherings that are, for example, more oriented towards social engagement and informal exchange of views, i.e., without a more precise theoretical concept or vision that could carry greater professional or scientific weight.

In this context, special attention should be paid to the journal *Kairos*, which, although a valuable theological reading for Croatian contexts, still does not belong to the A1 category of domestic publications, as pointed out in the 2014 and 2022 Self-Analysis. It is a journal of the A2 category (see “Ordinance on Academic Promotion and Advancement Requirements and Proceedings,” NN 72/2019, dated 31 July 2019, and “Ordinance on Academic Promotion and Advancement Requirements and Proceedings,” NN 21/2021, dated 22 February 2021), which, in technical terms, lowers the level of professionalism and scholarship of the teaching staff’s papers, contrary to how the Seminary presents these works. Although this categorization omission could be a significant problem for the Seminary, we believe this was not intentionally done to mislead the expert panel members. Nevertheless, this suggests that the Seminary should deal with professional and scientific issues in a more constructed way than it has done so far.

Recommendations for improvement

Increase the number and quality of published professional and scientific papers.

Where appropriate, suggest to teaching staff to cooperate and publish joint publications with other Seminary associates or third parties.

To divide more clearly the “domains of professional and scientific interest” among teaching staff.

Teaching staff are advised to strengthen their contacts with colleagues at home and abroad in their own “domain of interest.”

To check and recapitulate the status of *Kairos* journal within the categorization of domestic publications.

To pay more attention to the contextualization of its professional and scientific activities.

More detailed information on the impact and effect of teaching staff and associates on particular projects, their engagement in various domestic and international associations, editorial offices, organizations, institutions, and the like should be provided in SER. Creating a more detailed report that would show the specific role of teaching staff and associates in these various national and international conferences, workshops, forums, conferences, webinars and training events would be very helpful for the next external evaluation.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH STANDARD

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution

1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.

Analysis

The Seminary has established a functional internal quality assurance system, which includes and evaluates all activities of the Seminary and is based on the underlying documentation. The SER provides quite exhaustive description of the internal quality evaluation system at the ETS with operational links to relevant documents. The quality assurance is emphasized as one of primary goals in the five years Strategy document of the Institution. During the meetings with various stakeholders the Panel got an impression that this goal is well realized by the management, the staff, students and external stakeholders, who are well organized in pursuing it. The internal quality assurance system is based on surveys, that are filled by all the involved parties – teaching staff, students, alumni, partners, employers. Links to questionnaires are provided in SER, as well as an example of an official report on surveys made by the management. Surveys include all important areas of quality development - content of study programmes and study courses, their relevance and relationship with needs of society, teaching and managing quality, material base, etc. Of no less importance than the formal quality assurance procedures are informal relationships with various partners and employers who are very often alumni of the ETS and provide relevant feedback to the institution in informal way. Similarly, the collegial atmosphere at ETS ensures that feedback is readily provided by students or staff. Because of all, mentioned above, the ambition to pursue the high-quality performance (especially in teaching, community building, organizing) seems to be an important part of most activities at ETS and various activities are used as an opportunity to analyze the situations for the sake of quality improvement.

Recommendations for improvement

Even if the ETS is rather small institution and the responsibilities for the monitoring and assuring quality seems well defined, creating a dedicated Quality Assurance Committee, consisting of staff members, students and external stakeholders should be considered.

Where possible, representatives of students and external stakeholders should be included in various Committees at ETS, especially those that govern study programmes and important aspects of life of the Institution.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.

Analysis

After the last accreditation procedure in 2018, ETS was permitted by the Ministry of Science and Education of Croatia to conduct undergraduate and specialist graduate professional theology studies. According to the Expert Panel, based on seven assessment standards, ETS met the requirements for four standards (Higher Education Management and Quality Assurance, Students, Mobility and International Cooperation, Resources), partially met the requirements for the Teachers Standard and was recognized as being in the initial implementation phase for the Professional and Research Standard. The Institution took seriously recommendations of the Panel and has developed an Action Plan for Quality Improvement.

Following the recommendations of the Panel, ETS has drafted and adopted a series of relevant documents and regulations, made a significant improvement in areas of material base, communication, study procedures, hiring and upgrading teachers, international mobility, etc. (a detailed list of improvements is provided in SER, P. 11). All shortcomings, mentioned by the Panel, have been largely eliminated, and some recommendations are being worked on continuously.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.

Analysis

As a Christian institution, ETS strongly upholds standards of Christian ethics, such as value of human dignity, honesty, justice, respect, dialogue, equality, and solidarity. It stands for the implementation of equal rights for everyone, regardless of race, gender, or nationality. The Institution has an operational Code of Ethics which defines ethical and unethical behaviour, sets down the duties of teaching staff and students, and provides regulations for procedures in cases of unethical behaviour. The Ethics Committee is responsible for handling the ethics related situations at ETS. It consists of three staff members and student representatives. It should be noted that in five years period there were no complaints about an unethical behaviour at the Institution.

The ETS advocates ecumenical attitude and interreligious dialogue. It encourages students to exercise their right to free thought and opinion in an honest search for the truth. This attitude was enthusiastically confirmed by students (including Orthodox and Catholic students) during the meeting with Panel.

Recommendations for improvement

Subscription or buying rights to use a plagiarism checking software would ease the procedure of verifying the authenticity of papers and should be considered.

Quality grade

High level of quality

1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, professional and/or scientific and social role).

Analysis

ETS understands the importance of dissemination of information about the Institution, its study programmes and services it provides. Taking into consideration dropping numbers of candidates, the effort is made to present the Institution on as many platforms and to as many groups of society as possible. SER provides number of examples of such effort. ETS organizes promotional events on regular basis and advertises them online. Eg., Open Days event is organized every year both live and online for all those interested in studies at ETS. Also, ETS is represented at yearly Education Fair in Osijek where the Institution is promoted by disseminating leaflets and answering questions of those interested in study opportunities at ETS. At the beginning of each academic year Orientation Week is organized to greet new students and provide them all relevant information on study process and related opportunities. ETS uses internet and social

media to communicate with stakeholders, potential students and general public. All important information is announced/provided on ETS website and on the websites of number of Christian organizations. All relevant content on ETS website is provided both in Croatian and in English. The Institution has an operational Facebook page where all information is announced in social media format. For an internal study related communication between students and teachers the Institution is using Moodle online platform. Besides all mentioned means of communication, ETS uses traditional promotion materials (brochures, leaflets, posters) which are also being adapted for online use. The Institution has created a quality audio and video promotional materials that were broadcasted on local radio and TV channels, ETS Youtube channel, and Facebook.

Social role of ETS is communicated to the public by organizing cultural and societal events – round tables, conferences, book presentations, public lectures, guest lectures, as well as scientific conferences in collaboration with other academic institutions and international networks. Such events are always publically announced. An important role in communication and demonstration of social role of ETS is played by live testimonies. As Christian institution, ETS uses opportunity to be represented at various Christian camps, conferences, events. There is evidence that some of the strongest candidates chose studies at ETS attracted by success stories, shared at such events by ETS teachers and students.

It is evident, that ETS takes communication task seriously and has adopted good policy of communication. It uses a variety of communication tools and channels, both locally and internationally (especially in countries that are considered as labor market for ETS, eg. Romania).

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.

Analysis

In the 1990s ETS made a significant social impact by inviting students from other Southeastern and Eastern European countries, who, upon their return, worked with their

churches and communities to establish educational institutions that would grow into colleges or seminaries with domestic and international recognition. These institutions often worked according to the model of ETS and trained leaders and workers of local churches and communities.

Today ETS continues to promote the development of Protestant and applied theology and contributes to the academic, professional, and cultural community of the city of Osijek and the region by organizing numerous academic, professional, and cultural events, encouraging the active participation of students and teachers in research and social activities, organizing lifelong learning, and providing space and resources for various educational, academic and social initiatives and events. SER provides examples of research projects, public lectures, round tables, conferences, volunteering cases organized by ETS, that proves a high level of engagement into the relevant and sensitive topics of today (ecology, non-violence, fighting poverty, promoting women theologians, etc.). The Institution supports important initiatives for democracy social improvement of society by providing its space for Non-Violence Policy Institution and Nansen Dialogue Center.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.

Analysis

In 2020 ETS started one Life-long learning programme, which concentrates on studying the Bible and theological topics for those who want to serve their churches and society better or those who would like to study theology without enrolling to full-time studies. The programme corresponds to the mission and strategic goals of the Institution. Although the number of participants is small, based on survey, the programme meets their needs. The existing Life-long learning programme is based on a full-time theology programme at ETS. The Institution is considering creating more Life-long learning programmes in fields of Christian mission, Christian counseling, and religious pedagogy and is developing a strategic framework for this task, which would take into greater consideration a diversity of student population and allow greater independence of Life-

long learning programmes from regular studies according to the needs of a specific target groups.

Recommendations for improvement

The Institution has a capacity to offer more than one Life-long learning programme and should continue working towards this direction. Having more successful Life-learning programmes would also help ETS to continue its mission despite the dropping enrollment numbers.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

II. Study programmes

2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the demands of the labour market.

Analysis

The seminary's mission is to promote higher theological education and spiritual growth for missions and church ministry, amid the challenges of modern society. The vision of the Institution is to become a leading evangelical centre for learning and research of the christocentric mission in Eastern & Central Europe and the world. ETS programs are in line with its mission and vision, as well as with its strategic goals in general. The Seminary clearly recognizes and defines the different profiles of its students and establishes the learning outcomes that could meet those various profiles.

It has become clear to us that students, alumni and external stakeholders of ETS are highly satisfied with the study programmes, the outcomes and the way in which they are carried out at the institution. The commitment of teaching staff in fulfilling their duties at the Seminary was particularly emphasized by the various parties.

In this sense, we note that there is evidence that overall goals of all study programmes are consistent with the mission and strategic goals of the Seminary. Having stated this, we find, however, lacking evidence on some courses (for instance, concerning biblical languages). Also, some learning outcomes of graduate programme appear to be too pretentious or/and do not have corresponding study subject.

Being a unique institution of this kind in the large region, with an amazing theological library and qualified teachers, it is evident that delivering study programmes, taking into account social and economic needs, is clearly justified. To this end the Seminary provides and includes an analysis of resources of the higher education institution required for delivering study programmes. Being a minority in the Balkans, among Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim, Evangelical Christians certainly need a centre for theological higher education and formation of their ministers and lay people. There is an effort to provide both within the framework of the cultural diversity of the Balkans.

Problematic is, however, the reduced number of teachers, who, in addition, are charged with three institutes and four majors. It is unclear to us, even after our discussions, how these institutes can operate with such reduced resources. Indeed, although there is a strategy in place in this regard, the evidence is lacking concerning the justification of these institutes given very limited human resources.

The Seminary, in delivering study programmes leading to degrees in regulated professions, accepts the recommendations of professional organisations that govern their licencing. Indeed, it rightly and intensively interacts with those organisations as well as with other stakeholders. From our discussions with the different groups, it appears that the Seminary produces competitive professionals for national and international labour markets.

Recommendations for improvement

Hire more teachers that would be able to carry out the operation of the institutes and majors.

Emphasize even better the Croatian and Balkan context in the programmes' approaches. Keep track of the labour market in order to better adapt ETS programmes and outcomes for the sake of graduates' employability.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.

Analysis

As stated above, the learning outcomes of the study programmes have been clearly defined, and they are aligned with the mission and goals of the Seminary, both of which are clearly presented. The various and diverse expected qualifications are detailed along with the competencies.

It is clear from the highly-precise syllabi, praised by students as being of great assistance in understanding the different subjects, that the Seminary checks and ensures that the learning outcomes at the level of courses are aligned with the learning outcomes at the programme level. Indeed, in those syllabi, course objectives, learning outcomes (along with content, forms of instruction, student responsibilities, grading criteria and bibliography) are clearly stated. The learning outcomes achieved in the study programme are aligned with the Croatian Qualifications Framework and the European Qualifications Framework level descriptors. The Self-Analysis has provided a highly-detailed analysis of learning outcomes in general, in the different programmes and even for each study year. Furthermore, the qualifications to be acquired are defined and presented in detail.

In addition to this, in awarding professional degrees the Seminary acts in line with professional requirements and internationally recognized professional standards, ensuring that the programme is up to date. The Seminary collects all kinds of recommendations to improve them.

Since the vast majority of graduates are employed by their own churches, the input of these and some other institutions is continually taken into account in determining the learning outcomes.

As evidenced by our conversations with the various stakeholders and alumni, the level of satisfaction with the overall formation of the graduates is very high. This does not mean that there are no areas that need to be improved as it has become clear from the results of surveys conducted by the Seminary.

Again, we would like to point out the difficulties of carrying out two different programmes (professional and specialist) and offering four areas of specialization with the reduced teaching resources.

Recommendations for improvement

Continuously adapt the learning outcomes to the graduates' profiles required by possible employers.

Continue making clear to students what are the learning outcomes of the study programmes and of each course.

Explore new teaching methods that would better achieve the learning outcomes.
Improve the qualification of students in areas highlighted in surveys.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.

Analysis

From the discussions with the various groups at the Seminary, especially students and alumni, we received the impression that great clarity is provided all through the different stages of the teaching-learning process, especially, but not only, with regard to course objectives and learning outcomes. This also applies to the way in which the achievement of the learning objectives is ensured. In this sense, the Seminary ensures the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers. Those achievements and problems associated with them seem to be continuously taken into account as feedback for the improvement of the teaching process. These various evaluation forms (such as examinations, seminar papers, practical performances and final or diploma theses, etc.), adequately described and explained to the students, assist the entire process. In this regard, detailed student surveys provide valuable insights into the various aspects of teaching. This feedback should lead to continuous adaptation of the programmes and their learning outcomes to improve students' education and employability.

Recommendations for improvement

Make thorough student evaluation of each course the norm for the institution.

Continue in providing clarity not only of learning outcomes and course objectives but also concerning the way in which the achievements of outcomes and objectives are to be evidenced.

Take explicit feedback on diverse teaching methods.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.

Analysis

The Seminary, being a small institution, has a strong and close relationship not only to its students but also to the various stakeholders such as churches from different evangelical traditions, professional organizations, alumni, ONGs, among other institutions. This interaction facilitates the existence of mechanisms for providing continuous feedback on the outcome of the education process at the Seminary, on the necessity of changes in its programmes or even of creation of a new programme. In this regard, it can be affirmed that the development activities related to study programmes are carried out systematically and regularly, involving various stakeholders. These modifications or new developments require an intensive and continuous process that begins with recognizing the need for a new programme in order that the Seminary can better fulfill its mission. Information about the launching of a Lifelong Programme along with modifications to the existing programmes in the last four years has been provided by the Seminary and the changes have been conveniently recorded.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.

Analysis

The Seminary allocates ECTS credits in accordance with the actual student workload, based on the analyses of feedback from stakeholders in the teaching process or other procedures. While this is affirmed in general, we have found problems with some courses. Sometimes it is not clear why courses with the same number of hours have few ECTS while others have many more. This ambiguity in the distribution of ECTS is to be observed especially at the graduate level.

On the other hand, it is evident that students are generally satisfied with the ECTS allocation and that they are provided with feedback on the results of the analysis of gathered information and the implemented changes.

Recommendations for improvement

Revise and compare the amount of ECTS of some courses. This needs to be done especially at the graduate level.

Better justify the allocation of ECTS and underlying criteria.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

2.6. Student practice is an integral part of the study programmes.

Analysis

The mandatory character of the internship or practice shows its relevance to a professional degree. The number of hours allotted for it in the undergraduate programme constitutes an important tool in achieving the learning outcomes of the programme. In student practice, students internalize and apply what they have learned in the classroom and experience their future professional life and its challenges in advance. This internship is particularly successful in the case of the Seminary as we have learned from our conversations with various stakeholders as well as with the students. It is carried out in a systematic and responsible manner, ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcomes related to student practice.

The breadth of forms and areas of the internship is certainly an asset in the formation of these professionals. We encourage the Seminary to further expand the areas where the internship could be realized, taking into account the evolving labour market.

The interaction of the Seminary with the intern's supervisor is essential in providing feedback not only upon the student but also upon the programme. This comprehensive feedback has already identified areas to be improved in the teaching process.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

III. Teaching process and student support

3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clearly defined, published and consistently applied.

Analysis

The Seminary has clear and defined admission criteria and well-defined decision-making procedures that meet the admission criteria. On the website and in the evidence examples, we find clear and defined procedures for applying to studies. The criteria for admission or continuation of studies ensure the selection of candidates with appropriate prior knowledge in line with the requirements of the study programme. Information about study programmes and other studies and admission related information is sent by the Seminary to the churches and organizations in the region. The ETS also has published posters that are put up in visible places (e.g. on the bulletin boards in Osijek). Every year the ETS invites people to visit the Seminary and get a little taste of student experience (e.g. by attending some lectures, etc.) during the Open doors days. The Seminary has defined and provides evidence about local and foreign degrees and courses recognition procedures. Among the evidence are interviews and surveys from students who have transferred from other higher education institutions or programmes and whose qualifications and prior learning have been recognized by the ETS.

Recommendations for improvement

Since the Seminary introduced its current programmes and divisions of study only a few years ago, a continuous analysis of the processes involved is highly recommended in order to achieve the greatest success in the implementation of these programmes.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.

Analysis

The Seminary is committed to students and is continuously monitoring students' progress. Students are very motivated and satisfied with their study programmes and their motivation is proved by excellent results of their studies. The Seminary gathers and analyses data on students' pass rates, completion and drop-out rates. Students are regularly asked to complete surveys on various aspects of their experience at the Seminary. A separate survey is prepared for alumni to evaluate their study experience

from a time perspective and provide valuable feedback. It should be emphasized, however, that while the Institution uses the necessary formal tools to obtain feedback from its students, the most effective means of communicating with students and receiving their feedback is through the nonformal collegial relationships that flourish at the Seminary thanks to its Christian values and small number of students.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary ensures student-centered learning. The Seminary is constantly evaluating and applying various teaching methods – interactive and research-based learning, problem-solving, use of creative and critical thinking, etc. Teaching methods are adapted to a diverse student population – part-time students, vulnerable groups, etc. In a difficult time like the Corona virus outbreak, the Seminary has further enhanced online teaching and learning practices, especially through the use of the Moodle and BigBlueButton e-learning platforms. Teachers and students have acquired advanced technological competence through the use of IT equipment to access content, interact, submit their papers and take exams. Teachers do motivate students and encourage their engagement in class. They regularly take part in training, workshops, and courses regarding the various didactic methods and technologies used in teaching. During the meeting with panel, students readily confirmed that their teachers take a collegial approach and encourage student autonomy, creativity and responsibility. Both teachers and students see the reduced number of students as an opportunity study in smaller groups where personal monitoring of student by teacher is possible. It is evident that the Institution uses this opportunity well, as all students confirmed the availability of teachers for consulting, guidance and discussion. In this almost familiar atmosphere students feel encouraged, taken care of and well supported.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.

Analysis

The Seminary provides tutors, supervisors, and advisers as support in student learning and progress. It established functional procedures for student guidance, psychological and legal counselling, support for the students with disabilities, support for outgoing and incoming mobility, and library and student administration services. The Seminary fosters international and interdenominational dimensions, therefore it maintains ongoing relationship with numerous local and foreign partners (churches, communities, ONG's, etc.), which provides students with a rich, diverse and nurturing mentoring and supervision experience and ensures better career opportunities. The teaching staff has good availability in consulting hours offered to the students. The library of the Seminary is one of the richest in Southeast Europe, it has over 140 000 volumes. The library has titles in Croatian, but also in many other languages, such as English, German, French, and Russian from various fields such as theology, philosophy, sociology, psychology, and others. It is not surprising that during the meetings with panel both staff and students mentioned the library as an asset of an exceptional quality.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

Analysis

The Seminary supports its students from vulnerable and under-represented groups. Students are provided with different types of mentorship, financial support, surveys and focus groups among students, special workshops, website adjustments, targeted scholarships, accommodation, and teaching and assessment methods are adjusted to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups. Currently, there are a number of students at the Seminary with special social needs (students of lower socioeconomic status, students without both parents and the like). The Seminary regularly provides support to these students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups. These students may request additional support, adjustment, consultation and additional information by asking, requesting financial assistance or talking to the student office manager, student dean, secretary, vice dean or dean. Scholarships are also available to such students to apply for early enrolment. In the main building of the Seminary, access and movement

routes are adjusted to the needs of students in wheelchairs or students with reduced mobility. The Seminary has an elevator and wide corridors while individual rooms meet the standards required for the smooth movement of students with disabilities.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.

Analysis

The Seminary informed students about the opportunities for completing part of their studies abroad. The Seminary provides support to students in applying for and carrying out exchange programmes. Foreign language lectures are offered at the Seminary and the programmes have the international dimension to varying degrees (e.g., students are exposed to foreign literature, foreign experiences and practices, work with foreign professors and colleagues, etc.). A year ago, the ETS received an approved and signed Erasmus + Charter in higher education for the period 2021 - 2027. This is considered by the Institution as an important opportunity to take the international dimension of ETS to a new level. Another opportunity to gain an international experience is provided to staff and students by annual conferences organized by the ETS together with the OSIMS Institute and the CEEAMS Association, which bring together many theologians from all over the world.

Recommendations for improvement

Take advantage of every opportunity provided by Erasmus+ programmes. It is an easy to use and well-organized instrument for promoting international mobility, strengthening international dimension and increasing overall satisfaction level of staff and students of the Institution.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

3.7. The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.

Analysis

The Seminary ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students. All information about the enrolment and studies is provided on the ETS website in English. The Seminary provides support for foreign students in the application, accommodation and study procedures, the entire programme or a part of the programme is delivered to foreign students in English. All teachers at ETS speak and communicate in English, use literature and deliver papers in English. Teachers extend support to international students by providing lectures, supervising their independent work and research in a language they understand, consulting with them, and ensuring that they, like any other students, are involved in all activities within the scope of the Seminary. For example, during the meeting with students panel members had an opportunity to hear a very positive testimonial from student who came to study at the ETS from Africa. It can be concluded, that overall foreign students are very satisfied with their studies at the ETS.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.

Analysis

The ETS assessment and grading procedures are clearly defined in the Regulation on Studying and the Regulation on Assessment. Students are acquainted with these regulations before the beginning of each course. The study programme descriptions contain criteria and requirements for assessment for each course in the description of the course. In addition to these descriptions, all lecturers present the content and methods, inform about learning outcomes and explain the method of evaluation and assessment to their students in the first introductory class. Criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are in line with regulations, the objectives, methods and outcomes of the course and the whole programme. Each student has the opportunity to consult with teachers and is granted feedback from teacher on his or her achievements. This helps students a lot in development of their academic skills and reaching for the best results in their studies.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.9. The higher education institution issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary issues the appropriate documents, diplomas, and diploma supplements, following applicable regulations, such as the Law on Academic and Professional Titles and Academic Degrees, the Ordinance on the content of diplomas and supplementary study documents, the Ordinance amending the ordinance on the content of diplomas and supplementary study documents, and the List of professional titles and their abbreviations. Students of the Seminary who successfully complete the study programme are issued diplomas and an accompanying diploma supplement in Croatian and English.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

3.10. The higher education institution is committed to the employability of graduates.

Analysis

The Seminary analyses the employability of its graduates. Enrolment quotas are in line with church needs and the labour market. Students who complete the undergraduate three-year study of theology have achieved the conditions for employment in their churches and church organizations, mainly those that belongs to the Reformed tradition. In addition to service in church communities, students with completed professional studies can teach religious education to children attending lower grades of primary school. They can also cooperate in housing communities, work in various NGOs, carry out humanitarian and similar activities in jobs that match their expertise and acquired competencies. Graduate students are successfully employed as pastors in religious communities or church institutions. They are also employed in the education system in

Croatia and the education systems of other countries, as well as in the media, publishing, cultural institutions, humanitarian and social organizations.

Recommendations for improvement

The Seminary should consider new programs (also, lifelong learning programmes) and continuously improve existing programmes to attract new students and enhance their employability.

Quality grade

High level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek has a sufficient number of employed teachers, and it has invested a lot in the number and quality of its teaching staff. It has 7 full-time employed teachers, but also 22 external collaborators. The average age of full-time teachers is satisfactory. The employed teachers all have the professional title of lecturer; 4 of them have a doctor degree, while two others are in the final stage of their doctoral studies. The full-time teacher-student ratio is 1:4 in the current academic year. Both teachers and students emphasised the advantages of this ratio in terms of individual approach and monitoring of the learning process. All full-time employed teachers work in the research field of theology. The non-theological courses are covered by external collaborators. The curriculum offers several courses in psychology and pedagogy – especially because the ETS has graduate specializations (majors) in Christian Counselling and Christian Education. In general, the ETS fulfils formal requirements, mainly because not all courses and majors from the curriculum have been started, but it would be advisable for the future to have own teachers from those areas or permanent collaboration with institutions, in view of ETS plans and tradition of offering life-long education in some of these areas. Three full-time teachers have a higher workload than foreseen in the relevant legislation (max. 450 standard hours), and some of them have administrative duties as well. They need time for research, publishing, and for the activities of the three institutes that the ETS maintains. As a result, these teachers are overworked, even though they are willing to give generously of their time and energy to the Seminary.

Recommendations for improvement

The ETS should encourage and provide administrative support for teachers to obtain higher professional and academic titles.

The ETS should address the work overload of some teachers and allow sufficient time for research activities, necessary for their professional advancement.

The ETS should consider whether it is viable to run 3 institutes and 4 graduate majors with this – relatively small – number of full-time teachers.

It would be advisable to consider appointing full-time teachers with formal degrees in psychology and pedagogy, to make the specializations in Religious Education and Christian Counselling sustainable in the long-term and to strengthen life-long training education in these areas.

It would be desirable for the ETS to ensure a stable source of future leadership among its staff.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

4.2. The higher education institution ensures appropriate quality of external associates.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek has a clear and transparent regulation on the procedure for selecting external associates and about their expertise. The ETS has 22 external collaborators. All of them have adequate academic degrees. Most of them come from a non-academic setting, working in different professional, religious and cultural institutions, which guarantees that they have relevant work experience. It is possible and does happen that students visit them and are acquainted with their working environment. Some of external collaborators work at other academic institutions. This combination of external collaborators coming from professional and academic background guarantees a good balance between good pedagogical standards and the inclusion of the latest research, trends, and knowledge from the labour market in the teaching process. The ETS has a long tradition and places great emphasis on the importance of practical work of students, encouraging internships, that can often be completed at the external teachers' home institution. The external teachers are also involved in the process of mentoring of final and graduate theses. The ETS has system of evaluation of both full-time teachers and

external associates. Hence, we can conclude that the ETS has a system that ensures good quality and good organization of cooperation with external teachers.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

4.3. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures, which include the evaluation of excellence.

Analysis

Teacher recruitment and appointment procedures arise from the development goals of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek and are in accordance with legislation and internal regulations. The methods of selection of candidates follow the regulation on the conditions and procedure for election to titles and ranking, which guarantees that the competitive standards are met. The ETS has and applies a system of regular feedback by students on teaching quality. The employment process is transparent and based on advertisements published in several public media. Applicants for election for higher ranking are objectively evaluated according to their academic record, teaching experience, professional work, knowledge of foreign languages, academic title, evaluation by members of the expert committee and positive evaluation of the introductory lecture. We realise that this system has been in place only for the last three years, but the fact that all the full-time teachers hold the academic title of lecturer demonstrates the need to encourage their advancement to higher titles through research and quality publishing.

The ETS has the intention and practice of being an interdenominational and ecumenical school of theology. This has been especially confirmed and praised in the meetings with external collaborators, alumni and students. By its nature ETS is a Protestant seminary, and all the lecturers of theology (according to the list of full-time and external lecturers) specialize in Protestant theology. Nevertheless, it would strengthen the academic quality and the involvement in the local culture if the ETS had more institutional cooperation, including the exchange of teaching staff, with the major religious communities that are historically more established in this region of Europe.

Recommendations for improvement

The ETS should focus on the need of teachers to advance in quality and academic titles through research and quality publishing.

The ETS is encouraged to give more space to ecumenical and interreligious dialogue through institutional collaboration and teaching exchange with other major religious communities and theological schools in the region.

Quality grade

High level of quality

4.4. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek provides many opportunities for the improvement of teaching competencies by organizing and sponsoring seminars of pedagogical, psychological and didactic training. The ETS also financially supports participation of its staff at conferences, seminars, and professional training outside the institution and often in international environment abroad. At the meeting with teachers, they expressed a high level of satisfaction with the support they receive for their professional and academic development by ETS, especially through paid fees, paid leave for professional meetings and conferences, financial and institutional support for publishing of books. The Erasmus+ program at ETS is at the initial stage, but the seminary has other long-standing international connections that are used to facilitate international mobility of teachers. At our meeting, all full-time teachers were able to demonstrate, based on their own experience, the support received from ETS for international participation at various conferences, training events, professional meetings, summer schools, doctoral studies, etc. Hence, the support provided by the ETS in area of this standard is exemplary.

Recommendations for improvement

The ETS is encouraged to further develop the Erasmus+ international cooperation programmes for its staff and students, especially at the European level of exchange.

Quality grade

High level of quality

4.5. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT service, work facilities etc.) are adequate for the delivery of the study programmes and ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes and the implementation of professional and/or scientific activity.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary has its own campus in the city of Osijek with modern lecture halls, teachers' offices, multimedia hall and office space. Students have access to a library, a private student dormitory, a professional kitchen with a dining room and leisure space. All this is in line with the purpose and strategic goals of the school. Students have expressed their satisfaction with the material resources, especially with the opportunity to live on campus for a longer or shorter period at a reasonable cost, which is important for part-time students. Teachers find the premises of the ETS suitable for conducting study programmes as well as for their personal work, as there are 16 teachers' offices at their disposal. There is a sufficient number of classrooms of different sizes, appropriate to the number of students the ETS expects to have in the long term. The school premises are adequately equipped with IT infrastructure and services for the work of staff, teachers and students. The ETS continuously invests in equipment and safety.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

4.6. The library and library equipment, as well as access to additional resources ensure the literature necessary for ensuring high-quality of study and scientific and teaching activity.

Analysis

The library of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek is considered one of the best equipped theological libraries in this part of Europe. It is particularly rich in English language bibliography (80% of the books), which is important for the ETS's graduate program in English. It also has good stock of theological and religious books in Croatian. The library has two employed librarians. The library has a reading room and computers for students to use. It has a good selection of periodicals, but also access to internet databases for theological journals. The library is open 8 hours daily. Its catalogue is available online. Students can use the library and borrow books easily and free of charge, they can also use the interlibrary loan service if they need something from other libraries. The ETS invests regularly in new books, periodicals, and equipment. It regularly conducts

user satisfaction surveys. From the feedback of students and staff, it can be concluded that they are very satisfied with this service.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

4.7. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.

Analysis

The Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek has a reliable service for transparent and efficient management of its financial resources. It also has its own Seminary Foundation. It does not receive State funding, at least not on a regular basis. Hence, almost complete revenue comes from the ETS's own activities. A smaller portion comes from student fees, but with the small number of students, this is far from sufficient. The connection with the ETS's alumni is lively and well-established, although their relationship has not been formalized in the form of an association and is not yet a significant factor in the financial system. The ETS has no significant economic activity of its own. Neither it has revenues from scientific and professional projects. The main income comes from the ETS's own endowment. That includes renting of some premises on campus and the returns from the investments. Nevertheless, this is not enough, and the ETS needs to secure donations through fundraising, which it has been doing successfully for many years. It seems that the ETS can fund additional projects and institutional development from these sources as well. Both the leadership and the stakeholders of the ETS are convinced that the Seminary's finances are stable, and they are confident that they will get the necessary support from their donors, despite the current low number of students. Hence, the ETS depends on its stakeholders and is sustainable as long as it can secure sufficient funding from the endowment and fundraising. The management also believes that the quality of the ETS will attract more students. The ETS also plans to start new programs, such as Christian Counselling and Religious Education. The ETS's connection with its alumni has not been formalized, although their relationship is lively and well-established. However, all these plans are still at an early stage of development. We can conclude that the financial system of the ETS is stable now, but it is vulnerable as the normal functioning of the ETS depends on fundraising from year to year. In the long run, fundraising should be used to finance special projects, while the endowment should be strengthened sufficiently to ensure funding for regular academic activities. The ETS has a potential for increased

international student exchange as well as privately, corporately, and internationally funded projects, which should be pursued.

Recommendations for improvement

The ETS is encouraged to further strengthen its long-term endowment as a reliable source of funding ordinary functioning of the institution.

The connection with alumni can be strengthened through a formal association.

The ETS should seek to obtain some State funding through projects and grants.

Additional sources of funding could come from increased international student exchange, life-long learning programmes and attracting new students by offering new programmes.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

V. Professional and/or scientific activity

5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of professional and/or scientific activity.

Analysis

The Seminary's teaching staff's engagement is not questionable; they “actively participate in professional projects, the preparation of professional and scientific papers, organize and implement theological, professional and scientific conferences, implement study programs and develop curricula in the field of humanities” (SER, 74). This is evident from the list of publications, the list of participations of teachers and associates at professional and/or scientific conferences, and the list of conferences (professional and/or scientific) organized by the Seminary, as well as from tables 4.4. and 5.1.a, while table 5.2. which is referred to in SER is not included in the document itself.

The figures presented in the lists and available tables indicate a certain level of quantity and quality of professional and scientific engagement of teaching staff and associates of the Seminary. However, if we focus exclusively on the quality and quantity of these engagements in the case of teaching staff without external associates, we conclude that the level of these engagements is insufficient. Of course, it should be noted that the Seminary has no obligation to scientific production, since it does not have a permit to

perform scientific activities. Since the ETS is not financed by the State, conditionally speaking, it is not bound by “The Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act” as well as by “The Ordinance on Academic Promotion and Advancement Requirements and Proceedings.” However, in order to get a concrete insight into the issue, we will compare the productivity of the teaching staff of the Seminary with the quota and level of published works prescribed by the aforementioned “Ordinance” in the field of advancement in the humanities, as this indicates the average quality and quantity of published works that the professional and scientific activities of a higher education institution in the Republic of Croatia should have. If we do that, we get accurate data showing that each employee, in this case of the Seminary, should have published an average of 6 papers in the last five years, which would amount to 42 papers for seven employees of the Seminary, while actually ETS has a total of 22 papers (which is almost half less).

Furthermore, without calling into question the quality of the texts or the content of the professional and scientific conferences in which the teaching staff participated or which they organized, the question arises as to the professional and scientific form of these events. Namely, a certain part of the published works belongs to journals and publishers that are not so academically conspicuous, and many of these events are rather dedicated to social engagement and to the important but nevertheless informal exchange of views, without being made into a professional or scientific observation.

The Seminary puts a particular emphasis on Kairos journal. It is claimed that Kairos belongs to the A1 category of domestic publications in humanities, when in fact it belongs to the A2 category (see “Ordinance on Academic Promotion and Advancement Requirements and Proceedings,” NN 72/2019, dated 31 July 2019, and “Ordinance on Academic Promotion and Advancement Requirements and Proceedings,” NN 21/2021, dated 22 February 2021). Although this categorization omission could create a significant problem for the Seminary, we believe this was not intentionally done to mislead the expert panel members. Nevertheless, this suggests that the Seminary should deal with professional and scientific issues in a more constructed way than it has done so far.

With the recently adopted “Regulations on teacher remuneration and excellence of teaching staff and associates of the Seminary” (24 November 2021), the Seminary expresses a clear intention to promote and improve the quality and quantity of its professional and scientific productivity. Detailed parameters and procedures also demonstrate this clear intention to promote the quality of professional and/or scientific publishing. Also, the teaching staff, in conversations with members of the expert panel, repeatedly pointed out that the Seminary constantly encourages and supports them to develop in this direction and that this encouragement is now formalized in these “Regulations.”

Due to the short period of time from the adoption of the “Regulations” to the moment of this analysis (November 2021-May 2022), the results of the Seminary decision are not measurable in a way that would allow a more accurate assessment of the effectiveness of the process to promote the quality of professional and/or scientific publications. Nevertheless, it is evident that the Seminary has decided to address this shortcoming, which represents a significant change from the previous period of development and inaugurates a new phase of professional and scientific engagement of the ETS. To monitor this type of engagement of teaching staff, the Seminary collects data on their professional, scientific, and teaching work, as can be seen in Tables 4.4 and 5.1.a of the Analytic supplements to SER. There is a detailed bibliography of the Seminary and the bibliographic activity of the teaching staff, supported by a link to the Crosbi database, that is, by an overview of the citation database with a comprehensive overview of papers related to the Seminary (WoS and Scopus). What is lacking in all this, however, is the ability to identify the primary professional and/or scholarly area of interest and work of individual teachers. This lack of adequate professional and/or scientific “recognizability” of the teaching staff should be remedied by making it clearer who represents a particular professional and/or scientific field.

Consequently, staff should be encouraged to profile themselves professionally and scientifically more profoundly. This would be one of the basic prerequisites for a more constructive contribution and development of different areas relevant to theological education. The primary concern here is to foster a distinction between Systematic Theology, New Testament Theology, Old Testament Theology, and Church History, with additional fields of Pastoral Theology and Social Engagement of the Church. Addressing this issue would improve the overall quality of the work of the Seminary and remove the impression that almost any faculty member can teach or provide expertise on any topic with equal effect, which from a professional perspective cannot be possible. In this respect, the recently adopted document — “Regulations on the professional development of employees” (November 24, 2021) — should be helpful in the future in adequate professional and scientific profiling of the teaching staff.

The information provided in SER on the participation of ETS teaching staff at scientific events is sufficient. What we missed was an insight into the personal contribution of the teaching staff at each of these events. On basis of data provided, it is only possible to conclude that individual teachers participated in specific scientific events at home and abroad, but it is unclear what role they had and what was the outcome. Such clarification would provide a more complete picture of how the Seminary and its staff are perceived by others in the academic circles in which they appear.

Recommendations for improvement

Increase the number and quality of published professional and scientific papers in line with the number of teaching staff, as the current ratio between the two ensures a minimum level of quality.

If, for certain reasons, teachers are unable to meet these criteria on their own, it is suggested that they collaborate with other staff members of the Seminary or with third parties they consider relevant in this context and publish joint publications.

It is recommended that teaching staff more clearly delineate professional and scholarly areas of interest so that each member of the teaching staff is as recognizable and compatible as possible within the domain they represent. Accordingly, by publishing papers, participating in conferences and seminars, and providing expert commentary on specific events, each faculty member would help to strengthen the professionalism and scholarship of his or her "own" domain and thus contribute to a more accurate professional and scholarly implementation of the Seminary as a whole.

Regardless of the staff's good connections to other institutions abroad, it would be advisable for members of the teaching staff to strengthen their contacts within the framework of the above-mentioned "own field of interest." In this way, a global-local (glocal) connection would be created as well as the possibility of a specific exchange of contextual experiences that could lead to the creation of new insights and values in the articulation and transfer of knowledge in the sociopolitical context in which the Seminary is situated.

Check and recapitulate the status of Kairos journal within the categorization of domestic publications.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

5.2. The higher education institution proves the social relevance of its professional and/or scientific research and transfer of knowledge.

Analysis

The Seminary meets the criteria of social relevance in the environment in which it is located and operates, which is confirmed by the data from the SER and additionally by interviews with actors of social events in the local communities – individuals from church or secular organizations, church representatives, representatives of associations,

institutions, non-governmental organizations and the like – who cooperate more or less intensively with the Seminary itself, i.e., its teaching staff and associates.

By the nature of its mission, the Seminary primarily meets the needs of Christian churches and strives for the development of church activities. Still, it certainly does not lack understanding of the needs of other social actors, for according to all that can be read, heard, and seen about the College, it thoughtfully considers the necessities of the local community in many aspects of organizing and planning its professional and/or scientific and research activities.

The Seminary also has a developed system of support for research and the transfer of knowledge. It uses various methods to monitor the activities and engagements undertaken by teaching staff and associates. As it is claimed in SER, the Seminary participates in each of these processes with the maximum capacity it has at the time and, on this occasion, contributes to the development of specific projects, either through the contribution of its teaching staff and associates or through financial support and by making its infrastructure and technical capacities available.

In this sense, the Seminary seeks “not only to educate future theologians but also to make theological and humanistic content accessible, understandable and inclusive to everyone in the city of Osijek and the wider region” (SER, 79), and in all this “not to be in the role of an unfair competitor to business entities in the market, but to carry out projects that have their own religious component” (SER, 79). This should be taken as a sign of quality, considering that it is a private Seminary that receives no support from the State and relies solely on its own acquisitions and market capacity.

The system of support for research and transfer of knowledge and technologies inevitably contributes to the level of involvement of teaching staff and associates of the Seminary in the activities of professional associations “as active members of these associations at the national and international level [...] also involved in civic, humanitarian and social associations of various profiles” (SER, 79). In addition, some of them are on the editorial boards of domestic and foreign professional and scientific journals and book editions. They are active and regular members of domestic and foreign academic associations and institutions, and their presence in the media is noticeable. All these activities and engagements unquestionably confirm the social relevance of the Seminary.

The only critical remark that could be made here concerns the nature of the professional and scientific research and knowledge transfer that confirms this social relevance. Namely, regardless of the quality level and quantity that is reflected in all these activities, the lack of their contextualization cannot go unnoticed, i.e., the element that contains a

clear contextual note in relation to the territory of the Republic of Croatia and in the broader sense of the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans. The Seminary encourages the pursuit of excellence in a professional, scientific, and activist sense. However, judging from the information we received from reading the SER and through interviews with teaching staff and associates, all these efforts lack a more robust local, regional theological, and pastoral hallmark. The way the Seminary currently works, one gets the impression that its content could equally belong to many other sociopolitical contexts in different parts of the world, for although its engagements are clearly locally defined in form, they are not many in content, even though the goal of Christian mission is precisely to be “rooted in” a particular sociopolitical context. This may be due to the large number of international associates who do not feel close enough to this context to be immersed in it. Perhaps it is due to the lack of that interest among the Seminary domestic teaching staff? Perhaps it is due to the lack of a concept at the Seminary level in general, which could encourage this contextualization more strongly and thus clearly “root” the Seminary and its staff in the framework of the Republic of Croatia and the post-Yugoslav space? Be that as it may, it is assumed that only by improving and working on this contextual aspect can the Seminary reach the degree of efficiency contained in its capacity.

Recommendations for improvement

Given the Seminary's emphasis on its orientation towards the local community as part of its mission, it must pay more attention to the contextualization of its professional and scientific activities because without the contextual aspect, every theological conception remains, as it were, in the vacuum of theoretical discussion, and the very aim of Christianity is to be “rooted” as well as possible through practice. An excellent example of this “rooting process” could be found in the intention of the Seminary to connect more closely with Islamic institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which, in conclusion, only confirms the general assessment of the expert panel that the high professional and scientific capacities of the Seminary are present, but for some reasons are not yet sufficiently articulated.

The Seminary should consider in more detail the impact of its teaching staff and associates on particular projects of communal interest and their specific contribution to these engagements, in order to get a deeper picture of the importance of the social role of the Seminary. In this regard, a report should be presented showing exactly what each member of the teaching staff does, and to what effect, as part of his or her involvement in various domestic and international associations, editorial offices, organizations, and institutions.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

5.3. Professional and/or scientific achievements of the higher education institution have been recognized in the regional, national and international context.

Analysis

In this respect, the Seminary undoubtedly meets the required criteria, and it should be emphasised that some of these achievements (especially awards) are very respectable, especially those related to peacebuilding engagement and contribution to resolving the consequences of war conflicts and casualties in the former Yugoslavia. This aspect is perhaps one of the most outstanding features of the Seminary in the local context in general, and in particular contributes to the Seminary, its staff and associates being experienced as very important, relevant and respected members of society.

The importance and relevance of the Seminary are also reflected in the number of projects that have been carried out in the last five years. In this context, the project of the first complete translation of the Bible into Bosnian should be emphasized as a significant achievement in the cultural and social context of the former Yugoslavia, but also beyond. Also, the award of the “Ecumenical Charter” as part of the annual manifestations of “Christian Book and Reformation Week” should be mentioned.

Outside the Seminary, the teaching staff and associates regularly participate in national and international conferences, workshops, forums, conferences, webinars, and in-service instructor training, as evident from the SER and interviews with teaching staff and associates. What is not entirely clear in this context is the role of teaching staff and associates in these events and the goal of the Seminary to support particular professional development. Is there a specific strategy to support the further staff development, or is it a random selection? Such data would help to better understand the situation and lead to a more concrete assessment of professional and academic development strategy of the Seminary.

The teaching staff and associates of the Seminary are also members of various professional associations and editorial boards, some of which are among the most respected in the country and abroad, which indirectly contributes to strengthening the experience and knowledge that can be applied in the Seminary education. But here, as in the previous case, to get a complete picture, it would be good to know into how these individual memberships in associations and journals relate to the Seminary itself and in what specific ways they contribute to it.

Recommendations for improvement

Creating a more detailed report showing the role played by teaching staff and associates in various national and international conferences, workshops, forums, conferences, webinars, and in-service instructor training and the impact this has had.

Special attention should be paid to the element of professional development. Creating a more detailed report on this aspect will provide a concrete insight into the strategy of professional and scientific development of the Seminary by encouraging the already mentioned profiling of teaching staff in certain professional and scientific domains.

In the same spirit, it would be good to have a more detailed account of how each membership in professional associations and journals relates to the quality of the Seminary and how it contributes explicitly to its development in the field of professionalism and scholarship.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

5.4. Professional and/or scientific activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve teaching.

Analysis

The spatial capacities and equipment that the Seminary offers for the implementation of undergraduate and graduate classes, the implementation of part of student practice, and the independent theological research are of very high quality. In this sense, the infrastructure of the Seminary is almost flawless for the purposes it serves, and students and researchers have a whole range of opportunities at their disposal that enables them to achieve high quality results.

The very good involvement of undergraduate and graduate students in the Seminary projects certainly contributes to this quality. And not only in projects, but also in a variety of engagements resulting from the cooperation of the Seminary with many social factors such as local churches, associations, organizations, and the like. In addition, the students particularly emphasized the openness of the teaching staff to their wishes and ideas, actively and continuously involving them in their projects and activities, thus helping them to realize what interests them most.

Here, the care of the Seminary for the quality of student education through scholarships deserves special attention. The students in need can contact the management of the Seminary at any time during the academic year, who will try to find a financial solution to

a particular student's problems. This makes it clear that the Seminary is very concerned about the quality of education of its students, while the aforementioned "Regulations" also explicitly show the concern towards its employees.

In this sense, standard 5.4. seems to be one of the most prominent features of the Seminary, showing the professional and human care for all those it encompasses as an institution.

Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

Quality grade

High level of quality

APPENDICES

1. Quality assessment summary - tables

<i>Quality grade by assessment area</i>				
<i>Assessment area</i>	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
<i>I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution</i>			X	
<i>II. Study programmes</i>			X	
<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>				X
<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>				X
<i>V. Professional and/or scientific activity</i>			X	

<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<i>I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.			X	
1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.				X
1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.				X
1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, professional and/or scientific and social role).			X	
1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.				X
1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.			X	

<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<i>II. Study programmes</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the demands of the labour market.			X	
2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.			X	
2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.			X	
2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.				X
2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.			X	
2.6. Student practice is an integral part of the study programmes.				X

Quality grade by standard

<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clearly defined, published and consistently applied.				X
3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.				X
3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning.				X
3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.				X
3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.				X
3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.			X	
3.7. The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.				X
3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.				X
3.9. The higher education institution issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.				X
3.10. The higher education institution is committed to the employability of graduates.				X

<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.			X	
4.2. The higher education institution ensures appropriate quality of external associates.				X
4.3. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.				X
4.4. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.				X
4.5. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT service, work facilities etc.) are adequate for the delivery of the study programmes and ensure the achievement of intended learning outcomes and the implementation of professional and/or scientific activity.				X
4.6. The library and library equipment, as well as access to additional resources ensure the literature necessary for ensuring high-quality of study and scientific and teaching activity.				X
4.7. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.			X	

Quality grade by standard

<i>V. Professional and/or scientific activity</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of professional and/or scientific activity.		X		
5.2. The higher education institution proves the social relevance of its professional and/or scientific research and transfer of knowledge.			X	
5.3. Professional and/or scientific achievements of the higher education institution have been recognized in the regional, national and international context.			X	
5.4. Professional and/or scientific activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve teaching.				X

2. Site visit protocol

Reakreditacija Visoko evanđeosko teološko učilište u Osijeku Cvjetkova 32, 31103 Osijek	Re-accreditation of the Evangelical Theological Seminary Osijek Cvjetkova 32, 31103 Osijek
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Edukacija članova povjerenstva/Education of panel members

	Ponedjeljak 9. svibnja 2022.	Monday 9th May 2022
9:00 – 10:00	Edukacija – prezentacija sustava visokog obrazovanja	Education – presentation about HEIs in Croatia
10:00 – 12:00	Priprema za sastanke s visokim učilištem	Preparation for meetings

Prvi dan reakreditacije u virtualnom okruženju / First day of re-accreditation in virtual form

	Utorak, 10. svibnja 2022.	Thursday, 10th May 2022
9:00 – 9:15 (CEST)	Interni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva	Internal Meeting of Expert Panel members
9:15– 10:15	Sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva s upravom Visokog učilišta	Meeting of Expert Panel members with the Management of the HEI
10:15 – 10:30	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
10:30– 11:30	Sastanak s nastavnicima (u stalnom radnom odnosu, osim onih na rukovodećim mjestima)	Meeting with full-time employed teachers, except those in managerial positions
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:45–12:15	Sastanak s prodekanom za nastavu i prodekanom za studentska pitanja	Meeting with Vice-Dean for teaching and Vice-Dean for students affair
12:15 – 13:15	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>

13:15 – 14:00	Sastanak sa studentima	Meeting with students
14:00 – 14:15	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
14:15 – 15:00	Sastanak s vanjskim suradnicima	Meeting with external associates
15:00 – 15:15	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
15:15 – 16:00	Sastanak s aluminijsima	Meeting with Alumni

Drugi dan reakreditacije u virtualnom okruženju / Second day of re-accreditation in virtual form

	Srijeda, 11. svibnja 2022.	Wednesday, 11th May 2022.
9:15 – 9:35	Prisustvovanje nastavi preko ZOOM-a	Participate in lecturing by ZOOM
9:35 – 9:45	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
9:45 – 10:15	Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima	Meeting with external stakeholders
10:15 – 10:45	Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o otvorenim pitanjima – prema potrebi	Organisation of an additional meeting on open questions, if needed
10:00 – 11:30	Interni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva	Internal Meeting of Expert Panel members
11:30 – 11:45	Završni sastanka s upravom Visokog učilišta	Exit meeting with Management of the HEI
11:45– 15:00	Pisanje završnog izvješća	Drafting final report

Treći dan reakreditacije u virtualnom okruženju / Third day of re-accreditation in virtual form

	Četvrtak, 12 svibnja 2022.	Thursday, 12th May 2022
11:30- 15:00	Pisanje završnog izvješća	Drafting final report

SUMMARY

The history of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Osijek began in 1972, when the Biblical Theological Institute in Zagreb was founded with the aim of educating and preparing candidates from the wider region for pastoral, educational and other Christian ministry. The Evangelical Theological Seminary soon became an important strategic center for education and training for Christian service at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In 1983, it was decided to establish a school in Osijek and the Evangelical Theological Seminary began full-time studies. Since then, the Institution has survived the rapidly changing historical conditions, adapted and developed. Today, after several decades, the Institution has become a significant, internationally recognized interdenominational theological school. The ETS has everything it needs to successfully continue its mission. It is equipped with an excellent material base and an outstanding library. It has achieved financial stability thanks to a committed donors who believe in its mission and support it wholeheartedly. It has worked hard to align its procedures with national and European legal requirements. It has built a strong community of alumni and partners. It has assembled an international team of managers and teachers. It has introduced relevant programmes. It attracts study applicants not only from Croatia but also from the neighbouring countries. The impact of ETS on the social, cultural and religious life of society is obvious. There is much to admire about this school. Those who study at or work with the ETS usually become enthusiastic fans, which in itself is a testimony to the quality and importance of this institution.

The ETS has undergone an external evaluation previously and has effectively implemented most of the experts' requirements. During this external evaluation, the Panel was impressed by many positive qualities of the institution. The ETS achieved a satisfactory and high level of quality in almost all assessment areas. The Self-Evaluation Report was well structured and well written, with only minor shortcomings and inconsistencies. During the meetings with the Panel, the different groups of stakeholders cooperated willingly, answered questions, provided evidence, were honest and supportive, demonstrating a high level of culture of quality, openness and transparency. There are threats that the ETS faces and areas where it should improve, and these are covered in more detail in this Report. However, the Panel has no doubt that the ETS has the necessary capacity and zeal to deal with these threats, making the necessary improvements and continue to fulfil its mission, thereby making a further contribution to the Church and society.