



**REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
University Department of Health Studies
University of Split**

**Date of preliminary site visit:
23 May 2022**

**Date of online re-accreditation:
25 - 27 May, 2022**

June, 2022

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION.....	6
BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES	9
ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION.....	9
ANALYSIS OF EACH ASSESSMENT AREA, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH ASSESSMENT AREA	11
I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution	11
II. Study programmes.....	13
III. Teaching process and student support	15
IV. Teaching and institutional capacities.....	17
V. Scientific/artistic activity.....	19
DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH STANDARD.....	22
I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution	22
1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.....	22
III. Teaching process and student support.....	34
IV. Teaching and institutional capacities.....	42
V. Scientific/artistic activity	47
APPENDICES	53
SUMMARY.....	65

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 University Department of Health Studies University of Split.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- Prof. dr. sc. Ljubica Glavaš-Obrovac, Faculty of Medicine Osijek, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, the Republic of Croatia, chair
- Assoc. prof. dr. sc. Lana Škrgatić, School of Medicine, University of Zagreb, the Republic of Croatia,
- Assist. prof. Renata Vauhnik, Ph.D., Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Ljubljana, the Republic of Slovenia,
- Prof. dr. sc. Julie Jomeen, Faculty of Health at Southern Cross University, Australia,
- Marta Šantić, student, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Rijeka, the Republic of Croatia.

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

- University Management (Vice-Rector) and with the Management of the Department (Head, Assistants and Deputy of Head)

- Quality Improvement Committee and Head of the Committee for Internal Evaluation of the QA system
- Full-time employed teachers (except those in managerial positions)
- Heads of Departments and Heads of Academic Departments (except those in managerial positions)
- Assistant head for teaching and Assistant head for Business and Teaching Bases,
- ECTS coordinator
- Head of the Office for Science, Teaching and International Cooperation
- Head of Ethical committee
- Students – open meeting for all students
- Alumni (former students who are not employed by the Department/Higher education institution)
- External stakeholders - representatives of professional organisations, professional experts, external lecturers, non-governmental organisations
- Assistant Head for the Science and International Cooperation
- Heads of the research and professional projects
- Teaching assistants and postdoctoral researchers.

Croatian Expert Panel members went to the preliminary site-visit on 23 May 2022 during which they had a tour of the work facilities, laboratories, library, IT classrooms, student administration office and classrooms, Clinical skills laboratory and attended sample lectures, where they held a brief Q&A session with students.

During the preliminary site visit, the Expert Panel examined the available additional documents and study programme descriptions (learning outcomes).

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of the University Department of Health Studies University of Split on the basis of the University Department of Health Studies University of Split Self-evaluation report, other relevant documents, preliminary site visit and on-line 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, preliminary site visit to the University Department of Health Studies University of Split, online meetings, and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Iva Žabarović, coordinator, ASHE,
- Maja Šegvić, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Marija Omazić, interpreter at the preliminary site visit and during the online meetings,
- Dijana Ćurković, PhD, 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.

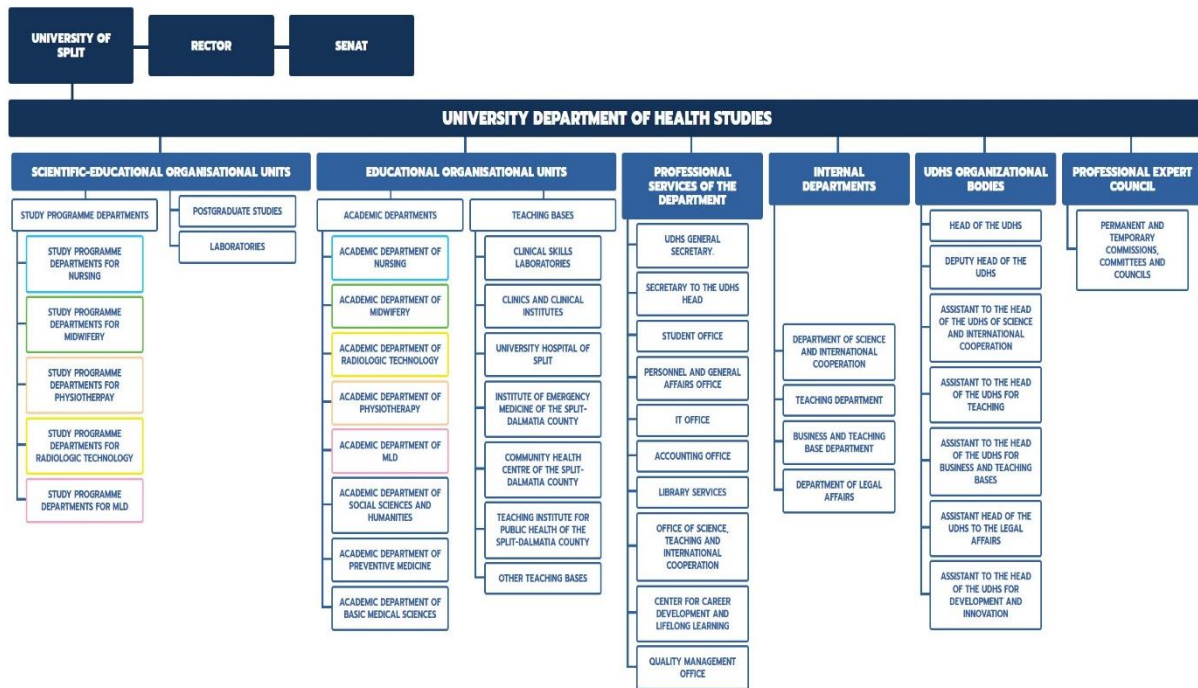
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: University of Split, University Department of Health Studies

ADDRESS: Ruđera Boškovića 35, 21000 Split

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: Full professor with tenure, primarius Stipan Janković, PhD, MD

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE: Self-evaluation, page 4, Picture 1. UDHS organization chart, March 2022



STUDY PROGRAMMES: Self analysis page 9

Undergraduate university study programme of Nursing
Undergraduate university study programme of Midwifery
Undergraduate university study programme of Physiotherapy
Undergraduate university study programme of Radiologic Technology
Undergraduate university study programme of Medical Laboratory Diagnostics
Graduate University Study programme of Nursing
Graduate University Study programme of Physiotherapy
Graduate University Study programme of Radiologic Technology.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: Analytic supplement to Self-analysis, page 2, Table 3.1. Number of students per study programme for the evaluated academic year

Nursing (1116), undergraduate university study programme, Split	156	135
Physiotherapy (1117), undergraduate university study programme, Split	48	0
Radiologic Technology (1118), undergraduate university study programme, Split	46	0
Obstetrical Nursing (1119), undergraduate university study programme, Split	48	0
Diagnostic Laboratory Medicine (1120), undergraduate university study programme, Split	46	0
Nursing (1121), graduate university study programme, Split	0	74
Physiotherapy (1122), graduate university study programme, Split	0	9
Radiologic Technology (1123), graduate university study programme, Split	0	58
Total	344	276

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: Analytic supplement to Self-analysis, page 14, Table 4.1.a Staff Structure – FOR UNIVERSITIES in the evaluated year

<i>Staff</i>	<i>Full-time staff</i>	<i>Cumulative employment</i>	<i>External associates</i>
<i>Full professors with tenure</i>	1	4	11
<i>Full professors</i>	-	1	21
<i>Associate professors</i>	2	5	19
<i>Assistant professors</i>	6	37	51
<i>Scientific advisor (permanent/with tenure)</i>	-	-	-
<i>Scientific advisor</i>	-	-	-
<i>Senior Research Associate</i>	-	-	2
<i>Research Associate</i>	-	-	1
<i>Teaching grade</i>	7	1	15
<i>Assistants</i>	3	-	14
<i>Postdoctoral researcher</i>	-	-	-
<i>Employees on projects</i>	-	-	-
<i>Expert assistants</i>	-	-	53
<i>Technical staff</i>	-	-	-
<i>Administrative staff</i>	12	-	-
<i>Support staff</i>	-	-	-

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

The University Department of Health Studies (hereinafter the UDHS) is a relatively new constituent of the University of Split established as a legal successor to the Professional Studies of the School of Medicine, University of Split which started work in the academic year 2011/2012.

Social justification of launching the University Department of Health Studies is confirmed by recent data of the Croatian Employment Service in the Split-Dalmatia County, strategic objectives from the Guidelines for Higher Education in Dalmatian counties, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia's projections of development and employment opportunities on annual basis, as well as our own very precise analysis of the current situation and needs for the most important types of health professionals required for proper functioning of the health system in the southern Croatian counties and the Republic of Croatia.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Well-developed cooperation with regional administration, health sector, higher education institutions, local community and economy.
2. The higher education institution – the University Department of Health Sciences (UDHS) understands and encourages the development of its social role, and prevents unethical behavior.
3. Undergraduate university study programs at UDHS educate health personnel who are necessary on the labor market in the Republic of Croatia and the EU.
4. Professional training of students with mentoring supervision in specialized exercises and student internships is an integral part of study programs.
5. Learning outcomes at the subject level are harmonized with learning outcomes at the level of undergraduate study programs; except for the Physiotherapy programme.
6. The higher education institution provides support to employed teachers in their professional development.
7. Highly motivated students lead to strong progression and completion rate.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. The curricula of graduate study programs have too many subjects in the field of economics and law.
2. Inadequate number of ECTS of part of subjects in the study programs as a consequence of their simultaneous performance as a joint course in different study programs.
3. Inadequate availability of appropriate literature and textbooks in Croatian language, as well as textbooks written by teachers and external associate who are employed at the UDHS.

4. Learning outcomes at the subject level are not harmonized with learning outcomes at the level of undergraduate of Physiotherapy.
5. Learning outcomes need to be written in line with professional requirements and internationally recognized professional standards.
6. Insufficient number of teachers in scientific and teaching positions, as well as assistants and postdoctoral students. This is limiting the capacity to develop research and support the staff mobility and professional development.
7. The international profile of the UDHS in the field of teaching and scientific research is not at the level it could be. There is no recognition of scientific achievements in national and international contexts.
8. For the research the UDHS has very limited external funding success.
9. Staff and student mobility and mechanisms to support it are in the early stages of development.
10. Only part-time students study in graduate studies.
11. Lack of permanent connection with former students of the UDHS.

LIST OF GOOD PRACTICES

1. Significant contribution to the development of study programs in the health care area which contributes to encouraging the creation of new jobs in the health profession and thus directly to the improvement of health care in the region and in the Republic of Croatia.
2. Surveys of students are conducted after the end of teaching courses.
3. The Faculty publishes a journal in which scientific and professional articles are published.
4. Significant efforts are made in the transfer of knowledge so that the professionals learn about the profession.

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:

The internal system of internal quality assurance of the University Department of Health Studies (UDHS) is regulated by the Ordinance on Quality Assurance of the UDHS, Regulations on the Quality Assurance System of the UDHS, UDHS Development Strategy from 2020 to 2027 and the Action Plan for Accelerated Development of Science and Improvement of the Teaching Process at the UDHS 2021-2026.

The Quality Improvement Committee (QIC) of the UDHS shares with the UDHS Management the responsibility for ensuring and improving quality in all aspects of the UDHS activities. In accordance with the Ordinance on Quality Assurance at the UDHS, the QIC has 9 members. The QIC submits the Activity Report on its work to the Expert Council of the UHDS and the Centre for Quality Improvement of University of Split once a year. Based on the submitted documentation and interviews with president and members of the QIC the Expert Panel concluded that their meetings are not organized regularly, and that they did not have the required number of members in order for the decisions and conclusions to be valid. In addition, most of the topics to be discussed by this Committee were not on the agenda in the observed period.

Well-designed survey forms for all stakeholders are presented in the submitted documentation. Based on the submitted document on conducting of the survey (the minutes of the meeting of the President of the QIC with the Management of the Department from 03/29/2021), the Expert Panel considers that the UDHS does not systematically collect and analyse data on its processes, resources and results, nor does it use them to effectively manage and improve its activities, and for further development as well.

Students as well as external stakeholders of the UDHS directly participate in the work of the UDHS through their representatives. The UDHS provides lifelong professional development to its employees.

After analysis of the Action plan of the UDHS for the academic year 2020/2021 and after talking to Board members and other stakeholders it was found that the Action plan was not fully met.

Considering the recommendations of the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education from 2016 and then from 2020 the number of employed teachers in the scientific-teaching profession is significantly increased, but their optimal number has not yet been reached. Scientific research work has significantly improved, but it is still not at an adequate level. Infrastructural capacities are still insufficient.

The UDHS supports academic integrity and freedom, and ensures ethical work through ethical codes at the Department's level and at the level of University of Split. Teaching bases also have their own Codes of Ethics for the purpose of patient protection. The UDHS also works in accordance with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity adopted in 2020. To prevent plagiarism, final and diploma theses are checked by mentors using the anti-plagiarism program.

In the academic year 2020/2021 four Lifelong learning programs are implemented and delivered by the UDHS as an organizer or co-organizer.

Information on all activities of the UDHS are available through the website in Croatian, and abbreviated information in English. The UDHS publishes its achievements in local media and has well-developed cooperation with the regional administration, the health sector, higher education institutions, the local community and the economy.

There is a lack of informing the public about the success of students' studies in study programs conducted at the Faculty, the employment of graduates at the UDHS. Due to the need to internationalize the UDHS, it is necessary to regularly update the information on the Department's website in English. On the web pages of the UDHS, the information for international students is missing.

Graduated medical professionals educated at undergraduate university study programs on the UDHS educate the health personnel which is necessary on the labor market of the Republic of Croatia and the EU.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Due to the need for better implementation and organizing of the quality assurance system at UDHS, it is proposed to establish Office for the Improvement and Quality Assurance of Higher Education.
- All activities in the domain of the Quality Improvement Committee need to be systematically documented and monitored. Quality Improvement Committee meetings have to be hold at least 4 times during the academic year.
- The UDHS should consistently work onto increase the number of employed teachers in the scientific-teaching titles, especially in the professions for which UDHS students are educated.
- The UDHS should fully meet:
 - a) Strategic plan for accelerated development of science and

b) Strategic plan for further development of the teaching process.

- The UDHS should systematically publish information on the UDHS web page about opportunities for study, Erasmus+ agreement, an index of student satisfaction with the teaching process and institutional policy, as well as cooperation in scientific research in English language.
- It is recommended to the UDHS to increase the number of accredited lifelong learning programs, monitor and analyze the satisfaction of participants in lifelong learning programs and publish the results as well.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

II. Study programmes

Analysis:

There are 8 study programs that are performed at UDHS, 5 of which are university undergraduate studies: Physiotherapy, Nursing, Midwifery, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics and Radiologic Technology, and 3 are university graduate studies: Physiotherapy, Nursing, and Radiologic Technology. For each study program, syllabi were submitted with learning outcomes at the level of the subject, as well as at the level of the study program.

A total of 620 students study at UDHS. There are 344 full-time students and 135 part-time students enrolled in the undergraduate study programs. A total of 141 part-time students study in graduate studies.

Undergraduate study programs (Midwifery, Nursing, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics and Radiological Technology) educate professionals who belong to regulated professions. Learning outcomes at the level of these study programs are in line with the requirements of EU Directive 2005/36/EC and EU Directive 2013/36/EC. The undergraduate study program in Physiotherapy educates physiotherapists whose profession is regulated in the Republic of Croatia. According to the National Classification of Activities (NKD) and the National Classification of Occupations, there are no occupations on the list of occupations (Central Bureau of Statistics - NKD Search Engine) for which students are educated on graduate studies at the UDHS. According to the competent professional chambers of the Ministry of Health Republic of Croatia, there is a need on the labor market for this level of qualification, but due to the fact that the status of masters of Nursing, Physiotherapy and Radiological Technologists is still not regulated by Croatian Law (Law on Professions in Health in the Republic of Croatia), they are still unable to be employed in the health care system in the Republic of Croatia.

The Expert panel noticed that learning outcomes for the undergraduate university study program in Physiotherapy were not harmonized with those at the study program level. In addition, for the same study is noticed that the learning outcome are not written according to the WCPT standards for Physiotherapy.

The UDHS ensures the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers. Final and graduate theses are available at the UDHS repository. Based on the submitted documentation the Expert Panel noted that the final theses are mostly theoretical for all undergraduate study programs.

Records of changes in study programs are available, and the reason for changing the number of hours or ECTS is stated, but it is not clear to what extent the changes are due to labor market needs, contact with alumni and employers themselves. Evidence from the stakeholders is missing. This has also been pointed out in the previous reaccreditation process.

The disparity between the student workload and the number of ECTS of individual subjects was noticed. Students are complaining about the study load and not enough time to study.

The UDHS allows learning and obtaining new skills through student practice. Student practice is carried out in a systematic and responsible manner, ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcome regarding student practice.

Recommendations for improvement:

- For the graduate study program of Physiotherapy, Radiological Technology and Nursing, it is recommended that the objectives are re-analysed and for undergraduate study of Physiotherapy, it is recommended that the learning outcomes are re-written according to the WCPT standards for physiotherapy.
- In defining learning outcomes, the higher education institution needs to act in line with professional requirements and internationally recognized professional standards, ensuring that the programme is up to date.
- The subject Physical Education should be excluded from the system of measuring student workload in ECTS credits.
- Final theses should be focused more on the research and should be supervised by the teachers from the profession.
- The UDHS should involve students and external stakeholders in the improvement of study programs.
- Harmonize ECTS credits in the subjects of all study programs with the real workload of students. The ECTS credits of law and management subjects should be reconsidered. Professional courses should have and should be checked for good allocation of ECTS credits in order to ensure horizontal and vertical connections between subjects within each study program.

- It is recommended that the UDHS continuously control the maintenance of professional practice, and to document observed non-compliances. Good practice should be the organization of monthly meetings with mentors on professional practice and document them in the form of minutes.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

III. Teaching process and student support

Analysis:

Admission criteria for the entrance and for continuation of studies are defined for all study programs and are readily available on UDHS web page. The program of the differential module and exams is formed for students who have completed professional first-cycle studies (bachelor's degree) and aim to continue their higher education at the graduate university level. For these candidates, recognition procedure is defined and available on the UDHS web page.

The UDHS has defined process for collecting and analysing data on student achievement, pass rate, quality of enrolling students and the relationship with student success rates, on an annual basis. Discussion in the interviews indicated that the data analysis enables identification of areas of risk for student failure/progression but it is not entirely clear what that process looks like. To some extent this is because failure rates are generally very low and action planning is undertaken to mitigate risk.

Most of the teaching at UDHS is conducted as an *ex cathedra*. According to the interviews with teachers and the data given in Self-evaluation, students use independent tasks that enable critical thinking based on experience. However, during the meeting with the students, the Expert Panel got the impression that in this aspect the quality is weakened, especially in clinical teaching, where overburdened mentors (Up to 10 students/1 clinical mentor) cannot perform experience-based learning.

The Student Office, assistant Head for teaching, teachers, and assistants are available to students. For part-time students, there is no defined consultation time, but the consultation time is agreed directly with the teacher via e-mail. There are several counseling centers within the University of Split: Psychological Counseling, Student Ombudsman and Career Management Counseling. Anonymous comments say that students are not well acquainted with all the services they can use to help.

Students are can study and do individual work at the university library. UDHS provided some of the literature available to students, but there are not enough textbooks in the Croatian language intended for the professions for which students at UDHS are educated.

The higher education institution provides the information about the possibility for completing a part of their study abroad through the Erasmus+ coordinator and on the bulletin board on the website. To improve students' mobility, the UDHS is working on collaboration with many other universities in Europe. The UDHS has currently two foreign students from the Department of physiotherapy and there are more students that will enrol in HEI in the next few months. Information package for foreign students is published on the UDHS website in Croatian and English.

The higher education system gives diplomas and Diploma Supplements to students after they graduate from UDHS on a graduation ceremony; or they can get it before the ceremony if they request it from the UDHS. Alumni confirmed that there was no issue regarding receiving diploma and/or Diploma Supplements. Diploma Supplements are in Croatian and English language which was also confirmed with alumni organization.

The higher education system organizes Career Day for students who will get better perspective of their future duties, job and possible workplaces. Students are aware and well informed about the Career Day and can freely participate in it. In conclusion, the HEI provides students with support regarding their future career planning.

Recommendations for improvement:

- While the analysis identifies areas of high risk for programmes, action planning should be clearly undertaken and documented to mitigate risk and improve performance of the risk area moving forward.
- The UDHS should encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem solving and creative and critical thinking, individual and group research students' projects.
- The working hours of the student office in the afternoon (from 14.00 to 17.00) at least two days a week to work with part-time students should be organized.
- The amount of information about the UDHS on the English language website about on the UDHS study opportunities should be increased.
- Students should be encouraged to outgoing mobility and to apply to Erasmus+ program.
- The UDHS should approve to students of lower economic status the payment of tuition in installments and/or participatory payment.
- A list of foreign institutions with which UDHS has signed an exchange agreement (bilateral agreement) or projects that enable incoming and ongoing mobility should be published.

- The UDHS should consider to develop a plan for conducting part of the study program in English.
- The UDHS should increase the number of foreign students in exchange for well-organized student internships.
- To establish a system and base of contacts with alumni and employers, and collect and analyze feedback from alumni and employers is a necessity for the UDHS.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Analysis:

The last five years have seen a significant increase in the number of staff employed by the UDHS, either in full-time or in cumulative employment. A total of 76 employees, out of which 64 are appointed into scientific-teaching, teaching or associate ranks. The total number of employees appointed into scientific-teaching and associate grades is 23 FTE at the time of the re-accreditation on 7 April 2016, this number was 4. This is an excellent increase and achievement by the UDHS, however staff still has a high teaching load, which limits capacity for research and scholarship. Whilst this is currently in line with relevant policies for workload, it does not enable an appropriate distribution of that workload across all elements of an academic role i.e. teaching, research, scholarships and service (administration) and limits opportunity for teacher mobility. In addition, it will be important to recruit or continue to internally develop staff with the professional qualifications relevant to the programmes and modules of study they lead and teach. It is acknowledged by the panel that some of this is outside UDHS control as the labour market in Croatia is limited and there is a number of staff members being currently supported to do their PhDs in relevant professions. Whilst the Self-evaluation document indicates some level of international applications for advertised roles; greater international recruitment might be helpful in this space.

Procedures for recruitment of teachers are harmonized with positive legal regulations and other acts that regulate this matter. The panel were happy that a robust process for recruitment and reappointment that assesses potential candidates against clear and transparent criteria, in line with all legal regulations and internal acts was in place. In addition, that recruitment was in line with the planning of the UDHS following the last accreditation.

Self-evaluation and panel interviews with staff and senior departmental leaders indicated a process for the advancement of teachers and associates and is based on the evaluation of and rewarding of excellence. Indicators of excellence are in line with those

recognised globally including high impact publications, research success including grant award, HDR supervision and authorship of textbooks. The UDHS did not introduce additional criteria for the promotion of teachers to higher academic ranks.

The UDHS appeared to the panel to offer full support to teachers in their professional development and this should be commended. There appears to be regular discussion of professional development needs with line managers and overall support for those requests. However, professional development should be discussed, documented and monitored annually as part of professional development review. Opportunities for development are well advertised and supported but limited workload capacity due to high teaching workload will compromise professional development and staff mobility and needs to be addressed. The UDHS has a process for the conferment of awards based on excellence in scientific, teaching and professional work.

The UDHS does not have its own building, it is limited in space and shares a common working space with other constituents of the University. There is clear library access and IT facilities are adequate. The UDHS has clearly had an active plan in place for the development of infrastructure to support the delivery of its academic activities. The panel believes that, with an expanding staff and scientific activity base, there is a need for continued infrastructure planning and negotiation of shared space to accommodate all activity. The strong and effective relationships with the 27 teaching bases seem robust but will need to be maintained.

Library services are centralised and include the provision of digital repositories (final and graduate theses of students and scientific and professional papers of employees). Whilst books and e-resources are available, student feedback suggests a lack of texts and available learning materials in Croatian. The development of learning materials requires acceleration to improve the experiences of students.

The financial status is transparent and appropriate. Significant investment is being made to realise scientific ambitions. However, additional sources of funding are currently limited for institutional development and improvement, specifically external grant funding as per the scientific plan.

Recommendations for improvement:

- There is a need for a staffing plan that will enable UDHS to meet its scientific and reputational ambitions and all academic employees have the opportunity and workload capacity to engage in supported professional development activity that supports advancement.
- Workload planning for academic staff should enable a recognised and equitable split of time across teaching, research and scholarship.

- All programmes need to be led by staff members who hold the same professional qualification. This should involve international recruitment, to address the labour market limitations in Croatia.
- It is recommended to UDHS that introduce additional criteria for the promotion of teachers to higher academic ranks.
- Professional development moving forward will need to be aligned not only with individual academic requests, but also the UDHS scientific action plan, and it will need to be undertaken within a structured professional development review process.
- Increased space for scientific and teaching staff will need to be facilitated in line with growth and strategic goals for scientific and research activities.
- Funding must be made available for appropriate literature and textbooks in Croatian.
- There is a strong need for UDHS to provide a number of copies of required literature for each course, which must be at least 20% of the estimated number of students who will be enrolled in that course.
- There is a need to attain more national and international funding to support the Department's ambitions, improvement and national/international reputation

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

V. Scientific/artistic activity

Analysis:

In the last five years, there has been a significant increase in the number of papers published in high-quality scientific publication by the UDHS employees independently or in co-authorship (source: Self-evaluation, CROSB) compared to the last evaluation period. There is a trend in increasing the number of published articles in the field of health sciences; however, the majority of published papers are still in the field of medicine. UDHS employees regularly present their scientific achievements at scientific and professional national and international conferences. More effort is needed to encourage participation in meetings in the field of health studies, as well as organizing national meetings in the field.

UDHS is in the process of establishing procedures for monitoring the needs of society and labor market in planning its research activities. There is a need to enhance scientific cooperation with the industry and public sector, as a prerequisite for application of knowledge and transfer of technology. UDHS research strategy is committed to involvement in preventive actions aimed at preserving health which is highlighted in the Departments mission, vision, and strategic goals. The UDHS has cooperation agreements with several local and international constituent institutions. Young scientists and the best students will be encouraged to do their training program within these institutions. UDHS has founded the *Croatian Journal of Health Sciences* to enhance the dissemination of research results of the staff as well as students that are encouraged to actively participate in institutional projects.

UDHS employees are collaborators in the implementation of several national and international projects, even though mainly in the field of medicine. Further actions are needed to ensure projects for which UDHS will be the holder institution. UDHS is self-financing ten institutional projects evenly distributed in all five study programs. Senior researchers (minimum post-doctoral fellows) should be holders of institutional projects. The strategy for the development of scientific activity is in line with the vision for the UDHS development, and strategic goals have been incorporated into the Science Development Strategy.

UDHS has created a financial plan of income and expenditures for the upcoming period of five years clearly stating the funding sources and the breakdown of expenditures.

In order to provide adequate space and equipment, as well as to enable teachers to maintain a high-quality teaching process, scientific activity is also performed in partner institutions. The quality of doctoral study is ensured by strict selection criteria and demanding criteria for the publication of articles from doctoral theses in accordance with the analysis of the ASHE.

Recommendations for improvement:

- There is a need for defining workload planning of employees to enable time for scientific work and publishing.
- Consistently work on increasing number of papers published in the field of health studies (nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, radiological technology and laboratory medicine).
- Procedures for monitoring the needs of society and labor market should be introduced, documented and implemented as a continuous process.
- To apply for national and international projects for which the holder institution will be the UDHS.
- Increase the mobility of scientists.

- Continue with efforts to stimulate research applications for scientific projects that are in line with UDHS Science Development Strategy.
- Request funding in order to ensure that UDHS gains its own adequate space and equipment necessary to facilitate research.
- Publish scientific and professional papers in co-authorship with students.

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

Analysis:

The system of internal quality assurance of the University Department of Health Studies of the University of Split (UDHS) is regulated by the Ordinance on Quality Assurance of the UDHS, Regulations on the Quality Assurance System of the UDHS, UDHS Development Strategy from 2020 to 2027 (adopted: 10/18/2019) and the Action Plan for Accelerated Development of Science and Improvement of the Teaching Process at the UDHS 2021-2026 (adopted: 10/26/2021). In addition to strengths and weaknesses, the UDHS Development Strategy and the Action Plan shows opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis).

The Quality Improvement Committee of the UDHS has been operating since 2012. It shares with the UDHS Management the responsibility for ensuring and improving quality in all aspects of the UDHS activities. In accordance with the Ordinance on the Quality Assurance at the UDHS, the Quality Improvement Committee should monitor all aspects of the UDHS activities (on evaluation and promotion of quality and to achieve the highest quality standards in teaching, scientific and research activities, professional and administrative activities). The Quality Improvement Committee should also prepare the Action Plan of the Quality Committee for each academic year with defined deadlines and activity holders. The Committee submits the Activity Report on its work to the Expert Council of the UDHS and the Centre for Quality Improvement once a year. The meetings of the Committee and the UDHS management are held periodically.

According to the Ordinance on Quality Assurance of the UDHS (adopted: 11/27/2019) the Quality Improvement Committee has 9 members. Today the members are: a Chairperson of the Quality Improvement Committee and 8 members: Assistant Head for Teaching, Assistant to the Head for Science and International Cooperation, representatives of the teaching staff and administrative offices, representatives of external associates and external cooperation and a student representative.

The Report of the Quality Improvement Committee of the UDHS to the University of Split for 2020/2021 states that 4 sessions of the Committee were held. At the request of members of the Expert Panel, 5 reports from the meetings of this Committee were submitted to review. The reports refer to the period 09/10/2019 to 03/10/2021. It was noted that there was no quorum at the Board meetings, and that never was a student or

external stakeholder present. In addition, most of the topics to be discussed by this Committee (proposes the adoption of decisions on the quality assurance system which are within the competence of the Expert Council; develops quality indicators specific to the UDHS; defines measures and procedures to encourage the improvement of teaching; investigates the causes of successful studies and the causes of low-quality, inefficient, and lengthy studies; conducts institutional quality research; evaluates work and competencies of teachers and proposes measures and activities for professional development of university teachers; promotes professional development of administrative staff; defines and implements standardization in the administrative work of the Department; collects and analyses information on improving the quality of teaching; conducts student surveys; encourages excellence and recognizability in scientific research; encourages international cooperation and mobility; improves the use of information system and the access to public information) were not on the agenda in the observed period. According to the data presented in the Self-evaluation of the UDHS: *in cooperation with the University, the UDHS conducts a survey of student evaluation of teaching, a survey on student evaluation of the work of professional and administrative services and other aspects of student life and a survey on student evaluation of the overall level of study. Analysis of the results of these surveys are regularly presented to the Expert Council by the Head or the Chairperson of the Quality Improvement Committee. They also discuss the results of the evaluation at the Committee meetings. The evaluation results are also published on the UDHS website and available to the public. This activity is not visible in the attached documents from UDHS.*

Well-designed survey forms for all stakeholders are presented in the submitted documentation: Survey on Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, A teacher self-assessment survey, Survey on assessment of teaching work by other teachers, Survey on the assessment of the teaching process quality by clinical practice mentors, Survey on the assessment of the teaching process quality by employers, Survey on student and teacher satisfaction with mobility processes, Survey on the ALUMNI members' satisfaction with the quality of cooperation with the UDHS, Survey on the employee satisfaction with work at the UDHS, and Survey of student evaluation of teaching. Unfortunately, the only submitted evidence on conducting of the surveys is the minutes of the meeting of the President of the Committee with the Management of the Department (from 03/29/2021), which shows that the survey was attended by a small number of students. Based on the above mentioned, it cannot be said that the UDHS systematically collects and analyses data on its processes, resources and results, nor does it use them to effectively manage and improve its activities, nor for further development.

Students as well as external stakeholders of the UDHS directly participate in the work of the UDHS through their representatives in the Expert Council, Quality Improvement Committee, Ethics Committee, Award and Recognition Committee,

Disciplinary Committee, Committee for Internal Assessment of the Quality Assurance System, and the Student Union.

The UDHS provides lifelong professional development to its employees. Non-teaching staff attends professional workshops. The UDHS funds doctoral studies for 5 its employees, appointment to scientific teaching grades of employees and supports professional development of teaching staff. A significant progress has been made in raising the level of scientific research, improving curricula, and defining learning outcomes, increasing the employment of teaching and administrative staff, encouraging student mobility, monitoring student performance, and increasing the number of teaching bases.

The Head of the UDHS sent a very ambitious Action Plan of the UDHS for the academic year 2020/2021 to the University of Split on 24th September 2020. After the analysis of this action plan and after talking to Board members and other stakeholders it was found that the plan was not fully met. In accordance with good practice, the results of the implementation of the action plan were reported to the Rector by the Head of the Department.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Due to the need for better implementation and organizing of the quality assurance system at UDHS, it is proposed to establish the Office for the Improvement and Quality Assurance of Higher Education.
- All activities in the domain of the Quality Improvement Committee need to be systematically documented and monitored.
- Quality Improvement Committee meetings should be organized at least 4 times during the academic year.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

Based on the Report of the Expert panel and the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (in 2016), the Minister of Science and Education sent a letter of expectation to the University of Split (on 25 April 2018) and requested that certain non-compliances and deficiencies be resolved within 1 year. That deadline was extended to a period of three years, i.e. until 25 April 2021 (on 14 July 2020).

The main deficiencies were: *insufficient number of teachers appointed to scientific-teaching grades in relation to the total number of teaching hours regulated by Law, which affects the quality of study programmes and results in a lack of scientific and professional activity*. According to the opinion of the Accreditation Council, in a letter of expectation dated 7 July 2020, some improvements were noticed, especially those related to the standard “Scientific and professional activity”. The Office and the Council for Science were established, the number of scientific was increased, the number of projects affiliated with the UDHS was also increased.

A new UDHS Development Strategy for the period 2020 – 2027, that contains the Science Development Strategy for the same period, and completely new curricula of study programmes have been developed according to the CROQF guidelines and sent for evaluation which precedes their entry into the National CROQF Register. Compared to the initial phase of the re-accreditation process, the number of full-time employees has been significantly increased. In the period from 2018-2021 the UDHS endeavored to eliminate the deficiencies (Report submitted to the Agency in July 2021). In the meantime, the Science Council drafted several ordinances on encouraging and rewarding scientific activity, a website showing the activities of the Science Council was set up, the number of registered projects affiliated with the UDHS increased. Cooperation with foreign institutions was established, some equipment of preclinical skills laboratories was purchased, lifelong learning courses were organized, 22 papers indexed in WOS and SCOPUS databases were published from January 2020 to April 2021, *Croatian Journal of Health Sciences* was launched. Based on the presented evidence, the Ministry of Science and Education issued a certificate confirming that UDHS meets the requirements for performing part of the activity and part of scientific activity determined by the provisions of the Law on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (on 13 July 2021).

Considering the recommendations from 2016 and then from 2020 the optimal number of employed teachers in the scientific-teaching profession has not yet been achieved. Furthermore, there is an excessive workload of employed teachers, as well as external teaching associates. Scientific research work has significantly improved, but it is still not at an adequate level. Infrastructural capacities are still insufficient for development plans from the strategic documents of the Department (UDHS Development Strategy from 2020 to 2027 and the Action Plan for Accelerated Development of Science and Improvement of the Teaching Process at the UDHS 2021-2026.)

Recommendations for improvement:

- The UDHS should consistently work onto increase the number of employed teachers in the scientific-teaching academic ranks, especially in the professions for which UDHS students are educated.

- It is recommended that the UDHS fully meets: a) Action plan for accelerated development of science and b) Action plan for further development of the teaching process.
- The UDHS should encourage further development of pre-clinical, clinical and public health professions.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

The UDHS supports academic integrity and freedom, and ensures ethical work through ethical codes at the Department's level (Code of Ethics, work of the Ethics Committee) and at the University of Split. Teaching bases also have their own Codes of Ethics for the purpose of patient protection. Duties of the Ethics Committee are to achieve and promote ethical principles and values in science and higher education, in business and public relations. The UDHS also works in accordance with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity adopted in 2020.

To prevent plagiarism, bachelor and master theses are checked by mentors using the PlagScan program.

Recommendations for improvement: -

Quality grade: *High level of quality*

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

Analysis

Information on study programs, enrolment quotas, enrolment criteria, teaching and examination schedules, public tenders, public procurement, quality assurance, work of the Alumni Association, extracurricular activities of students and employees, student sports activities and the important events at the University of Split are available on the website of the UDHS in Croatian, and abbreviated information in English. The UDHS organizes Open Days, Science Festival, Researchers' Night, Virtual tour of the UDHS via the Virtual tour of the University, Popular professional as well as informative lectures within public health events of our teaching bases and various associations. The UDHS is open for visits of prospective students and their parents.

The UDHS publishes its achievements in local media, such as opening new study programs or announcing the completion of studies and the promotion of bachelors and masters. Certain UDHS activities are regularly followed by regional and sometimes the state portals and media through reports from the Senate of the University of Split sessions.

There is a lack of informing the public about the success of students' studies in study programs conducted at the Faculty, the employment of graduates at the UDHS. Due to the need to internationalize the UDHS, it is necessary to regularly update the information on the Department's website in English. On the web page from the UDHS, the information for International students is missing.

Recommendations for improvement:

- It is recommended that UDHS systematically publish information on UDHS, opportunities for study, Erasmus+ agreements, as well as cooperation in scientific research on the website of the Department in English language.
- The UDHS should systematically publish for each academic year an index of student satisfaction with the teaching process and institutional policy.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

The UDHS has well-developed cooperation with regional administration, health sector, higher education institutions, local community and economy. Graduated medical professionals educated at undergraduate university study programs on the UDHS educate health personnel who are necessary on the labor market in the Republic of Croatia and the EU. The UDHS teachers and students participated in the activities of science popularization. Some students and employees are actively involved in volunteer work.

Recommendations for improvement

- It is recommended that UDHS designs programs for inclusion of community work in the educational process of higher education.

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 the academic year 2020/2021 four Lifelong learning programs are implemented and delivered by the UDHS as an organizer or co-organizer: "Geroprophylaxis", "Vascular aging", "Communication in health care during the COVID-19 pandemic", and "Syndrome of burnout of health professionals".

Recommendations for improvement:

- The UDHS should increase the number of accredited lifelong learning programs.
- There is a strong need to analyze the quality of implemented lifelong learning programs and to advance them.
- The UDHS should monitor and analyze the satisfaction of participants in lifelong learning programs.

Quality grade: *Minimum 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 needs of the society.

Analysis

There are 8 study programs at UDHS, of which 5 are university undergraduate studies: Physiotherapy, Nursing, Midwifery, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics and Radiologic Technology and 3 are university graduate studies: Physiotherapy, Nursing, and Radiologic Technology. For each study program, syllabi were submitted with learning outcomes at the level of the subject, as well as at the level of the study program.

Undergraduate study programs (Midwifery, Nursing, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics and Radiological Technology) educate staff who belong to regulated professions. Learning outcomes at the level of these study programs are in line with the requirements of EU Directive 2005/36/EC and EU Directive 2013/36/EC. The undergraduate study program in Physiotherapy educates physiotherapists whose profession is regulated in the Republic of Croatia.

There is evidence that the general goals of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the UDHS. The justification for delivering study

programmes, with regard to social and economic needs is provided and includes an analysis of resources of the UDHS required for delivering study programmes. Furthermore, the UHDS delivers study programmes leading to degrees in regulated professions, and accepts the recommendations of professional organisations that govern their licencing. The UHDS produces competitive professionals for national and international labour markets. Data on graduates' employment is presented in the Self Evaluation Report, and the number of unemployed former students is indicated for undergraduate and graduate university study programmes at the UDHS. According to the National Classification of Activities (NKD) and the National Classification of Occupations, there are no occupations on the list of occupations (Central Bureau of Statistics – NKD Search Engine) for which students are educated on graduate studies.

According to the competent professional chambers of the Ministry of Health Republic of Croatia, there is a need in the labor market for this level of qualification, but due to the fact that the status of masters of Nursing, Physiotherapy and Radiological Technologists is still not regulated by Croatian Law (Law on Professions in Health in the Republic of Croatia), they are still unable to be employed in the health care system in the Republic of Croatia.

Recommendations for improvement:

- For the graduate study programs of Physiotherapy, Radiological Technology and Nursing, it is recommended that the objectives are re-analysed.
- Furthermore, the unemployment of some study programmes should be evaluated.

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

The UDHS has defined the learning outcomes of the study programmes and checks that the learning outcomes at the level of courses are aligned with the learning outcomes at the programme level.

After analyzing the learning outcomes, the Expert panel noticed that learning outcomes for the undergraduate university study program in Physiotherapy were not harmonized with those at the graduate study program level. In addition, for the same analysis noted that the learning outcomes are not written according to the WCPT standards for Physiotherapy: 1) World Confederation for Physical Therapy. *Policy*

statement: Education. London, UK: WCPT; 2019. 2) Roberts P. (1994). Theoretical models of physiotherapy. *Physiotherapy*, 80(6): 361-366; 3) World Confederation for Physical Therapy. *Policy statement: Description of physical therapy*. London, UK; 2019.; 4) World Physiotherapy. *Physiotherapist education framework*. London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2021. 5) World Confederation for Physical Therapy. *Policy statement: Direct access and patient/client self-referral to physical therapy*. London, UK; 2019.

Furthermore, in the syllabus of the undergraduate university study of Medical Laboratory Diagnostics, it was noticed that the study load expressed in ECTS credits includes the subjects Physical Education 1 and Physical Education 2. The total workload for these two subjects is 3 ECTS. Furthermore, Basics in Nursing Care and Basics of Health Care Management are taught as the 1st year compulsory courses, which are not required by the students of this undergraduate study.

In the curriculum of the undergraduate and graduate university study of Radiological Technology, the course of study is well explained. In the first year of undergraduate study, there is a problem in the division of ECTS that does not agree with the overall effort of students. For example, in the first year, the course Anatomy carries 3 ECTS, and Radiobiology and Radiation Protection carries 3,5 ECTS, and there is a difference in the number of lectures, seminars and exercises.

Recommendations for improvement:

- In defining learning outcomes, the higher education institution needs to act in line with professional requirements and internationally recognized professional standards, ensuring that the programme is up to date.
- There is a strong need to identify overlaps in the topics covered on different subjects.
- The subject Physical Education should be excluded from the system of measuring student workload in ECTS credits.
- For undergraduate study programme of Physiotherapy, it is recommended that the learning outcomes are re-written according to the WCPT standards for physiotherapy.
- For undergraduate study of Medical Laboratory Diagnostics, it is recommended that the compulsory courses, Basics in Nursing Care and Basics of Health Care Management, are offered to students as electives, and these ECTS are awarded to the subjects of Biology and Physics.

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

In accordance with Ordinance on Studies and the Study System verification of the achievement of learning outcomes is proven by written and/or oral exams. Implementation plans specify the methods of verification for each case individually.

From the attached syllabi of study programs, it is evident that assessment is conducted during classes (through exercises, seminars and other activities) and exams consisting of simple questions with single and multiple choice, to questions that require an essay form of answer (evidence: examples of written exams), which is in accordance with the Ordinance on the content of the permit, and the conditions for issuing a permit for higher education, study programs and re-accreditation of higher education institutions (*Official Gazette*, No. 24/10).

The UDHS ensures the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers. Bachelor and master theses are available at the UDHS repository. Based on the submitted documentation the Expert Panel noted that the final papers are mostly theoretical for all undergraduate study programs.

Recommendations for improvement:

- See the recommendation above at the 2.2.
- Final theses should focus more on the research and should be supervised by the teachers from the profession.

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

Development activities related to study programmes are carried out systematically and regularly. The UDHS publishes up-to-date versions of study programmes. The UDHS records the changes to study programmes and analyses their appropriateness. Records of changes in study programs are available, and the reason for changing the number of hours or ECTS is stated, but it is not clear to what extent the changes are due to labor market needs, contact with alumni and employers themselves.

Evidence from the stakeholders is missing. This has been pointed out in the previous reaccreditation.

From the interviews with students who are currently studying and who have completed their studies, it was stated that they are not familiar with all the possibilities of getting involved in changes in study programs.

Recommendations for improvement:

- It is recommended that the feedback from the students is done more times not just after the final stage of each course.
- There is a strong need to discuss the needs of revision of study programs with the students.
- There is a strong need to involve external stakeholders in the improvement of study programs.
- The UDHS should document and publish activities after periodic audits of study programs to interested participants.

Quality grade: *Minimum level of quality*

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

Analysis

In the conversation with students and based on the analysis of the subject curriculum, the disparity between student workload and the number of ECTS of individual subjects was noticed. Students are complaining about the study load and not enough time to study.

In the 1st year of all undergraduate studies, students have an extremely large number (21–23) of compulsory subjects that carry between 1 and 3 ECTS credits. From interviews with teachers and students, it was found that many subjects in the 1st year of study are performed as joint courses despite the fact that students are educated for different professions. Based on the information mentioned above, the Expert panel concluded that inadequate number of ECTS of some subjects in the study programs is a consequence of their simultaneous performance as joint courses in different study programs

Furthermore, in the syllabus of undergraduate studies, it was noticed that the study load expressed in ECTS credits includes the subjects Physical Education 1 and Physical Education 2. The total workload for these two subjects is 3 ECTS. Furthermore, in the 1st study year are taught as compulsory courses, Basics in Nursing Care and Basics of Health Care Management, which are not required by the students of undergraduate studies of Physiotherapy, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics and Radiological Technology. The curricula of graduate study programs have too many subjects in the field of economics and law.

Recommendations for improvement:

- The UDHS should harmonize ECTS credits in the subjects of all study programs with the real workload of students.
- It is recommended that internal and external stakeholders are involved in changes in ECTS credits of the courses.
- The subject Physical Education has to be excluded from the system of measuring student workload in ECTS credits.
- For undergraduate study of Medical Laboratory Diagnostics, it is recommended that the compulsory courses, Basics in Nursing Care and Basics of Health Care Management, are offered to students as electives, and these ECTS are awarded to the subjects of Biology, Physics or Anatomy.
- The ECTS credits of the Law and Management subject should be reconsidered since these two subjects have more ECTS than Anatomy which is clearly more relevant for the study programmes at the UDHS.
- Professional courses should be checked for good allocation of ECTS credits in order to ensure horizontal and vertical connections between subjects within each study program.

Quality grade: Satisfactory level of quality**2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).*****Analysis***

The UDHS allows learning and obtaining new skills through student practice. Student practice is carried out in a systematic and responsible manner, ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcomes regarding student practice. For each undergraduate study program, booklets have been prepared with a list of clinical or clinical-laboratory skills that the student must acquire during the student practice.

The UDHS has signed agreements on business and professional cooperation that allow student practice outside the Department (evidence: contracts with employers, *Booklet of clinical skills* completed by students and certified by their teachers; feedback from students and employers).

The survey on the assessment of the entire level of study comprises 83 questions in nine categories: assessment of general study conditions, assessment of administrative and professional services, and assessment of the content and organization of the study programmes, the assessment of study implementation and procedures of knowledge assessment, the teachers' attitude towards a student, the assessment of institutional

support, the relations between students, other aspects of studying, and the final overall assessment of the study.

In the anonymous feedback from the students, clinical practice is not always organised well and changes are made with no or very short notice. The timing of clinical practice and lectures is sometimes reversed which is not appropriate. According to student interviews, 1 clinical mentor has 10 students on clinical practice.

Recommendations for improvement

- The UDHS should continuously control the maintenance of professional practice, and document observed non-compliances.
- The UDHS should organize monthly meetings with mentors on professional practice and document them in the form of minutes.
- The UDHS should increase the number of student mentors so that they have a maximum of 6 students in clinical practice.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory 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

Admission criteria for the entrance and for continuation of studies are well defined for all study programs, and the decision-making procedures of admission are clear and readily available on UDHS web page. The UDHS is consistently applying clear criteria for admission or continuation of studies, which is in line with the requirements of study programs which apply to all the University of Split constituents.

For those candidates that graduated from high school before 2010. for which entrance exam is obligatory, necessary literature is clearly defined and available.

The program of the differential module and exams is formed for students who have completed professional first-cycle studies (bachelor's degree) and aim to continue their higher education at the graduate university level.

For candidates that are applying from another HEI, recognition procedure is defined and readily available on UDHS web page.

The evaluation process regarding the admission criteria in the first year of the undergraduate or graduate university study programs is transparent for all candidates.

Recommendations for improvement

- It would be good practice to put examples of entrance exams from previous years on the website for candidates which are required to take the entrance exam (graduated from high school prior to 2010).

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 UDHS has a clear process in place for collecting and analysing data on student achievements, pass rates, quality of enrolling students and the relationship with student success rates, on an annual basis.

The UDHS attracts a high calibre of students, which then correlates well with progression and success rates. There has also been a year-on-year improvement according to the data presented.

Discussion in the interviews indicated that the data analysis enables identification of areas of risk for student failure/progression, but it is not entirely clear what that process looks like. To some extent this is because failure rates are generally very low, and action planning is undertaken to mitigate risk.

Recommendations for improvement:

- When the analysis identifies areas of high risk for programmes, action planning should be clearly undertaken and documented to mitigate risk and improve performance of the risk area moving forward.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

Most of the teaching at UDHS is conducted as an *ex cathedra*. According to the interviews with teachers and based on the data given in the Self-evaluation, students use independent tasks that enable critical thinking based on experience (evidence based learning). However, during the meeting with the students, the Expert Panel got the impression that in this aspect the quality is weakened, especially in clinical teaching, where overburdened mentors cannot perform experience-based learning.

Up to 10 students can take part in clinical exercises led by 1 clinical mentor. The Expert Panel got the impression that most of the theoretical classes are held in the traditional form.

The Student Office is available to students for issues related to enrollment, enrollment in higher years of study, transfers from other universities, classes, exams, certificates, graduation and graduation ceremony. The office hours of the student office are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11.30 to 14.30, and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8.30 to 11.30. Part-time students have the option of arranging meetings with the office.

The higher education institution encourages various modes of programme delivery, in accordance with the intended learning outcomes. Available and committed teachers contribute to the motivation of students and their engagement. The UDHS encourages autonomy and responsibility of students.

Recommendations for improvement

- Teaching methods that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem solving and creative and critical thinking should be encouraged.
- Individual and group research students' projects should be encouraged.
- It is recommended to organize the work of the student office in the afternoon (from 14.00 to 17.00) at least two days a week to work with part-time students.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.

Analysis

During meetings with assistants, teachers and students, the Expert panel concluded that Assistant Head for teaching, teachers, and assistants are available to students in case they need help or advice. Due to the fact that there is a high number of part-time students at the UDHS, there is no defined consultation time, but the consultation time is agreed directly with the teacher via e-mail.

There is one student from under-represented and vulnerable groups at the UDHS.

There are several counseling centers within the University of Split: Psychological Counseling, Student Ombudsman and Career Management Counseling (evidence: Self-evaluation;). Anonymous comments say that students are not well acquainted with all the services they can use to help.

According to Table 2.6. from MOZVAG it is evident that there is practically no outgoing student mobility. According to the explanation given to the Expert Panel members, the problem is in the organization of classes that are held as shift teaching, but also in a large number of part-time students.

Students are able to study and work individually (with prior notice) at the university library. UDHS provided some of the literature available to students. The expert panel noted that there are not enough textbooks in the Croatian language intended for the professions for which students at UDHS are educated.

Recommendations for improvement:

- The UDHS should increase the amount of information about its programs on the English language website.
- The UDHS should encourage students to outgoing mobility by holding workshops and joint student activities with foreign collaborating institutions.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

The higher education institution monitors various needs for students from vulnerable and under-represented groups. In the Self-evaluation document it is stated that UDHS provides support and has an appointed commissioner for students with disabilities and monitors their needs, communicates directly with them and proposes adjustments to the teaching process. Until now the HEI had only one student that had a status of a disabled student which was later confirmed by the Assistant Head of the Teaching Department on one of the meetings.

Recommendations for improvement:

- The UDHS website should publish information on UDHS study opportunities for students who belongs to the vulnerable and/or under-represented groups.
- For students of lower economic status, with an application and evidence of it, UDHS should approve the payment of tuition in installments and/or participatory payment.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

The higher education institution provides information about the possibility of completing part of their study abroad through the Erasmus+ coordinator and on the bulletin board on the website. The support to students in applying for and carrying out outgoing mobility is provided, but due to COVID-19 pandemic in the last two years there were no students who applied to Erasmus+ program.

Students are informed about the possibility of studying abroad, but most students are waiting their last year at the HEI and are thinking in enrolling in the chance of outgoing mobility. All information can be found on the UDHS web page or on web page of University of Split. If students are interested in Erasmus+ program, they can contact Erasmus coordinator for more information). The UDHS also organizes Erasmus+ info days and various educational workshops.

Students are emphasizing that one of the reasons why are they not enrolling in international experience is that, when they are enrolling in graduate studies and applying in student dorm, they get less points because it turns out that they extended one year more than they did when in reality they finished everything on time.

The higher education institution is working on collaboration with many other universities in Europe for the possibilities in outgoing/incoming mobility for students and staff.

The list of institutions with which UDHS has signed a bilateral agreement on cooperation and student mobility is not visible on the website.

Recommendations for improvement:

- The higher education institution has to work on the Erasmus+ program for other departments (Medical laboratory diagnostics, Midwifery, and Radiological technology) and give those students a chance to study abroad.
- The higher education institution should motivate more students to apply to Erasmus+ program.
- There is a strong need to establish cooperation and sign more bilateral agreements that would that enable incoming and outgoing mobility.
- It is recommended to publish a list of foreign institutions with which UDHS has signed an exchange agreement (bilateral agreement) or projects that enable incoming and ongoing mobility.

Quality grade: *Minimum level of quality*

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

Analysis

The UDHS has currently two foreign students from the Department of physiotherapy and there are more students that will enrol in HEI in the next few months. Those students are from the Department of Physiotherapy and Department of Nursing. The information about the opportunities for enrolment and study is available to foreign students in foreign language on the HEI web site.

The professional practice is enabled in a foreign language (English), but if the foreign student wants to take classes there is no English-speaking course where they can attend the subjects that they are interested in. For those foreign students who are eager to learn Croatian language in agreement with the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Split, language classes are organized at any time. On the UDHS web site foreign students can find more information about what CEHAS is (the Centre for Croatian Studies abroad) and document how the classes are structured and what they will learn at those lessons.

There are only two foreign students. There was no meeting with those students so it is difficult to say how well the program is organized for them and if they are satisfied with the clinical practice and the opportunities that they are given.

Information package for foreign students is published on the UDHS web site in Croatian and English.

Recommendations for improvement:

- The web site should be upgraded and more information about the possibilities of studying at the UDHS should be better explained and written.
- There is a strong need for UDHS develop a plan for conducting some of their study programs in English.
- The UDHS have to provide English language classes for foreign students.
- There is a strong need for UDHS to increase the number of foreign students in exchange for well-organized student internships.

Quality grade: *Minimum level of quality*

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

Analysis

The higher education institution has appropriate strategies and provides clear information about the criteria and methods of evaluation and grading students at the beginning of each course. Students are well informed by the head of the certain course and can also find information about grading and other substantial information on the platform EDUPLAN which students can access with their AAI identity.

UDHS provides a performance plan to students before the start of classes and has a well-described grading system. The plan is published on the website for all courses at the beginning of the year (evidence: Self-evaluation).

The students receive feedback on the evaluation results of their final test before it is written in their index. The procedure for appealing against the examination results is well determined and students can make an appeal within two days after getting notified about the final grade. Students are very well informed about the possibilities of an appeal and on the further appeal procedure if the appeal is filed. The higher education institution should allow the head of the course to write in the final grades, and not the clerks in the student service.

Recommendations for improvement

- It is recommended to introduce the clinical part of student assessment (practical test), not just the assessment of the written exam from professional courses.
- The higher education institution should allow the head of the course to write in the final grades and not the clerks in the student service.
- The UDHS should involve all participants in the teaching process in the assessment of student workload.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

The higher education system gives students diplomas and Diploma Supplements after they graduate from UDHS on graduation ceremony or they can get it before the ceremony if they request it from the HEI. Alumni confirmed that there were no issues regarding receiving diploma and/or Diploma Supplements. Diploma Supplements are in Croatian and English language, which was also confirmed by the alumni organization.

Recommendations for improvement: -
Quality grade: *High level of quality*

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

Analysis

University organizes Career Day for students who will get better perspective of their future duties, job and possible workplaces. Students are aware and well informed about the Career Day and can freely participate in it. In conclusion, the HEI provides students with support regarding their future career planning.

The alumni organization is relatively new and, according to its members, they are maintaining close contact with the UDHS and are working on bettering the institution. All members of alumni organization found jobs easily and think that the HEI offers good preparation for what is coming in future endeavours.

More about employment in Republic of Croatia and abroad can be found on the web site which is available to all students and Faculty members and information about what employers think their workers' education level is can be found in the "Survey for employers on students who have completed their studies at the University Department of Health Studies, University of Split" (Appendix 3.10.3.).

In undergraduate study programs, UDHS educates professional health personnel who are necessary on the labor market in the Republic of Croatia and the European Union. External stakeholders (Croatian Chamber of Midwives, Croatian Chamber of Healthcare Professionals, CHC Split, Public Health Institute SDC, Health center SDC) confirmed that most of their employees and staff are former students of the UDHS. Employers are very satisfied with the level of knowledge that students acquire at this higher education institution.

Recommendations for improvement:

- The UDHS should establish a system and base of contacts with alumni and employers.
- The UDHS should collect and analyze feedback from alumni and employers.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis

The UDHS has made significant progress since the last 2016 accreditation in terms of the staff numbers appointed into scientific-teaching and associate academic ranks, with a total of 64 employees in those grades of employment.

The UDHS now has 18 full-time employees and 46 in cumulative employment. This is a significant increase in recruitment, for which the UDHS should be commended. Figure 4.1.3 illustrates that the student-teacher ratio has seen huge improvement from 2016 to 2022, with the minimum ratio of 1:30 being exceeded. The current teacher-student ratio is 16.55 (Analytic supplement).

However, it is also clear that scientific-teaching staff and associates have heavy teaching loads; whilst this is currently in line with relevant policies, it does not enable an appropriate distribution of workload across all elements of an academic role i.e., teaching, research, scholarships and service (administration).

This, excepting the context of COVID over the last two years, limits opportunity for teacher mobility, research growth and will limit the realisation of the scientific action plan if recruitment is not ongoing.

In addition, it will be important to recruit or continue to internally develop staff with professional qualifications relevant to the programmes and modules of study they lead and teach.

Recommendations for improvement:

- There is a need for a staffing plan that will enable to UDHS to meet its scientific and reputation ambitions.
- Workload planning for academic staff should enable a recognised and equitable split of time across teaching, research and scholarship.
- All programmes need to be led by staff who hold the same professional qualification. This should involve international recruitment and addressing the labour market limitations in Croatia.

Quality grade: *Minimal level of quality*

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

Analysis

The Self-evaluation document describes a robust process for recruitment and reappointment that assesses potential candidates against clear and transparent criteria, in line with all legal regulations and internal acts. The Self-evaluation document indicates some level of international applications for advertised roles.

Procedures for recruitment of teachers are harmonized with positive legal regulations and other acts that regulate this matter: the Law on Scientific Activity and Higher Education, Decision of the Rectors' Assembly on the necessary conditions for the evaluation of teaching and scientific-professional activities in the process of election to scientific- teaching titles, the Decision on the form and manner of conducting the inaugural lecture for election to scientific-teaching titles, artistic-teaching and teaching ranks, and the Ordinance on the procedure of advancement in scientific-teaching, artistic-teaching, scientific, teaching and associate academic ranks, and to appropriate positions at the University of Split. When initiating the process of selecting new teachers, the consent for employment is obtained from the University for the position predicted in the Plan of Employment, Promotion and Other Personnel Changes, submitted at the beginning of the year. The procedure begins with the adoption of the Decision of the UDHS Council on announcing the competition for election to the rank and appropriate position, and the appointment of the commission, after which, in accordance with legal regulations, the competition is published and remains open for 30 days. After collecting applications, the documentation is forwarded to the expert committee for evaluation. The committee issues a report on all eligible candidates, taking their competencies, previous teaching and scientific/research activities into account. During the re-election procedure, special attention is paid to the results of student surveys.

A combination of the Self-evaluation document and interviews with staff and senior departmental leaders indicates that the process for the advancement of teachers and associates is in place, and that it is based on evaluation and rewarding of excellence. Indicators of excellence are in line with those recognised globally including high impact publications, research success including grant awards, HDR supervision and authorship of textbooks.

The UDHS did not introduce additional criteria for the promotion of teachers to higher academic ranks.

Recommendations for improvement:

- To ensure that all academic employees have the opportunity and workload capacity to engage in supported professional development activity that supports advancement.

- It is strongly recommended to UDHS that introduce additional criteria for the promotion of teachers to higher scientific-teaching titles.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

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

Analysis

The UDHS mission and vision offer full support to teachers in their professional development, and this should be commended. There are clear opportunities for staff to engage in both internal and external workshops, conferences and seminars, as well as to undertake further academic studies, e.g. PhD. There is a clear mechanism for feedback from student evaluations of teaching. There appear to be regular discussions of professional development needs with line managers and overall support for those requests. Professional development should be discussed, documented and monitored annually as part of professional development review. Opportunities for development are well advertised and supported, but in line with earlier comments under standard 4.3. workload capacity and high teaching workload will compromise professional development. Staff mobility remains limited and needs to be addressed in a post-COVID context. The UDHS has a process for the conferment of awards based on excellence in scientific, teaching and professional work.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Professional development, moving forward, will need to align not only with individual academic requests, but also the UDHS scientific action plan, and it will need to be undertaken within a structured professional development review process.
- Workload planning must allow opportunity for staff mobility and continued professional development

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

4.4. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity.

Analysis

The UDHS does not have its own building, it is limited in space and shares common working space with the University Library in Split. There is an area of 803.23 m² in a large building called "Three Faculties" for the UDHS to use. The following is located in that building: 4 laboratories, the Council Chamber, administration offices, 4 lecture or seminar halls, 2 IT classrooms, 8 teachers' offices, the Student Office, the Career Centre – the UDHS branch, the Office for Science, Teaching, and International Cooperation and the UDHS Quality Management Office. The UDHS also uses the premises of other faculties in the building, including the amphitheatre, which is in line with the agreement and its clear implementation during the academic year. Part of the classes for nursing students are taught in the large lecture hall of the Franciscan monastery, which is located near the Clinical Hospital Centre Split. The UDHS and School of Medicine of the University of Split, by the Agreement on Mutual Cooperation, regulated mutual relations regarding courses that are taught by School of Medicine teachers at the UDHS, and regarding the classrooms at the School of Medicine used for teaching the UDHS students. During the academic year, 10 lecture halls/seminar halls with one amphitheatre, 5 teaching laboratories, 2 scientific laboratories and 7 computer classrooms located in the building of the School of Medicine are used for teaching the UDHS students.

The UDHS has clearly had an active plan in place for the development of infrastructure to support the delivery of its academic activities. There is the use of both dedicated and shared space. With an expanding staff and scientific activity base there will be a need for continued infrastructure planning to accommodate all activity. There are strong and effective relationships with the 27 teaching bases and mentorship preparation to support delivery and quality of clinical teaching in the teaching bases seems robust.

There is clear library access and IT facilities are adequate. There will be a continued need to negotiate shared space in line with the UDHS strategic goals.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Increased space for scientific-teaching staff will need to be facilitated in line with growth and strategic goals.
- The UDHS should increase the spatial capacity for the implementation of scientific and research activities.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

4.5. The library and library equipment, including the access to additional resources, ensure the availability of literature and other resources necessary for a high-quality study, research and teaching.

Analysis

The UDHS does not have its own building and shares space with the library. There is an agreement in place to ensure the needs of students are met. The library is a centralised service which offers library and information services, as well as space for studying of the UDHS students. The library has taken responsibility for archiving degree theses in the institutional repository. The University of Split opening hours are adequate and are supplemented by library access in the teaching bases. There is a sharing of resources with the School of Medicine.

The UDHS is included in the national system of digital repositories DABAR, which stores final and graduate theses of students and scientific and professional papers of employees; papers are available through AAI identification access or are in open access to all interested readers.

Whilst books and e-resources are available, student feedback suggests a lack of texts and available learning materials in Croatian. They often learn from textbooks that are not appropriate to their level of education or profession, and often from notes.

There appears to be ongoing work on development of learning materials within the UDHS, but this should be actively supported and accelerated to improve the experiences of students.

Recommendations for improvement:

- More appropriate literature and textbooks in Croatian must be made available for students.
- It is extremely important for the learning process that more textbooks are written by employed teachers and external associates.
- The UDHS should provide funding for textbooks and books.
- There is a strong need for UDHS to provide a number of copies of required literature for each course, which must be at least 20% of the estimated number of students who will be enrolled in that course.

Quality grade: *Minimum level of quality*

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

Analysis

The financial status is transparent and appropriate, but the current state of the UDHS indicates that it is running in deficit, which is underpinned by significant investments made in staff and infrastructure, but it is also a consequence of a state funding lag into the UDHS budget. It is clear that investment is being made into the department from within its own budget but also at university level.

Significant investment is being made to realise scientific ambitions and promote growth and national and international reputation, which should be highly commended. However, additional sources of funding are currently limited for institutional development and improvement.

There is minimal funding secured through national and international projects. This is reflective of where the Department is on its journey, and the assessors recognise the significant progress that this young department has made. The internal investment to pump prime research and project activity must be supplemented moving forward by external funding award.

The scientific action plan outlines ambition to attain external grant funding to support research and mobility. This ambition will need to be realised, but as the previous comments have stated, it will need to be supported by workload planning and staff resourcing.

Recommendations for improvement:

- There is a need to attain more national and international funding to support the departments ambitions, improvement and national/international reputation

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

V. Scientific/artistic activity

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

Analysis

In the last five years, there has been a significant increase in the number of papers published in high-quality scientific publications by the UDHS employees independently or in co-authorship (source: Self-evaluation, CROSB). The number of published scientific

and professional papers per teacher is low, but this is expected due to the work overload of teachers. Compared to the last evaluation period there is a trend in increasing the number of published articles in the field of nursing.

The UDHS is recording and updating data on the number of publications by UDHS affiliated scientists in Croatian and English. According to Self-evaluation document, the UDHS total citation rate for all years is 5.362 citations excluding self-citations, h-index 37, an average of 11.08 citations per paper. Institutional citations of papers in the last five years are 534 without self-citations according to the Scopus database and 564 without self-citations according to WOS database. The number of citations per paper in the observed period is 4.04 (Scopus) and 3.49 (WoS). The total h-index for the observed period is 13 (according to the Scopus database) and 12 (according to the WoS database).

There is a discrepancy between the recorded number of published papers in CROSB database and total number of papers published as some employees failed to indicate UDHS as their affiliation.

UDHS encourages publishing in high-quality scientific publications by rewarding first and corresponding authors of the best scientific articles according to Ordinance on Awards and Recognition at the UDHS. In order to increase the visibility of papers published by the UDHS scientists, the UDHS also encourages publishing in open science high quality journals by covering publishing costs.

UDHS continuously covers the costs of doctoral studies and preparation of doctoral theses of eleven UDHS employees that are involved in PhD study programs. Mentors of most dissertations are from the School of Medicine of University of Split.

UDHS employees regularly present their scientific achievements. According to Self-evaluation document, in the past five years they actively participated in 175 scientific and professional national and international conferences. A considerable number of conferences was in the field of medicine and not in the field of health studies.

Recommendations for improvement:

- there is a need for defining employees' workload planning of to enable time for scientific work and publishing.
- consistently work on increasing the number of papers published in the field of health studies (nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, radiological technology and laboratory medicine).
- encourage active participations on international meetings in the field of health studies, as well as organizing national conferences in the field.
- ensure that UDHS employees indicate their affiliation when publishing papers.
- consider involving international co-mentors of doctoral thesis from experts in the field (nursing, physiotherapy, midwifery...).

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

5.2. The higher education institution provides evidence for the social relevance of its scientific / artistic / professional research and transfer of knowledge.

Analysis

It is evident that UDHS is in the process of establishing procedures for monitoring the needs of society and labor market in planning its research activities. UDHS research strategy is committed to involvement in preventive actions aimed at preserving health which is highlighted in the Department's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

The UDHS encourages and strengthens national and international research cooperation. The UDHS has cooperation agreements with several constituent institutions of the University of Split (CERES platform), The Mediterranean Institute for Life Research (MedILS) in Split and the Institute for Anthropological Research in Zagreb, as well as with Faculty of Nursing, Sør-Trøndelag University College (HIST), now Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) from Trondheim in Norway. Young scientists and the best students are encouraged to do their training program in the first-class research institutions within the SEA-EU Alliance.

The UDHS teachers and students are encouraged to actively participate in the activities of science popularization (UDHS Open Days, University of Split Open Days Science Festival, Pink Ribbon Day, Brain Awareness Week, Researchers' Night).

The UDHS has founded the *Croatian Journal of Health Sciences* to enhance the dissemination of research results of the staff as well as students that are encouraged to actively participate in institutional projects.

The UDHS teachers and associates participate in the activities or are members of various professional associations, public and advisory bodies, and civic associations.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Procedures for monitoring the needs of society and labor market should be introduced, documented and implemented as a continuous process.
- Enhancement of scientific cooperation with the industry and public sector, as a prerequisite for application of knowledge and transfer of technology.

Quality grade: *Minimum level of quality*

5.3. Scientific/artistic and professional achievements of the higher education institution are recognized in the regional, national and international context.

Analysis

The UDHS employees are collaborators in implementation of seven projects funded by the Croatian Science Foundation, two projects funded by the SEA-EU Alliance, two projects funded by the European Structural Funds, two international projects (Canada and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and one FP7 project. These projects are mainly in the field of medicine. It was noticed that none of the mentioned projects is the holder of UDHS.

The UDHS is self-financing ten institutional projects evenly distributed in all five study programs. Holders of several of these projects are PhD students, which implies that certain lack of expertise might be possible.

In the past five years, the UDHS teachers and associates have participated in 175 scientific and professional conferences (22 as invited lecturers). In the past five years, the UDHS teachers and associates have published 113 scientific papers. Although the total number of published works is low, a significant increase was observed in the number of performed works, as well as in their quality. Thus, in 2021, 35 papers were published, which, compared to 2019 when only 8 papers were published, is more than 4 times.

Recommendations for improvement:

- It is recommended to apply for national and international projects for which the holder institution will be the UDHS.
- Further involvement is needed in order that UDHS employees become holders of projects in the relevant field of health studies.
- Consider senior researchers (minimum post-doctoral fellows) as holders of institutional programs.
- Stimulate international scientific cooperation in the field to enhance visibility.
- Stimulate participation in national and international conferences in the field.
- Increase the mobility of scientists.
- Stimulate teachers who have invited and plenary lectures.

Quality grade: *Minimum level of quality*

5.4. The scientific / artistic activity of the higher education institution is both sustainable and developmental.

Analysis

The strategy for the development of scientific activity is in line with the vision for the UDHS development, and the strategic goals have been incorporated into the Science Development Strategy that is an integral part of the UDHS Development Strategy for the period 2020–2027.

Five-year Action Plan for the accelerated scientific development and further improvement of the teaching process, as well as the UDHS Science Development Strategy

for the next five years, is created together with the guidelines for further improvement. The focus of the scientific work is on prevention and protection of health of the elderly, mothers and children, as well as on research into workplace-related diseases.

The UDHS has created a financial plan of income and expenditures for the upcoming five year period clearly stating the funding sources and the breakdown of expenditures.

The UDHS encourages publishing in high-quality scientific publications by rewarding the first and corresponding author of the best scientific articles according to Ordinance on Awards and Recognition at the UDHS. UDHS in order to increase the visibility of the papers published by the UDHS scientists also encourages publishing in open science high quality journals by covering publishing costs.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Continue with efforts to stimulate research applications for scientific projects that are in line with the UDHS Science Development Strategy.
- Further support efforts to become holder of Croatian Science Foundation and European Structural Funds.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory level of quality*

5.5. Scientific/artistic and professional activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve the teaching process.

Analysis

In order to provide adequate space and equipment, the scientific activity is also performed in partner institutions, the University of Split School of Medicine and in the main teaching bases: Clinical Hospital Centre Split, Institute of Public Health of Split-Dalmatia County, Health Centre of Split-Dalmatia County and the Institute of Emergency Medicine of Split-Dalmatia County. Scientific-research work is mostly performed in the laboratories of the School of Medicine in Split, and the UDHS also cooperates with other higher education institutions of the University of Split. This enables the teachers to maintain high quality teaching process for UDHS students.

The UDHS supports involvement of under-graduate and graduate students in scientific research and several papers are published in co-authorship with UDHS students in *Croatian Journal of Health Sciences*.

The quality of doctoral study is ensured by strict selection criteria and demanding criteria for the publication of articles from doctoral theses in accordance with the analysis of the ASHE. Post-graduate students in the PhD program published several papers on the topic of dissertation in journals of respectable IF.

Recommendations for improvement:

- Request funding in order to ensure that UDHS gains its own adequate space and equipment necessary to facilitate research.
- Continue publishing quality papers in *Croatian Journal of Health Sciences* in order to satisfy the requirements for indexing the journal in international databases.
- Teachers of the UDHS should publish scientific and professional papers in co-authorship with students.

Quality grade: *Satisfactory 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. Scientific/artistic activity</i>			X	

Quality grade by standard

<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, scientific/artistic and social).			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		

Quality grade by standard

<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 needs of the society.			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 study programmes (where applicable).			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	
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<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. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.			X	
4.3. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.			X	
4.4. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity.			X	
4.5. The library and library equipment, including the access to additional resources, ensure the availability of literature and other resources necessary for a high-quality study, research and teaching.		X		
4.6. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.			X	

Quality grade by standard

<i>V. Scientific/artistic 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 scientific research.			X	
5.2. The higher education institution provides evidence for the social relevance of its scientific / artistic / professional research and transfer of knowledge.		X		
5.3. Scientific/artistic and professional achievements of the higher education institution are recognized in the regional, national and international context.		X		
5.4. The scientific / artistic activity of the higher education institution is both sustainable and developmental.			X	
5.5. Scientific/artistic and professional activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve the teaching process.			X	

2. Site visit protocol

Reakreditacija
Sveučilišnog odjela zdravstvenih studija Sveučilišta u
Splitu/University Department of Health Studies University of
Split
Ruđera Boškovića 35
Split

PROTOKOL POSJETA

**Edukacija članova stručnog povjerenstva u virtualnom
okruženju/Training of panel members in virtual form**

	Srijeda 18. svibnja 2022.	Wednesday, 18 th May 2022
11:55 12:00	- Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM	Joining the ZOOM meeting via link
12:00 14:00	- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Predstavljanje AZVO-a• Predstavljanje sustava visokog obrazovanja u RH• Postupak reakreditacije• Standardi za vrednovanje kvalitete• Kako napisati Završno izvješće• Priprema povjerenstva za posjet visokom učilištu (rasprava o Samoanalizi i popratnim dokumentima)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of ASHE• Overview of the higher education system in Croatia• Re-accreditation procedure• Standards for the evaluation of quality• How to write the Final report• Discussion on the Self-evaluation report and supporting documents• Discussion on pre-prepared questions• Appointment of Expert Panel Chair

**Preliminarni posjet Stručnog povjerenstva visokom
učilištu/Preliminary site-visit of the expert panel members to the
University Department in Split**

MJESTO/VENUE:

Sveučilišni odjel zdravstvenih studija

Ruđera Boškovića 35

Split

	Ponedjeljak 23. svibnja 2022.	Monday, 23 th May 2022
9:20 – 9:30	Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM i kratki interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva	Joining the part of the Expert Panel members to the ZOOM meeting via link and short internal meeting of panel members
9:30 – 10:30	Sastanak sa Upravom Sveučilišta (rektor) i Upravom Odjela (pročelnik, zamjenici i pomoćnici pročelnika) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bez prezentacija 	Meeting with the University Management (Rector) and with the Management of the Department (Head, Assistants and Deputy of Head) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no presentation
10:30 – 10:45	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
10:45 – 11:45	Sastanak s Odborom za unaprjeđenje kvalitete i predstavnikom Povjerenstva za unutarnju prosudbu sustava osiguravanja kvalitete	Meeting with Quality Improvement Committee and Head of the Committee for Internal Evaluation of the QA system
11:45 – 13:15	Obilazak Odjela (predavaonice, informatičke učionice, knjižnica, prostorije za studente, nastavnički kabineti, studentska referada, laboratoriji, laboratorij kliničkih vještina) i prisustvovanje nastavi	Tour of the Department (classrooms, computer classrooms, Library, Student premises, Student's Office, Teacher's office, Laboratories, Clinical skills laboratory, etc.) and participation in teaching classes

13:15 14:15	-	<i>Analiza dokumenata</i>	<i>Document analysis</i>
14:15 15:15	-	<i>Ručak za članove povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch organized by ASHE</i>

Interni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva u virtualnom okruženju / Internal meeting of Expert Panel members in virtual form

		Utorak 24. svibnja 2022.	Tuesday, 24th May 2022
11:55 12:00	-	Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM	Joining the ZOOM meeting via link
12:00 14:00	-	Diskusija o zapažanjima i dojmovima s preliminarnog posjeta, priprema za sastanke s dionicima visokog učilišta	Discussion on observations and impressions from the preliminary site-visit, preparation for the meetings with HEI stakeholders

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

		Srijeda, 25. svibnja 2022.	Wednesday, 25th May 2022
9:50 10:00	-	Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM	Joining the ZOOM meeting via link
10:00 11:00	-	Sastanak s nastavnicima u stalnom radnom odnosu, puni i kumulativni radni odnos (osim onih na rukovodećim mjestima)	Meeting with full-time employed teachers (except those in managerial positions)

11:00 11:15	-	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:15 12:15	-	Sastanak s pročelnicima katedri i pročelnicima odsjeka (osim onih na rukovodećim mjestima)	Meeting with the Heads of Departments and Heads of Academic Departments (except those in managerial positions)
12:15 12:30	-	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
12:30 - 13:30	-	Sastanak s pomoćnikom pročelnika za nastavu i pomoćnikom pročelnika za poslovanje i nastavne baze	Meeting with the Assistant head for teaching and Assistant head for Business and Teaching Bases
13:30 14:00	-	<i>Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o otvorenim pitanjima – prema potrebi</i>	<i>Organisation of an additional meeting on open questions – if needed</i>

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

	Četvrtak, 26. svibnja 2022.	Thursday, 26 th May 2022
9:50 – 10:00	Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM	Joining the ZOOM meeting via link
10:00 – 10:45	Sastanak s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECTS koordinatorom • Voditeljicom Ureda za znanost, nastavu i međunarodnu suradnju / predsjednicom Etičkog povjerenstva 	Meeting with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECTS coordinator • Head of the Office for Science, Teaching and International Cooperation / Head of Ethical committee
10:45 – 11:00	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:00 – 12:00	Sastanak sa studentima svih studijskih programa - otvoren za sve studente	Meeting with students – open meeting for all students
12:00 – 12:15	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
12:15 – 12:45	Sastanak s alumnima (bivši studenti koji nisu zaposlenici visokog učilišta)	Meeting with Alumni (former students who are not employed by the Department/Higher education institution)
12:45 – 13:00	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
13:00 – 13:45	Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima - predstavnicima strukovnih i profesionalnih udruženja, poslovna zajednica, poslodavci, stručnjaci iz prakse, organizacijama civilnog društva, vanjski predavači	Meeting with external stakeholders - representatives of professional organisations, professional experts, external lecturers, non-governmental organisations
13:45 – 14:30	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>

14:30 15:15	-	Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o otvorenim pitanjima – prema potrebi	Organisation of an additional meeting on open questions – if needed
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Treći dan reakreditacije u virtualnom okruženju / Third day of re-accreditation in virtual form

		Petak, 27. svibnja 2022.	Friday, 27th May 2022
8:30 9:00	-	Sastanak s pročelnicama katedri ZOOM	Meeting with the Heads of Departments ZOOM
9:20 9:30	-	Interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva	Internal meeting of the Expert panel members
9:30 10:15	-	Sastanak s pomoćnikom pročelnika za znanost i međunarodnu suradnju	Meeting with the Assistant Head for the Science and International Cooperation
10:15 10:30	-	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
10:30 11:15	-	Sastanak s voditeljima znanstvenih i stručnih projekata	Meeting with the Heads of the research and professional projects
11:15 11:30	-	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:30 12:15	-	Sastanak s asistentima i doktorandima	Meeting with teaching assistants and postdoctoral researchers
12:15 14:30	-	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
14:30– 14:45		Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva – ocjenjivanje prema standardima kvalitete	Internal meeting of the Expert panel members – assessment according to quality standards
14:45 15:00	-	Završni sastanak sa Upravom visokog učilišta (pročelnikom, zamjenikom i pomoćnicima pročelnika)	Exit meeting with the Department Management

SUMMARY

The University Department of Health Studies (UDHS) started work in the academic year 2011/2012. The UDHS contributes significantly to the development of study programs in the health care area, which contributes to encouraging the creation of new jobs in the health profession and thus directly to the improvement of health care in the region and in the Republic of Croatia.

There are 8 study programs that are performed at UDHS, 5 of which are university undergraduate studies: Physiotherapy, Nursing, Midwifery, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics, and Radiologic Technology; and 3 are university graduate studies: Physiotherapy, Nursing, and Radiologic Technology.

A total of 620 students study at UDHS. 344 full-time students and 135 part-time students study at the undergraduate programs. Undergraduate study programs (Midwifery, Nursing, Medical Laboratory Diagnostics and Radiological Technology) educate professions who belong to regulated professions (requirements of EU Directive 2005/36/EC and EU Directive 2013/36/EC). The undergraduate study program in Physiotherapy educates physiotherapists whose profession is regulated in the Republic of Croatia. Undergraduate studies are aligned with social and economic recommendations.

141 part-time students study at graduate studies of the UDHS. According to the competent professional chambers of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia, there is a need for this level of qualification in the labor market, but due to the fact that the status of masters of Nursing, Physiotherapy, and Radiological Technologists is still not regulated by Croatian laws, they are still unable to be employed in the Croatian health care system. There is a good practice at the UDHS that the professional training of students is done under the supervision of mentors in specialized exercises, and that student practice is an integral part of study programs.

Considering the observed extremely high workload of the teaching staff, it is strongly recommended that the UDHS consistently works to increase the number of employed teachers in the scientific-teaching academic ranks, especially in the professions for which UDHS students are educated.

Staff and student mobility and mechanisms to support it are in the early stages of development. Although the number of scientific publications with UDHS affiliation has been increasing in the last 2 years, there are no significant scientific achievements in national and international frameworks.

The internal system of quality assurance of the UDHS is well regulated by ordinances on the level of UDHS and University of Split. There is the UDHS Development Strategy from 2020 to 2027 and the Action Plan for Accelerated Development of Science and Improvement of the Teaching Process at the UDHS 2021–2026. All activities in the

domain of the Quality Improvement Committee need to be systematically documented and monitored.