



agency for science and higher education

**REPORT  
OF THE EXPERT PANEL  
ON THE  
  
RE-ACCREDITATION OF  
THE FACULTY OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT  
UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA**

**Date of site visit:**

19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>th</sup> November 2018

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**MAMFORCE**



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## INTRODUCTION

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

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

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent Expert Panel for the evaluation of The Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Rijeka.

Members of the Expert Panel:

1. Prof. Peter Mason, Ph.D., Guildhall School of Business and Law, London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – **Chair of the expert panel**,
2. Assoc. prof. Aleksandra Brezovec, Ph.D., Faculty of Tourism Studies – TURISTICA Portorož, University of Primorska, Republic of Slovenia,
3. Assoc. prof. Josip Mikulić, Ph.D., Faculty of Economics and Business University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia,
4. Assoc. prof. Smiljana Pivčević, Ph.D., Faculty of Economics University of Split, Republic of Croatia,
5. Duje Vulas, univ. bacc. oec., Faculty of Economics University of Split, Republic of Croatia.

During the site visit, the Expert Panel held meetings with the following stakeholders:

- Management (dean, vice-deans and secretary),
- Self-evaluation Report Committee, dean's assistant for Quality Assurance, ECTS coordinator,
- Vice dean for education, vice dean for science and professional activities, vice dean for business cooperation and vice dean for international affairs,
- Heads of study programmes,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- Heads of research projects,

- Teaching assistants,
- External stakeholders (representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, professional experts, non-governmental organisations, external lecturers),
- Students,
- Alumni.

The Expert Panel members had a tour of library, IT classrooms, student administration office and classrooms (both in Opatija and Zabok) and also attended sample lectures (in Opatija), where they held a brief Q&A session with students.

In accordance with the site visit protocol, 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 Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Rijeka on the basis of The Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Rijeka self-evaluation report, other relevant documents and site visit.

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 site visit protocol),
- Summary.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit to the The Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Rijeka and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Frano Pavić, coordinator, ASHE,
- Katarina Šimić Jagunić, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Ivana Rončević, interpreter at the site visit, 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:** The Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Rijeka

**ADDRESS:** Primorska 42, p.p. 97, 51410 Opatija and Prilaz dr. Franje Tuđmana 15, 49210 Zabok

**DEAN:** Professor Dora Smolčić Jurdana, Ph.D.

### **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

*Short description was based on the Self-evaluation document on pages 3 and 4.*

The Faculty management bodies are the Dean and the Faculty Council.

The Faculty has five vice deans:

- Vice Dean for Student Affairs,
- Vice Dean for Science and Professional Activities,
- Vice Dean for International Affairs,
- Vice Dean for Development,
- Vice Dean for Business Cooperation.

The Faculty has seven heads of studies:

- Head of Undergraduate Studies,
- Head of Graduate Studies,
- Head of Student Center Zabok,
- Two heads of Postgraduate Doctoral Studies,
- Two heads of Postgraduate Specialist Studies,

The Faculty has four Assistant Deans:

- Assistant dean for Implementing IT Solutions,
- Assistant dean for International Studies,
- Assistant dean for Quality Management,
- Assistant dean for Lifelong Learning.

The Faculty has the secretary office and the professional services responsible for administrative, personnel, financial-accounting and other general affairs.

The basic organizational units of scientific and teaching work at the Faculty are the

Departments. The Departments performing scientific and professional work in the appropriate scientific branches make the Institutes.

The Faculty operates with 7 institutes:

- Institute for Tourism,
- Institute for Management,
- Institute for Multi-disciplinary areas,
- Institute for Accounting,
- Institute for National and International Economics,
- Institute for Hospitality,
- Institute for Finance.

The Faculty has a Center for Professional Practice of Students and a Center for EU Projects.

Students' interests at the Faculty are represented by the student representative body, the Student Union. The Student Union elects its representatives to the Faculty Council. Students account for at least 15% of the members of the Faculty Council and participate in decision making equally. Students are also members of other bodies of the Faculty.

### **STUDY PROGRAMMES:**

*Based on the Self-evaluation report on page 5, Table 1: Overview of the study programmes of the Faculty*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of the study program</b>	<b>Type of program</b>	<b>Contractors</b>	<b>No. ECTS credits</b>	<b>HKO **Level</b>
1.	Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality (Study modules: Tourism Management, Hotel Management)	University undergraduate study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	240	6.
2.	Management of Sustainable Development	University undergraduate study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	240	6.
3.	Tourism Marketing	University graduate study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	60	7.

4.	Hospitality Management	University graduate study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	60	7.
5.	Tourism Management	University graduate study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	60	7.
6.	Sustainable Tourism Development	University graduate study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	60	7.
7.	Clinical Nutrition*	University graduate study	Faculty of Health Sciences (Rijeka)	120	7.
8.	Tourism and Hospitality Management	Postgraduate professional study	Faculty of Philosophy in Rijeka (Rijeka)	90	7.
9.	Health Tourism*	Postgraduate professional study	Faculty of Medicine (Rijeka)	120	7.
10.	Management of Sustainable Development	University postgraduate (doctoral) study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	180	8.2
11.	Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality Industry	University postgraduate (doctoral) study	Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (Opatija)	180	8.2

\*Joint study programme with multi-institution contractors and/or several institutions participating in the study programme.

\*\* Croatian Qualification Framework

Source: Data generated from the Mozvag Module Browser, <http://mozvag.srce.hr/preglednik/access> 25. 5. 2018



**NUMBER OF STUDENTS:**

*The number of students per study programme for the current academic year is given in Table 3.1 in the Analytic supplement to the Self-evaluation report on page 2.*

<b>Study programme name</b>	<b>Full-time students</b>	<b>Part-time students</b>
Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality; specialisations in: Tourism Management, Hotel Management (248)	396	421
Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality; specialisations in: Tourism Management, Hotel Management (249)	0	661
Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality (253)	2	24
Medical Tourism (255)	0	9
Management of Sustainable Development (256)	7	50
Management of Sustainable Development (257)	121	119
Tourism Management (258)	45	62
Tourism Marketing (259)	36	24
Sustainable Tourism Development (260)	31	25
Hospitality Management (261)	26	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>1.414</b>

**NUMBER OF TEACHERS:**

*The structure of teachers is given in Table 4.1.a in the Analytic supplement to the Self-evaluation report on page 12.*

<b>Staff</b>	<b>Full-time staff</b>	<b>Cumulative employment</b>	<b>External associates</b>
Full professors with tenure	6	-	-
Full professors	15	-	8
Associate professors	11	-	1
Assistant professors	15	-	1
Scientific advisor (permanent/with tenure)	-	-	-
Scientific advisor	-	-	-
Senior Research Associate	-	-	-
Research Associate	-	-	-
Teaching grade	3	-	-
Assistants	13	-	3
Postdoctoral researcher	11	-	1
Employees on projects	4	-	-
Expert assistants	-	-	-
Technical staff	5	-	-
Administrative staff	18	-	-
Support staff	-	-	-

## **SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION**

*Short description was based on the Self-evaluation document on pages 1 – 3.*

The Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (in further text Faculty), started its activity in 1960, and has, since its founding, undergone various phases and organizational forms. The history of the Faculty begins with the establishment of the Higher School of Economics with Hospitality Orientation, which is in 1969 transformed into the Department of Hospitality and Tourism (a specialized four-year university study) of the Faculty of Economics in Rijeka. In 1974, the Hospitality and Tourism Department became the Faculty of Hotel Management Opatija, and in 1999 it changes its name into the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management. In 2008 a smaller name correction in the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management was made. Today, this Faculty is legally registered as the University of Rijeka Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management. The headquarters of the Faculty is in Opatija, one of the leading tourist destinations in Croatia. Since 1987, the Faculty has been operating at Primorska 42, Ika. Since 2000, part of teaching activities is also taking place in the Study Center Zabok, in the Krapina-Zagorje County.

Development determinants of the Faculty are defined by the Development Strategy for the period 2015-2020, established on the basis and in accordance with guidelines of the Strategy of the University of Rijeka 2014-2020, respecting at the same time the specificity of the scientific-research profile and curriculum and needs of a wider community in the field of Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality and sustainable development.

As part of the Development Strategy of the Faculty the mission and vision are defined:

- **Mission** – the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management of the University of Rijeka as a scientific-research and educational institution, is the creator of knowledge on tourism, hospitality and sustainable development. Students are provided with quality education aimed at taking over the leadership positions in the conditions of a strong global competition. Employees thereby play a key role. A stimulating working environment initiates innovation, scientific, research and educational excellence, loyalty and commitment.  
Creative partnerships with the economy, public sector and civil society provide scientific based solutions to economic and social challenges. Excellence is encouraged and all the activities carried out respecting the principles of ethics and social responsibility.
- **Vision** – the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management is the leader of higher education, scientific and professional research in the field of tourism, hospitality and sustainable development in Croatia and the wider region.

The goals defined by the strategy of the Faculty are aimed to achieve the common goals of the University, but also to develop the Faculty as a component of the University of Rijeka. The strategic direction of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management is to strengthen its position as a respectable Higher Education Institution for tourism, hospitality, and sustainable development in the Republic of Croatia, as well as to provide dissemination of knowledge in the wider region. Particular emphasis is placed on improving the quality of teaching process and scientific-research work. Special attention is also paid to the development of individuals and the institution as a whole, to the public activities of the employees, and to the role of the Faculty in improving the quality of community life in which it operates.

## **BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES**

### **ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. A generally good teaching and learning environment in Opatija, which is currently being improved.
2. Committed and engaged teachers, particularly the teaching assistants.
3. A formal reward system for publishing articles in highly rated journals.
4. Feedback from students and external stakeholders is used in the planning, delivery and changes to study programmes.
5. Strong engagement with the local community and local industry through the Lifelong Learning programmes.
6. Significant involvement in funded professional projects.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. The output of scientific publications is generally too low, and the output in highly rated journals is very low indeed.
2. There have been almost no publications in tourism journals over the past five years.
3. Learning outcomes are not being used effectively by all teaching staff when preparing, delivering and assessing courses.
4. The learning environment in Zabok is barely adequate and in need of improvement.
5. There are relatively few modules involving learning a foreign language.
6. There is a lack of a study programme taught in English.

## **LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES**

### **EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE**

1. The Faculty has responded positively to recommendations from previous evaluations.
2. There is strong support for all students, including vulnerable groups.
3. There is a 'buddy' system used with foreign students.
4. Turnitin is used with all students' submitted assignments at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level.
5. The internship is an integral part of study programmes.
6. Scientific activity of staff is used in teaching.

## **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**

Here are summarised the most important findings regarding internal quality assurance and the social role of the Faculty. For a detailed analysis of each standard, please refer to the section *Detailed Analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard* and its subsection.

#### **Analysis**

The Faculty has a relatively sophisticated internal quality assurance system, which attempts to evaluate all of its activities, and provides documentation to support this. The quality assurance policy is viewed as very important by the University of Rijeka and is part of the strategic management of the Faculty and of the University.

The quality improvement strategy of the Faculty is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee which has been in existence since 2005 and this Committee works closely with the Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee of the University of Rijeka. The Faculty Committee is responsible for developing a quality improvement strategy, organising and implementing evaluation procedures and developing internal quality assurance and improvement mechanisms for the Faculty.

The internal quality assurance system involves a range of different stakeholders: students, employers, alumni, representatives of professional organisations and of society organisations. The Faculty systematically collects data using a variety of methods. It subsequently analyses this data and uses the information to manage and improve its activities, as well as to assist in future developments.

The Faculty has made use of recommendations from previous evaluations, some of which were internal University level activities, but also others that came about from external involvement, including the most recent ASHE evaluation of the Ph.D. programme that took place in May 2017.

The Faculty supports academic integrity and freedom and upholds ethical standards. It uses mechanisms to prevent unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination. Particularly impressive is the use of the electronic detection programme 'Turnitin' in relation to all students' work, to try to prevent academic offences.

Information from evaluations is generally available to stakeholders and is published in both Croatian and English, although not everything is published in English.

The Faculty provides information to stakeholders on important measures including pass rates, graduate employment and outcomes of previous evaluations. However, it appears not to provide entirely accurate information on student drop-out rates, with different figures in different tables.

The Faculty takes its social role very seriously, as is indicated in its strategic aim 'to be a public and socially sensitive institution' and runs a successful Lifelong Learning programme. It has very good links with the local and regional hospitality and tourism industry and has several professional projects involving community organisations. Faculty staff participate in a range of community-based activities, including public lectures, panel discussions and the popularisation of science activities and many staff are also members of professional organisations and associations.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The organisational structure is complex and should be simplified and management roles clarified.
- The internal quality assurance system needs to ensure the appropriate application and use of Learning Outcomes in module preparation, teaching and assessment (this point is discussed in more detail in relation to Assessment Area 2).
- The internal quality assurance system should provide accurate information on student drop-out rate.
- There is a need to improve the quality of scientific publications (this point is discussed in more detail in relation to Assessment Area 5)

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality**

## II. Study programmes

Here are summarised the most important findings regarding study programmes of the Faculty. For a detailed analysis of each standard, please refer to the section *Detailed Analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard* and its subsection.

## Analysis

In general, learning outcomes of Faculty's study programmes are defined in a satisfactory manner and aligned with the Faculty's mission and strategic goals. However, there is a lack of consistency in the application of learning outcomes. Of concern is that there are several study programme outcomes to which only one learning outcome contributes, especially at graduate level. Also, some broad, generic courses contribute to only one, narrow study programme outcome, as well as the converse situation, where wide, generic study programme goals are covered by a small number of courses that do not match. There is also a mismatch between the learning outcomes and assessment methods, as emphasis is placed on written exams using closed-ended questions, not open-ended more qualitative questions, whilst 'soft skills' are not valued sufficiently in the assessment process.

Students graduating from the Faculty are almost exclusively employed in Croatia. There are relatively few courses delivered in a foreign language and teaching hours of foreign languages are low as revealed in documents, in interviews with students and also indicated by employers, and this is a cause of concern in relation to students seeking employment beyond Croatia.

Recommendations from professional organisations on the study programmes and any proposed changes to them are sought and are largely supportive of the Faculty's work. The Faculty allocates ECTS credits generally in accordance with the student workload.

Student practice is an obligatory element of the undergraduate study programme. As many of the students come from outside the local area, the Faculty has made internship places available throughout the country. The teaching process in the respective semester is adapted to allow for the internship. However, despite what is stated in the course syllabus, practice is only possible in hotels, and not other tourism related business/institutions.

## Recommendations for improvement

- A formal system of graduate employment analysis needs to be set up to ensure the alignment of study programmes with society's and labour market needs.
- A system of formal inclusion of external stakeholders in the process of study programmes' improvement and/or development needs to be established.
- The international competitiveness of graduates should be improved.
- The learning outcomes of the study modules should be redefined in order to reflect their different levels and specific focus. Some fine tuning of study programmes' learning outcomes is also recommended. The revision of course learning outcomes to ensure the alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy and Dublin descriptors, as well as



their mutual consistency is required. Following this, the revision of courses' contribution to study programmes learning outcomes' achievement is required.

- More foreign languages, reduction in the repetition of course content and addition of modern web-based content (as suggested by students) and more foreign languages and the introduction of a psychology-focused module (as suggested by the alumni) need to be taken into account in changes to study programmes.
- The survey of employers on the appropriateness of learning outcomes needs to be focused on the Faculty's specific/defined study programmes' learning outcomes, not the generic ones.
- It is recommended that study programmes configuration in the 4+1 system is revised in relation to students' mobility and continuing studying options.
- The inclusion of soft skills in courses' learning outcomes is required, to ensure their achievement through study programmes. Thus, the methods of soft skills assessment, as well as other course elements, need to be revised and more adequate assessment methods and weighting in grading implemented.
- A system for monitoring the achievement of study programmes' learning outcomes and a functional feedback-improvement-loop needs to be set up.
- The relationships between the Faculty and external stakeholders should be formalised and made more systematic by including the appropriate external stakeholders' representatives in the process of study programme development.
- The Faculty should give serious consideration to making itself distinctive from the Faculty of Economics (and all other faculties offering tourism and hospitality courses in Croatia) by awarding degrees with titles that more accurately represent the nature and content of the study programmes.
- In addition to hotels, as is actually stated in the practice syllabus, other tourism institutions/firms need to be included, particularly in relation to 'Tourism Management and Management of Sustainable Development',
- The learning outcomes of student practice need to be clearly defined so that their achievement can be measured.
- In line with the Faculty's vision and mission, firms outside Croatia should be included in the practice.
- Incoming ERASMUS students should be included in the practice, especially as the number of such students is growing in the Faculty.

**Quality grade**

**Satisfactory level of quality**

### **III. Teaching process and student support**

Here are summarised the most important findings regarding teaching processes and student support of the Faculty. For a detailed analysis of each standard, please refer to the section *Detailed Analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard* and its subsection.

### Analysis

Evidence was presented in documents and during interviews that the criteria for the admission and continuation of studies are published and available through various channels of communication of the higher education system in Croatia. These criteria have been applied consistently within the Faculty. The Faculty also has mechanisms to recognise prior learning. Procedures for monitoring student progress are clearly defined and available. Other than issues with the accuracy of data on student drop-out rates (referred to in Assessment Area 1) information on student progress is collected, analysed, presented to stakeholders and used to ensure students move through and complete their studies.

To a large extent, the Faculty ensures student-centred learning takes place and it uses different modes of programme delivery that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem-solving and creative and critical thinking. It also promotes the use of group projects, case studies, field work, use of multimedia and guest lectures. However, as noted in relation to Assessment Area 2, modes of programme delivery are not always in accordance with the intended learning outcomes. Nevertheless, according to the document analysis, teaching methods are adapted to a diverse student population, including under-represented and vulnerable groups. Students also stated at the interview that they regularly evaluate teaching methods through surveys and that all their recommendations are implemented, if it is possible to do so.

From the documents provided, but in particular via interviews with students and teachers, it is possible to state that the Faculty ensures support for students at all levels and of all abilities, including vulnerable and disabled students. Students appear generally happy with the professional support they receive and describe staff as approachable and largely helpful. In general, if they are faced with a challenge, they know who they have to talk to, and what they have to do.

Evidence was provided that the Faculty allows students to gain international experience, but with certain limitations. It appears to be the case that some students who had been involved in international mobility had not had all their ECTS credits recognised on their return. The Faculty ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students. However, certain areas raised concern. Despite the fact that the Faculty uses a very good 'Buddy' system for foreign students, and that foreign students are offered

courses in foreign languages, there is not a complete study programme in English and, overall, relatively few courses are delivered in English. Although Croatian language courses are delivered for foreign students at the University level, Faculty foreign students indicated they were not interested in them.

Criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are clear and published before the beginning of a course. However, it appears that the criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are not fully aligned with the teaching methods used. Nevertheless, the Faculty issues diplomas in accordance with the relevant regulations.

The Faculty monitors the employability of its former students and its surveys include issues related to the status of the employed/unemployed, workplace compliance with acquired qualifications, time of employment after graduation and the desire for additional education in the area of their interest. The Faculty also aligns admission quotas with social and labour market needs and available resources.

### Recommendations for improvement

- Establish an adequate internal system for monitoring students who drop out from a programme.
- Teaching methods and different modes of delivery should be adapted and improved according to the nature of each course and its intended learning outcomes.
- Establish an internal system of workshops aimed at improving the teaching competencies which will include all teaching staff.
- Establish an internal system for a peer review process which will include all teaching staff.
- Improve the quality of technology used in the teaching process in SC Zabok.
- Encourage involvement of students in SC Zabok in peer support projects and other student-related activities.
- Improve procedures regarding the selection of courses and recognition of ECTS credits gained at another higher education institution.
- Conduct surveys among foreign students studying at the Faculty about the quality of the teaching process and different aspects of the achieved mobility.
- Provide more foreign language programmes aimed at improving communication skills of students.
- Increase the number of courses delivered in English with foreign lecturers at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level.

- Conduct surveys on foreign students' satisfaction with the quality of the Faculty's support in the practical issues of student mobility on arrival and before they depart.
- Introduce a complete study programme in English, or at least increase the diversity of courses delivered in English at the Faculty.
- Teaching competencies should be improved by increasing the number of organized workshops aimed at developing skills related to testing and assessment methods.
- Establish an internal system for monitoring the employability of former students.
- Provide undergraduate and graduate students with information about the employability of former students.
- Introduce a formal way of providing feedback to the alumni members about improvements at the Faculty.

### Quality grade

#### Satisfactory level of quality

## IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Here are summarised the most important findings regarding teaching and institutional capacities of the Faculty. For a detailed analysis of each standard, please refer to the section *Detailed Analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard* and its subsection

### Analysis

There are 74 persons related to scientific and teaching activities in the Faculty, including 47 in scientific-teaching position (6 are tenured, 15 are full professors, 11 are associate professors, 15 are assistant professors), additionally those classified as in teaching (lecturers), plus teaching assistants and post-doctoral students. Another 14 external associates contribute to teaching. In relation to the teachers' qualification, the required teaching qualifications are met, and the structure, with regard to seniority, is appropriate.

Teachers from the Faculty have won the award for teaching excellence at the University level twice. However, teaching staff generally lack international experience and they also tend not to have an international research reputation.

Based on the MOZVAG database, the Faculty's teacher to student ratio is 1:26, meaning that the Faculty complies with the prescribed conditions and the ratio of teachers and students is appropriate and ensures a high quality of study. Also, this ratio has shown a

declining trend in the last 5 years and not fairly recently the ratio of students to teachers was in excess of 50:1.

Students benefit from more than enough teachers today, ample study space and generally well equipped and well-maintained buildings. Although this is the case in Opatija, conditions of classrooms and equipment are not as good at Zabok, where students, although generally happy with their working conditions, complained about poor sound quality in some rooms, as well as poor quality audio-visual equipment. The library in Zabok is also very small, but that in Opatija is good, although students indicated that they do not use it very much, preferring to access material on-line.

The breakdown of individual teacher's workload indicates an appropriate distribution of teaching, scientific activities, professional and personal development and administrative duties. However, some teachers appear to have a very heavy course workload compared with others, which is incompatible with a favourable teacher to student ratio. According to the explanation provided by the SER, individual derogations are of temporary nature and the consequence of a time gap between the retirement of one of the employees and the employment of a new staff member once the recruitment procedure is carried out.

Teacher recruitment procedures arise from the development goals of the Faculty and appear to be at the level of national standards and the Faculty considers previous teaching and research activities of teachers in the recruitment process. The evaluation and promotion of teachers into higher grades is well defined, clear and satisfactory.

Teaching competencies are being improved by considering student evaluation results and by peer-review assessments. So far, nine teachers and associates have conducted a peer-teaching assessment.

The Faculty is mainly state-funded, as approximately two thirds of its income comes from the state or the University, and the rest is earned by the Faculty itself. This income is mainly spent on salaries and the necessary material costs. The rest of the income comes essentially from tuition fees (70%), sales of services (17%) and from EU Projects. Current construction and main building re-construction costs will be partly financed by the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education (47%), while the remaining amount will be financed by the Faculty's funds and by the University of Rijeka's funds.

### Recommendations for improvement

- The figures with respect to the number of teachers, the number of students and drop-outs, as well as teachers' workloads should be revised and broken down to

study levels and programmes (including those delivered in Zabok), as at present it is not possible to thoroughly assess teaching capacities and workloads.

- Additional competitive criteria, that will reflect the strategic goals of the Faculty (for example, becoming the 'leading player' in the wider region), should be developed for the promotion of teachers into higher grades.
- While job offers are communicated through different channels, it seems appropriate in relation to the internationalisation goals of the Faculty to add some more targeted channels with European coverage.
- The Faculty should focus teachers' work activity to a greater extent on higher scientific achievements.
- To provide a fully comprehensive institutional support to the teachers in their attempts to become excellent in their scientific work, the Faculty needs to define conditions and procedures for the use of sabbatical leave.
- The Faculty should plan the quality improvement of premises, equipment and infrastructure in SC Zabok.
- A question about students' satisfaction with the Library and Library services should be included in the yearly quality assessment.
- Very close monitoring of future income and expenses and performing cost-volume-profit analysis with respect to the number of different types of students is required, to maintain and even increase the accrued surplus.
- More funds should be raised through projects and market-related activities.
- Income and expenditure should be planned for the next 5 years.

### Quality grade

#### **Satisfactory level of quality**

## **V. Scientific/artistic activity**

Here are summarised the most important findings regarding the scientific activity of the Faculty. For a detailed analysis of each standard, please refer to the section *Detailed Analysis of each standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard* and its subsection.

### Analysis

As is recognised by HEIs globally, the most important output of research is in the form of articles published in high quality, high impact journals. One of the major criticisms of the Faculty is that it lacks both quantity and quality in terms of outputs published in top-rated journals. Over the past five years the Faculty members have published a relatively large number of articles, but only 3 articles in journals from the 1<sup>st</sup> quartile

according to the WOS database, and overall 6 articles in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile journals according to the WOS database. Divided by the number of teachers and associates, this yields only 0.008 Q1-WOS publications per teacher/associate per year over the past five years (0.017 Q1/Q2-WOS publications). This is a long way from the goal set within the institution's vision statement, which is to be the leader of tourism-related scientific research in Croatia and the wider region. It is also striking that only one article has been published in a major tourism or hospitality journal during the past five years.

In an attempt to stimulate publications in higher quality research outlets, the institution has set up a financial incentives system in 2013 and Faculty members are awarded a fixed amount of money for each article published in such a journal.

However, members of the Faculty have published 27 professional papers over the past five years, which amounts to 0.11 professional papers, per teacher, per year. The Faculty has also been involved in 46 professional/commercial projects over the assessment period, which may be regarded as a better indicator of the public and societal relevance of the Faculty's research than journal publications.

The Faculty has established a "2020" scientific research strategy in 2017 which is aligned with its general Development strategy (2015-2020), in particular its vision and mission, and the higher-order Development Strategy of the University of Rijeka. Overall, the Faculty's scientific research strategy has fourteen objectives. However, the Faculty currently falls short with regard to several key objectives, including: 1 - international visibility of researchers and inclusion into the European research area; 2 - internationalization of scientific research; 3 - excellence in scientific research, although it performs adequately with regard to several of the other objectives.

There are very few teachers that stand out with regard to a significant number of citations of their work, while there are many with a very low number of citations. A large proportion of the latter category is made up of tenured full professors. In terms of sustainability of scientific activity, this is certainly not good, as it means that there is a strong dependence on only a very few individuals.

Over the past five years, Faculty teachers have published 64 papers co-authored by undergraduate and graduate students, and 134 papers co-authored by doctoral students. The Faculty has further established a special program to finance research projects led exclusively by students.

Based on interviews conducted with the research and teaching assistants, the teachers, and the Faculty's alumni, there is evidence that both scientific and professional research results are used to enhance the teaching process.

### Recommendations for improvement

- Future evaluations of the Faculty's progress, with regard to scientific publishing, could be simplified and enhanced by providing annual data. In doing so, separate data should be provided for SCOPUS and for WOS. Separate data should also be provided for journal articles and for conference papers.
- The Faculty should check their publication lists for correctness and consistency. For example, the publication list provided as supplementary material during the on-site visit (Document 5.1.1) contained many mistakes. Most mistakes were related to the wrong classification of articles (e.g. listed as Q1/Q2 articles, whereas the journal is neither indexed in the WOS, nor SCOPUS).
- The Faculty should define key field journals in its areas of research and teaching (i.e. tourism and hospitality) based on journal prestige and traditional metrics like the JIF.
- The Faculty should seek means and instruments of encouraging and stimulating those researchers who have proven to be internationally-oriented and productive in their research in terms of journal and book publications.
- Since journals have significantly wider reach and scientific relevance than conference proceedings, far more emphasis should be put on journal articles rather than conference papers, in order to gain better international visibility of the Faculty and its individual members.
- The Faculty should encourage the publication of books with international publishers in order to gain better international visibility.
- Upon completion of the annex to the main building, the Faculty should consider ways to devise some space for the EU project center.
- The Faculty is strong with regard to both national and international professional projects. Hence, the Faculty should seek publication opportunities in highly ranked journals by making more use of their professional research. Several journals (e.g. the "Journal of Destination Marketing and Management", or the "Journal of Sustainable Tourism") are currently offering opportunities for high-quality case studies and professional papers with a strong practical focus and implications.
- To increase the Faculty's visibility at the international level, it is recommended to keep close ties with international researchers with whom the Faculty members have collaborated to date, and to develop new contacts which could result with collaborative research projects and publications at an international level.



- The Faculty should provide strong institutional support to applicants who apply and conduct competitive research projects at the national and international level.
- The Faculty should be more ambitious in terms of research excellence since it is in a very favourable position which relates to the fact that tourism is one of the few parts of the Croatian economy which is constantly developing, and that the Faculty's focus is precisely on this part of the Croatian economy. This should give the Faculty a comparative advantage over many other HEIs from the wider field of social sciences, with regard to both publishing opportunities and attracting research grants.
- Income from scientific research projects is very low and needs to be increased.
- The incentives/award scheme should be revised in a way that it becomes more competitive and stimulates publishing in higher-impact journals, rather than treating all WOS/SCOPUS journals in the same way.
- Citation data from WOS or SCOPUS for individual teachers should be provided in future reports.

**Quality grade**

**Satisfactory level of quality**

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

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

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

##### **Analysis**

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp 9-16),
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality,”
- The “Report on the Strategy Implementation of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Annual Quality Committee Report,”
- Interviews with senior managers, programme managers, teaching staff and students during the site visit,
- On-site documentation.

According to the SER the Faculty has a detailed and sophisticated internal quality assurance system. The internal quality assurance system includes and attempts to evaluate all activities of the HEI and provides documentation to support this. The quality assurance policy is part of the strategic management of the Faculty and of the University of Rijeka. There are a number of important documents that provide evidence of the internal quality assurance system, in particular, the ‘Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka’ and the ‘Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality’. The SER indicates that the internal quality assurance system seeks to involve all stakeholders of the Faculty.

The planning of the quality improvement strategy of the whole Faculty is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee which, according to the SER, was established in 2005. The Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee of the Faculty works closely with Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee of the University of Rijeka. The Quality Committee is responsible for

developing a quality improvement strategy, organising and implementing evaluation procedures and developing internal quality assurance and improvement mechanisms at the Faculty level.

The SER indicates that Quality Committee conducts evaluations in the following areas: the development strategy and procedures for quality assurance; approval, monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes; assessment of students and teaching staff; learning resources and assistance to students; the information system; provision of public information; scientific research; collaboration with the local community and international cooperation. The SER also states that the performance of quality assurance activities is reported on an annual basis in the “Report on the Strategy Implementation of the University of Rijeka” and the “Annual Quality Committee Report”.

The internal quality assurance system involves a number of different stakeholders. In addition to students this, includes: employers, alumni, representatives of professional organisations, civil society organisations and internal stakeholders.

According to the SER, the Faculty uses a variety of methods to collect feedback on quality:

- Feedback from students on the quality of teaching, which is collected by a regular annual survey and the results of this are discussed at the Quality Committee.
- Feedback on students’ satisfaction via a questionnaire survey. The SER reports that this survey was completed by 465 students at both undergraduate and graduate level in 2016/2017.
- The Quality Committee evaluates the quality of teaching in the Lifelong Learning programmes.
- The Faculty conducts the assessment of the student learning environment, in particular student support services, as well as the library and related infrastructure.
- Elected student representatives can be used to present issues and problems at the Faculty Council.
- An electronic mailbox for students’ suggestions, remarks, praise and questions is provided at both Opatija and Zabok.
- Teachers hold regular meetings with students of at least four hours per week duration.
- The Quality Committee in conjunction with the Alumni Association monitors the employability of former students and has conducted two cycles of surveys of alumni so far.

- As internship is a significant component of courses, students complete a questionnaire survey concerning the internship when they have finished it and the results are reported at the Deans' meeting. In 2017-18 a professional internship mentor survey was conducted.
- The Quality Committee conducted an evaluation of employers' attitudes to learning outcomes achieved by the Faculty (although the SER does not report when this was conducted). Results were accepted by the Quality Committee and presented to the Deans' Meeting.

For the future (2018-2020), the SER states that it is intended to introduce to the internal quality assurance system a *peer review* system and the SER reports that the Faculty organised a workshop concerned with peer review in June 2018.

The SER reports a number of examples of what the internal quality assurance system has achieved in recent years and an important reported measure of activity is the construction of a new building annexe in Opatija. The panel saw the building work for this annexe and in addition were shown plans for future building development by the Dean during their site visit. Some improvements of study conditions at Zabok (these were recommended following the evaluation visit of 2011) were also noted by the panel during their site visit, although the panel considers there is still much to be done to improve the overall learning environment in Zabok. Other measures reported in relation to the internal quality assurance system in the SER, including reducing the teaching burden, rewarding scientific productivity and financing of scientific projects for staff and students and funding of doctoral studies and participation in conferences, are discussed in relevant sections to follow.

An important criticism of the internal quality assurance system is the failure to accurately record student drop-out rates. More detail is provided on this issue in Standard 1.4.

Additionally, there is the issue of Learning Outcomes. This is referred to in 1.4 below and discussed in more detail in relation to Assessment Area 2. To outline the issue here, the expert panel has concluded that not all teachers are making use of Learning Outcomes in their module documents and in relation to assessments. Hence, although the Faculty provides information to stakeholders on the Faculty Learning Outcomes, the internal quality assurance system appears to have failed to ensure that all teachers make appropriate use of Learning Outcomes in their module preparation, delivery and assessment. The topic of 'Learning Outcomes' was discussed by the Panel, in some detail with senior managers, during the visit and in particular with the Vice Dean of Education. In fact, at interview, the Vice Dean of Education asked the advice of the

panel on how to bring about much greater application and use of Learning Outcomes amongst teaching staff.

One other important issue in relation to the internal quality assurance system is the complexity of the Faculty organisational structure. It appears that over 80% of staff have some form of management role. Hence, it is not clear what all of these staff are managing and who they are managing. Nevertheless, it would seem that some of the 80% of staff have a relatively minor management role, whilst the organisational structure leaves less than 10 staff who, it appears, do not have a management role, lack responsibility, but nevertheless may be significantly overburdened.

### Recommendations for improvement

- The organisational structure is complex and should be simplified and the management roles clarified.
- The internal quality assurance system needs to ensure the appropriate application and use of Learning Outcomes in module preparation, teaching and assessment.
- The internal quality assurance system needs to provide accurate information to stakeholders on student drop-out rate.

### Quality grade

#### Satisfactory level of quality

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

### Analysis

Evidence for this Standard came from the following:

- The SER (pp 17-27),
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality,”
- The “Report on the Strategy Implementation of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Annual Quality Committee Report,”
- Interviews with senior managers and teaching staff during the site visit,
- On-site documentation.

Evidence that the Faculty has responded to recommendations from previous evaluations was provided particularly via the SER (Table 3) and interviews. Table 3 in the SER gives

very detailed information on the recommendations and actions taken by the Faculty since 2010. Table 3 shows information from both external and internal evaluations. The evidence from interviews came in particular from meetings with the Dean, Vice Deans and Secretary, and also with the Vice Dean of Scientific and Professional Activities and the Heads of Research Projects.

The most recent external evaluation was of the PhD programme of the Faculty which took place in May 2017. One significant recommendation from this evaluation visit was the allocation and appointment of a supervisor at the beginning of PhD studies for each enrolled student. The Panel were assured at interview that this has been introduced from the beginning of the academic year 2018. Interviews also indicated that the Faculty has introduced another recommendation following the May 2017 visit, which they termed the 'Scandinavian Model' as a route to obtaining a PhD. This is via publications rather than the traditional monograph/single thesis route and in the limited time it has been introduced has proved an attractive option for some candidates.

The Faculty has made significant improvements in relation to the student/teacher ratio. Until quite recently this was over 1:50. The SER, in particular in Table 14, reports trends in the ratio between the number of teachers and students since 2013 and indicates improvements in this ratio. The SER (p78) indicates that the Faculty now has a ratio of students to teachers of 26.7:1, which falls below 1:20 if the teaching associates are also included. Interviews with the Dean and Vice Dean of Education also provided further confirmation of this reduction in the student/teacher ratio.

Over the past five years there have been improvements in relation to scientific and professional-related output. However, this has been primarily in the professional field. Hence, the quality of scientific research outputs cannot be considered to be at the level required for the Faculty to meet its strategic target as stated in the Faculty vision (SER p.1) of being the "leader of higher education, scientific and professional research in the field of tourism, hospitality and sustainable development in Croatia". This point is taken up again and discussed in detail in relation to Assessment Area 5.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- Continue to maintain improvements based on recommendations from previous evaluation visits.
- Improve the quality of scientific publications (this point is discussed in more detail in Assessment Area 5).

#### **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**

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp28-29),
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality,”
- Interviews with senior managers and teachers during the visit,
- On-site documentation.

The SER and interviews provide evidence that the Faculty has a code of ethical behaviour, an Ethics Committee and makes use of Turnitin software to detect academic offences.

According to the SER, the Quality Assurance Policy supports the prevention of all forms of intolerance and discrimination as the basic principle of the adopted Code of Ethics, which covers human rights, respect for integrity and dignity of individuals, equality and justice, academic freedom, professional behaviour and compliance with laws and legal proceedings. The rules of behaviour of the Faculty are set out in the “House Rules of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management of the University of Rijeka”, which was issued in May 2018. The Code of Ethics defines conflicts and irregularities and indicates how these can be resolved.

The Panel were particularly impressed by the use of Turnitin with all students – undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies. In addition to the use of Turnitin, all students are required to submit and sign a ‘Statement on Authorship’, to confirm it is their work when handing it in.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- Continue to monitor the functioning of the Code of Ethics and the “House Rules of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management of the University of Rijeka” to ensure they work efficiently to prevent irregularities and can be used to resolve any issues that may arise.

#### **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**

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp 29-33),
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality,”
- The “Report on the Strategy Implementation of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Annual Quality Committee Report,”
- Interviews with senior managers and programme managers during the site visit,
- On-site documentation.

Evidence for this element was obtained mainly from the SER, but also specific information came from interviews. The Faculty provides information on its study programmes and this is available in Croatian and English, although not all that is in Croatian is also in English. The Faculty informs stakeholders on admission criteria, enrolment quotas, study programmes, learning outcomes, qualifications and types of support for students. The Faculty also provides detailed information on its social role. The documentary evidence of this social role was supported during interviews, and in particular from comments by the Dean and Head of Lifelong Learning.

The Faculty informs stakeholders via a number of important indicators, including pass rate analysis, graduate employment and outcomes of previous evaluations. However, the Faculty has not provided consistently accurate information on student drop-out rates. There are confusing sets of figures in tables in the SER and in the MOZVAG information. It appears from some tables that as many as one hundred students are not accounted for. Attempts to explain this issue during interviews by senior staff led to comments such as ‘students who have been in the system for several years’ are the reason for the apparent inaccuracies. However, this explanation was viewed by the Panel as an unsatisfactory response.

##### **Recommendations for improvement**

- The Faculty must provide consistently accurate information on student drop-out rates.

##### **Quality grade**

**Satisfactory level of quality**



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

#### **Analysis**

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp 33-38),
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality,”
- The “Report on the Strategy Implementation of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Annual Quality Committee Report,”
- Interviews with senior managers, programme managers and teaching staff during the site visit,
- On-site documentation.

The Faculty has a clearly defined social role, which is stated in the SER and this is incorporated into the mission of the Faculty, which refers to “the strategic commitment...to be a public and socially sensitive institution, a generator of economic development and ...important... in transferring (sic) the region into a knowledge-based society” (SER p37).

The Faculty staff contribute to the development of the economy and local community by participating in professional projects (and some scientific projects) totalling 280 in the period 2013-18, as indicated in Table 7 of the SER. Staff have also participated in a range of community-based activities, including public lectures, panel discussions and the popularization of science activities and are members of a large number and variety of professional organizations and associations.

As a part of the University of Rijeka, the Faculty takes part in a number of: ‘smart specialisations’ (SER p.35), including those in sustainable development and tourism. The Faculty also cooperates with the local region (Primorje – Gorski kotar County) and the city of Opatija. In the recent past the Faculty has also worked closely with the Croatian Ministry of Tourism on a number of projects.

Evidence of the importance of the Faculty’s social role is provided via its Lifelong Learning Programme and this role was explained at the interview by the Dean and also the Head of Lifelong Learning Programmes.

### Recommendations for improvement

- The performance of the Faculty should be continually monitored to ensure it is carrying out successfully the strategic aim to develop its social role.

### 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

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp 38-42),
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Rulebook on Quality Assurance and Improvement System of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality,”
- The “Report on the Strategy Implementation of the University of Rijeka,”
- The “Annual Quality Committee Report,”
- Interviews with senior managers, programme managers and teaching staff during the site visit,
- On-site documentation.

The development of lifelong learning is a strategic commitment of the Faculty and is linked closely to the vision of the Faculty, which is to be the leading Croatian HEI in the field of tourism, hospitality and sustainable development.

The Faculty has established three lifelong learning tasks, which are as follows: to increase the number of lifelong learning programmes; to establish a Centre for Lifelong Learning and; to introduce a system of non-formal and informal lifelong learning recognition. According to the SER, between 2013 and 2018, the Faculty launched six lifelong learning programmes, targeted primarily at the local business community and focusing on a range of themes, including health tourism, camping resort management, and business communication in tourism. The Faculty has also worked closely with the City of Opatija and the Chinese Embassy to provide courses in the Chinese language and Chinese culture. Several of these courses have been accredited by external agencies. Up to the date of publication of the SER, 160 people had taken lifelong learning courses run by the Faculty.

The Faculty monitors the performance of the lifelong learning programmes to ensure quality and, according to the SER, is in continuous contact with its stakeholders to gain information on satisfaction levels and any need for change.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- Continue to monitor programmes closely to ensure they are of high quality and improve them if necessary.

#### Quality grade

**High 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

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp. 43-44 and 72-73),
- The “Analytical supplement to the SER - Theme 2,”
- “The Development Strategy of the Faculty 2015 – 2020,”
- List of study programmes' general goals,
- “University of Rijeka - Forms for study programmes accreditation,”
- Study programmes' enrolment numbers of the University of Rijeka (the official website),
- The Croatian Employment Service recommendations regarding the admission policy (the official web site),
- On-site revised documentation and interviews.

The Faculty's vision, mission and goals are presented in a publicly available document referenced in the SER (p. 11) and are generally aligned with the objectives of the University of Rijeka. The Faculty's study programmes, available on the Faculty's website and revised in documentation on-site, offer tourism, hospitality and sustainable development focused education on all three levels (undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD level) and are aligned with the Faculty's mission and strategic goals.

The rationale for delivering study programmes is a necessary element of the study programmes accreditation process at the University level (the procedure and forms are available on the University website), including the infrastructure and staff capacities, study programme description, financial analysis and quality assurance. The Panel noted that the recommendations of professional organisations on the study programmes outcomes are sought and were found to be positive and supportive of new programmes.

Data on graduate employment reported by ASHE as well as the Faculty graduates employment survey conducted in 2018, reveal that most graduates are employed within 6 months of graduation and the unemployment rates range from 11,9% to 16,85% (SER p. 44) whilst only a small number of graduates were still registered as unemployed by the Croatian Employment Bureau statistics (SER p. 44 and pp.72-73).

In the recent Action plan for the Faculty internal quality assurance system, it is suggested that data on student employment are planned to be continuously monitored in the future.

Currently, although over 95% of graduates are employed, this is only in Croatia. During the interviews with students, as well as teachers of foreign languages, the need for more teaching hours of foreign languages was emphasised. Foreign languages were also listed as an area needing improvement in the results of the employer's survey of study programmes outcomes and the internship programme (reviewed on-site), while the interviews with management staff revealed that domestic students rarely opt for courses taught in English.

The Croatian Employment Service recommendation recently, in relation to admission policy, was that there should be a decrease of enrolment in the Faculty disciplines. The Faculty's enrolment figures have indeed decreased as compared to five years ago, but have actually not gone down, but remained stable, in the three most recent academic years. The Faculty provided a rationale for this by referring to the importance of tourism in the regional and national economy, the sector's expected employment growth rate in the upcoming period and the country's low global rank in tourism human potential competitiveness (SER p. 73).

### Recommendations for improvement

- A formal system of graduate employment analysis and indicators, foreseen in the Development strategy and strategic goals of the Faculty, needs to be set up and monitored continuously to assure the alignment of study programmes with society's and labour market needs.
- A system of formal inclusion of external stakeholders (employers, public bodies representatives) in the process of study programmes' improvement, or new study programmes development, is recommended (for example, by setting up an External Stakeholder Advisory Board).
- The international competitiveness of graduates should be improved, especially bearing in mind the Faculty's vision is to be the *"educational... leader in the area of tourism, hospitality and sustainable development in Croatia and wider region"* and the mission statement that students will be able to *"...take over the leadership positions in the conditions of strong global competition."* The specific recommendations are as follows: to place greater emphasis on and increase the teaching time of foreign languages; to increase the number of domestic students enrolled in courses delivered in English; to increase outgoing student mobility and;

the inclusion of firms/institutions from other countries in student practice (starting initially with neighbour countries).

- Careful balancing of society needs with the enrolment numbers in the near future is required, especially bearing in mind the proposed study programmes and the teachers' workload (there is a more detailed discussion of this in relation to Assessment Area 4).

### 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

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp. 45-47 and pp. 72-75),
- "Analytical supplement" (Table 2.1. from Mozvag),
- "The Rulebook on undergraduate professional, undergraduate and graduate university studies at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,"
- "Rulebook on evaluation of students at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,"
- Study programme syllabus and detailed teaching delivery programme,
- Learning outcomes of all study programmes,
- Graduate employment analysis; employers' survey,
- On-site interviews with students, alumni, teaching staff, assistants, study programme leaders and Vice Dean for Education.

In general, learning outcomes of the Faculty's study programmes are clearly defined and aligned with the Faculty's mission and strategic goals. However, in terms of ensuring that the learning outcomes at the level of courses are aligned with those at the study programme level, there is evidence that some study modules at undergraduate and others at postgraduate level have identical programme learning outcomes. During the interviews with teaching staff, assistants, study programme leaders and Vice Dean for Education, the unanimous opinion was surprisingly that this was appropriate.

The Faculty has put effort into and provided tables to demonstrate that the learning outcomes at the level of courses are aligned and contribute to study programme learning outcomes (Table 2.1. from Mozvag). However, a cross-check of courses' learning outcomes during the on-site visit and with the web-site, reveals that in many cases, they are not well defined, and a lack of consistency is evident. Furthermore, there are a number of study programme outcomes to which only one course outcome contributes, especially at postgraduate level, and one of these is, inappropriately, Physical Education. Other mis-matches were found where wide and generic courses contribute to only one, narrow study programme outcome, as well as the opposite of this, where wide, generic study programme goals were covered by a small number of not optimally matching courses.

Learning outcomes of study programmes are defined according to Dublin descriptors and Blooms's taxonomy and are aligned with the CroQF and EQF level descriptors for the respective level of study, although using some minor adjustments to the language. The Faculty has participated in the EU project "Adoption of CroQF in higher education" for the purpose of alignment with the CroQF standards.

The interviews with students revealed that they largely find the courses relevant and up to date, while suggestions were given for more emphasis on foreign languages and on inclusion of subjects related to web operations and design. Students also commented on overlap and repetition in some courses throughout the study programmes. In the interviews with alumni, the inclusion of a Psychology-based course was suggested. The teachers however stressed the rigidity of the system and argued that changing the courses and updating programmes is not easy.

The intended learning outcomes clearly reflect the competencies required for employment, continuing education or other individual/society needs. However, due to issues referred to above, the achievement of the defined study programmes learning outcomes is not assured. The Faculty has conducted a survey of employers on the appropriateness of study programmes' learning outcomes focusing, however, on general learning outcomes and not those of its study programmes.

In terms of continuing education, the configuration of study programmes in a 4+1 system poses limits to students' mobility to other institutions at home and abroad. With reference to this, only one major Faculty of Economics in Croatia had a 4+1 system. This was until three years ago and according to that Faculty's management team, was the benchmark for 4+1 systems. However, this institution has switched to an integrated graduate model (5+0) where there is no separate Bachelor level and all students must enrol at the outset on a Masters' programme, while all other similar

faculties in Croatia are 3+2 based, which is similar to the vast majority of those in other EU countries.

#### Recommendations for improvement:

- It is recommended that the learning outcomes of the study modules are redefined in order to reflect their different levels and specific focus. A suggested approach is to distinguish and list separately the generic/general study programme learning outcomes (those that will be the same in all modules) and those that are specific to particular study modules. Some fine-tuning of study programmes' learning outcomes is also recommended. The revision of course learning outcomes to ensure the alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy and Dublin descriptors, as well as their mutual consistency is required. After this, the revision of Mozvag 2.1. Table (i.e. the revision of courses' contribution to study programmes learning outcomes' achievement) is required.
- There is a need for a more flexible framework for study programmes. The programme improvements suggested by students (more foreign languages, reduction in course content repetition, addition of modern web-based content) and by the alumni (more foreign languages, introduction of a psychology-focused module) need to be taken into account in the planned study programme changes.
- There should be the use of external stakeholders in the study programmes development process (see Recommendation 2. in the Standard 2.1.).
- The survey of employers on the appropriateness of learning outcomes needs be focused on the Faculty's specific/defined study programmes' learning outcomes, not the generic ones.
- It is recommended that study programmes configuration in the 4+1 system is carefully and objectively revised in relation to students' mobility and continuing studying options.

#### Quality grade

##### Minimum 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

Evidence for this Standard was collected as follows:

- The SER (pp. 47-48),
- Analytical supplement Table 2.1.,
- "Faculty Rulebook on undergraduate and graduate university studies,"



- “Faculty Rulebook on evaluation of students,”
- Cross-checking of course syllabi, tests, exams and final theses across all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes on-site,
- Examples of learning outcomes changes provided on-site,
- Results of the employers’ survey,
- On-site interviews with teachers, assistants, heads of study programmes and the Vice Dean for Education.

The data in the Mozvag 2.1. Table would suggest that to a great extent, the Faculty ensures the achievement of the intended learning outcomes of its study programmes. However, cross-checking the courses’ syllabi on the web site (where not all detailed teaching plans are publicly available) and in documentation during the visit, a discrepancy in formulating the learning outcomes was evident, with many not being aligned with Bloom’s taxonomy and Dublin descriptors. The Faculty has regulated student grading by the “Rulebook on undergraduate and graduate university studies” and the “Rulebook on evaluation of students”, both aligned with the University regulations and revised in 2018. However, cross-checking the learning outcomes, evaluation and grading methods, and the respective assignments and exams, a mismatch between the learning outcomes and assessment methods was found. This is especially the case for the ‘soft skills’ which are not adequately valued in the process, because of the high weighting given to written exams that rely heavily on closed-ended questions. These soft skills are regarded as very important in the business world today and likely to continue to be so in future. The feedback in the employer’s survey list different soft skills as the ones needing improvement in study programmes. The constructive alignment of courses has not yet been implemented, although it is planned (it is referred to in the Action plan for improvement of quality assurance system) and stated by the Vice-Dean of Education at interview as one of the crucial steps to be taken in the near future. In relation to the above, at the moment the achievement of the overall study programmes’ outcomes cannot be guaranteed. However, the interviews with the management and teachers indicated that they are aware of these issues and the Panel were informed changes are planned to be introduced soon.

The documents provided on-site demonstrated the changes implemented in previous academic years, as did the interviews with various Faculty groups such as teachers, research assistants, heads of study programmes and the Vice Dean for Teaching. However, the teachers expressed the view that the national regulatory system for syllabi is rather rigid and does not enable more profound changes in the course content, nor does it encourage changes in the learning outcomes, which they think could be improved. However, teachers indicated that some smaller changes have been

adopted, which were largely based on students' comments. These changes were also indicated by students as well as referred to by teaching assistants.

### Recommendations for improvement

- A thorough revision of courses' learning outcomes is required to achieve their alignment with Bloom's taxonomy and Dublin descriptors, to ensure internal consistency and adequate contribution to study programme learning outcomes.
- The constructive alignment matrixes need to be generated for all courses offered. In this process, appropriate inclusion of soft skills in courses' learning outcomes is required, to ensure their achievement through study programmes. Thus, the methods of soft skills assessment, as well as other course elements, need to be revised and more adequate assessment methods and weighting in grading implemented. As a result, in written exams, less weighting needs to be allocated to closed-ended questions and more weighting given to more complex open-ended questions, especially at the postgraduate level, where students can express opinions and provide arguments.
- A system for monitoring the achievement of study programmes' learning outcomes (surveys or focus groups of postgraduates and/or employers) and a functional feedback-improvement loop needs to be set up.

### Quality grade

#### Minimum 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

Evidence for this Standard was gathered as follows:

- The SER (pp. 48-50),
- On-site revised documentation on changes in study programmes at all three levels,
- The published up-to-date version of all study programmes on the official web site and in documentation provided on-site,
- On-site interviews with the Vice Dean for Education, Heads of study programmes, students, alumni and external stakeholders.

The on-site revised documents and additionally interviews conducted with management staff, students and external stakeholders provided evidence of improvements in study programmes. These improvements were based on feedback by

students (for example the suggestion to move some courses from one semester to another), previous accreditations (the most recent being that concerned with PhD programmes, previously discussed with reference to Assessment Area 1) and external stakeholders such as the local and regional business and public sector in close communication with whom new postgraduate study programmes were developed. Documents reviewed on-site, as well as interviews, in particular with the Vice Dean for Education and Heads of study programmes, provided evidence that the activities related to study programmes development are conducted systematically and regularly.

A standard obligatory procedure for proposing new study programmes includes an analysis of the rationale for its delivery, resources required and alignment with the strategic goals at the local and regional level, and other needs of society. The interviews with external stakeholders provided evidence that new study programmes are delivered in cooperation with local and regional economy stakeholders, as well as based on their needs and insights into labour market needs.

That tourism and hospitality are social phenomena with environmental and cultural consequences, as well as economic dimensions, is recognised in the actual title of the Faculty, and evident in several study programmes. However, this is not fully reflected in the qualifications awarded by the Faculty, which are respectively Bachelor of Economics and Master of Economics. Currently, at the University of Rijeka, the Faculty of Economics offers study programmes awarding the same qualifications but with modules different from the ones taught at the Faculty (in other words those where tourism and hospitality are not specialisations). However, it appears that the Faculty does not wish to make itself more distinct from the Faculty of Economics by awarding differently titled qualifications. When asked if it would be better to have a degree with e.g. the title just 'Tourism' rather than as it is at present, this idea was rejected by almost all of those asked at interview, including managers, teachers, alumni and external stakeholders, who made reference to, for example, 'tradition' and 'possibilities of employment' as the rationale for their responses.

All the Faculty's study programmes are publicly available on its website, as well as the syllabi while the detailed teaching delivery plans in Croatian are published at the beginning of each semester.

The Faculty has a procedure for amendment of study programmes aligned with the one set by the University of Rijeka. The procedure includes the rationale for changes proposed. Evidence was gathered during the on-site visit that the procedure is adhered to and records kept, and the procedure revised as necessary. However, the teaching

staff indicated that the national system is quite inflexible (as referred to in Standard 2.3).

### Recommendations for improvement

- On-site interviews with external stakeholders, alumni and employers revealed that their relations with the Faculty are close, well-developed and mutually trusting. These relationships should be formalised and made more systematic by including the appropriate external stakeholders' representatives in the process of study programmes development and changes (for example, by setting up an External Stakeholder Advisory Board mentioned in Standard 2.1) and holding regular meetings to exchange ideas and improvement suggestions.
- The Faculty should give serious consideration to making itself distinctive and different from the Faculty of Economics (and all other faculties offering tourism and hospitality courses in Croatia) by awarding degrees with titles that more accurately represent the nature and content of the study programmes. This may also have the advantage of giving the Faculty a competitive edge and present a greater opportunity to achieve its stated mission aim of being the leader in tourism and hospitality higher education in Croatia.

### Quality grade

#### Satisfactory level of quality

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

### Analysis

Evidence for this Standard was collected as follows:

- The SER (pp. 40-51),
- Study programmes detailed teaching plans,
- The documentation in revised ECTS distribution in 2018/19,
- On-site interviews with students, teachers, assistants, the Vice Dean for Education and Heads of study programmes.

The student work load, in terms of ECTS, is documented in syllabi, as well as detailed teaching delivery plans adopted by the Faculty Council at the start of the academic year. Feedback via students' questionnaires reveals a high average grade (4,63) awarded to the harmonisation of course obligations and ECTS load (SER, pp. 50-51). The interviews with students confirmed the appropriateness, as did those with teachers, assistants and management staff. As a result, no cases of ECTS weighting change for courses were introduced/documentated.

However, in the process of study programme amendments for the 2018/2019 academic year, a redistribution of ECTS credits among the individual activities within courses was introduced to improve the achievement and evaluation of the learning outcomes. The students have been informed about the changes through syllabi published on the web site, as well as by teachers at the beginning of each course.

#### Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations.

#### Quality grade

**High level of quality**

### **2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).**

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 51-53),
- “Analytical supplement - Theme 2,”
- On-site revised documentation related to student practice (“Rulebook on student practice,”
- Student practice course syllabus,
- Contracts with employers; student and employers’ feedback on student practice,
- On-site interviews with students, the Vice-Dean for Education and Heads of study programmes.

The Faculty has introduced student practice as an obligatory element of undergraduate study programmes. Due to the number of ECTS i.e. required work hours included and the fact that most students come from outside the local area, the Faculty has signed contracts and made internship places available throughout the country to enable the internship to take place close to students’ places of residence. Furthermore, the teaching process in the respective semester is condensed to allow for the internship. However, contrary to the description in the course syllabus, the practice is only possible in hotels, and not other tourism related business/institutions. This is especially inappropriate for the undergraduate study programme ‘Management of Sustainable Development’ and the ‘Tourism Management’. This view was also expressed by students themselves in the on-site interviews. However, this issue is also recognized by managers, interviews revealed, and changes are planned.

Student practice is organised in a generally systematic manner, according to the SER and on-site documentation and further evidence of this was provided at interview with the respective management staff. However, certain shortcomings were noticed. In addition to the limited types of business involved (as indicated above, this is hotel based), the students' suggestions were that in its realisation, a distinction should be made between students enrolling in the Faculty from hospitality schools i.e. those already having practical/internship experience and those coming from other schools with no such prior experience, to ensure that all gain new insights. The learning outcomes of the course are rather vague and too general, making it hard to measure their achievement. Also, practice-related feedback in surveys from employers and students involved listed elements that need to be improved in the course. Specifically, in relation to the "Management of Sustainable Development" learning outcomes, the feedback indicated that there is a need for less emphasis on low-skill jobs performed, in favour of more management related activities, while some employers' suggestions were related to study programmes, with specific reference to improvement in knowledge of foreign languages, communications skills, and better linking of theoretical and practical knowledge.

### Recommendations for improvement

- In addition to hotels, as actually stated in the practice syllabus, other tourism institutions/firms need to be included, particularly in relation to "Tourism Management" and "Management of Sustainable Development", as already stated in the practice syllabus.
- The learning outcomes of student practice need to be clearly defined so that their achievement can be measured.
- The feedback from employers and students need to be used for practice syllabi and organizational improvement as well as using the employers' suggestions to make improvements of study programmes.
- More frequent and systematic communication with mentors during the practice is recommended.
- The education of mentors in firms/organisation is recommended.
- In line with the Faculty's vision and mission, firms outside Croatia should be included in the programme (specifically neighbouring countries/regions).
- Ways to include the incoming ERASMUS students in the practice need to be developed and promoted to prospective candidates, especially as the number of such students is growing at the Faculty.

### 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

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 54-58),
- Rulebook on Studies of the University of Rijeka,
- Acts and Regulations on Studies and Studying at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
- Documents of the Education Commission and Student Office on the transition from another Higher Education Institution and recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications and Periods of Study,
- Interviews with the Vice-Dean for Education and Heads of the study programme and meeting with the students.

The Faculty bases its Admission criteria, procedures, recognition of prior learning and completion of studies on the "Rulebook on Studies of the University of Rijeka" and internal acts and regulations on studies and studying. The collected data from reports, documents and meetings show that the criteria for the admission and continuation of studies are published and available through various channels of communication of higher education system in Croatia (SER, p 54).

According to the documents of the Education Commission and Student Office on the transition from another Higher Education Institution and recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications and Periods of Study, the Faculty defined and published clear procedures in the 'Rulebook on undergraduate professional, undergraduate and graduate university studies at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management' (Articles 30-32). The Faculty conducted a students' survey of experiences with the recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning. According to the elements mentioned in the study of satisfaction with the experience of continuing the studies at the Faculty, the overall grade is 4.17.

Students stated at interview that they did not have any problems with procedures regarding admission criteria and criteria for continuation of studies. Students stated that the criteria for admission and continuation of studies are consistently applied.

### Recommendations for improvement

- Improve mechanisms for recognising prior learning with an emphasis on non-formal and informal forms of learning.

### 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

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp 58-60),
- Acts and Regulations on Studies and Studying at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
- Analytic supplement to SER,
- Meeting with the senior managers and meetings with students,
- On-site document analysis.

The progress of the students during the course of studies is regulated by the 'Rulebook on undergraduate professional studies, undergraduate and graduate university studies at the Faculty' (Articles 20-25), and the 'Rulebook on Student Assessment of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management'.

According to the SER (p. 58) and the collected data, the Faculty regularly collects and analyses the data on student progress and provides students with an insight into each segment of learning outcome. Data on the success of the study and study progress are also stored in the Student Office. The Faculty also undertakes various activities aimed at increasing the efficacy of the study (SER, p. 59), which are fully implemented and work efficiently according to the teaching staff and students. However, there are no clearly defined mechanisms for improving student progress in case of lower pass rates, although there is a possibility to adapt activities aimed at increasing the efficacy of the study for this purpose.

Nevertheless, information on drop-out rates are not sufficiently defined (Analytic supplement to SER, p.7). Information about the number of drop-out students is stated; however, it is not divided according to study programmes. Since student progression is one of the elements of the Faculty strategy, the Panel considers the introduction of an



adequate internal system for monitoring students who drop out to be introduced in order to contribute to improved quality of the continuity and completion of study.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends that in case of lower pass rates, mechanisms for improving student progress should be implemented.
- Establish an adequate internal system for monitoring students who drop out from a programme.

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 60-64),
- Acts and Regulations on Studies and Studying at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
- Meeting with the teaching staff and meeting with the students,
- On-site document analysis and review of learning facilities.

'The Rulebook on Undergraduate Professional, Undergraduate and Graduate University Studies at the Faculty for Tourism and Hospitality Management' provides a framework for defining the methods of teaching, monitoring and evaluation based on the defined learning outcomes.

According to the information from the SER (p. 60), interviews with the teaching staff and students, and class attendance, the Panel determined that the Faculty uses different modes of programme delivery that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem-solving and creative and critical thinking. The Faculty encourages the use of these modes of delivery, which include group projects, case studies, field work, use of multimedia and guest lectures. However, according to the structure of the grades for each course, the Panel determined that modes of programme delivery are not always in accordance with the intended learning outcomes. Nevertheless, according to the document analysis, teaching methods are adapted to a diverse student population, especially to under-represented and vulnerable groups.

Students cited the increasing use of new teaching methods throughout lectures and group projects, allowing them to connect theory and practice. Students also stated that they regularly evaluate teaching methods through surveys in the middle of the semester and that all their recommendations are implemented, if it is possible to do so. In discussion with students, the Panel confirmed the availability of all necessary learning sources via the e-learning platform of the Faculty and a regular updating of this system. Regarding the use of state-of-the-art technologies to modernise teaching, students in Opatija indicated that they are satisfied with the quality of the used technologies. On the other hand, students in SC Zabok stated that technology used in teaching process is out of date.

The teaching staff encourage autonomy in students by allowing them to choose their own seminar paper themes and group projects. Teachers also stated that this contributes to the motivation of students and their engagement. In addition, teachers stated that the Faculty provided them and the associates with the possibility of attending workshops for improving teaching competencies. Teachers also stated that they disseminate information from workshops to teachers who did not have the opportunity to enrol in these workshops. With the aim of improving the quality of teaching on the basis of feedback from another teacher, nine teachers and associates have performed a peer review process.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- The Panel recommends that teaching methods and different modes of delivery are adapted and improved according to the nature of each course and its intended learning outcomes.
- Establish an internal system of workshops aimed at improving the teaching competencies which will include all teaching staff.
- Establish an internal system for a peer review process which will include all teaching staff.
- Improve the quality of technology used in teaching process in SC Zabok.

### **Quality grade**

**Satisfactory level of quality**

### **3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.**

#### **Analysis**

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 64-67),
- Acts and Regulations on Studies and Studying at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
- On-site analysis of documents of the Careers Office of the University of Rijeka, Career Days and peer support project,
- On-site analysis of documents of the University Counselling Center services, the Office of the Student Ombudsman of the University of Rijeka, the Office for Disabled Students, the Office for International Mobility / Erasmus and the CEEPUS Office,
- Meeting with the teaching staff and meeting with students.

According to the information from the SER (pp. 64-66), the site visit, and meetings with students, it is evident that the Faculty ensures adequate student support.

The Faculty provides guidance on studying and career opportunities to students through counselling hours, the Career Office of the University of Rijeka, Career Days and peer support project involving students and mentors. The information on job offers is provided to students on the web page of the Faculty. Students in both Opatija and Zabok stated that they are satisfied with the peer support project and the approachability of teachers for guidance on studying. Students also stated that the Faculty actively supports the work of the student union and student associations.

The Faculty has established functional procedures for psychological and legal counselling, support to students with disabilities, and support in outgoing and incoming mobility through the University Counselling Center services, the Office of the Student Ombudsman of the University of Rijeka, the Office for Disabled Students, the Office for International Mobility / Erasmus and by the CEEPUS Office within the Agency for Mobility and EU Programs. Students cited satisfaction with services provided from these offices. Furthermore, students in Opatija and Zabok also expressed satisfaction with the availability of library services. However, students stated that the working hours of the Student Office should be longer. According to their feedback, the Student Office should be open during morning hours.

Student support is tailored to a diverse student population. 'The Rulebook on Undergraduate Professional Studies, Undergraduate and Graduate University Studies at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management' provides for a special programme (Article 12) aimed to special students who for objective reasons are not

able to meet the conditions of the student's teaching activities and allow them to collect a certain number of points in accordance with the 'The Rulebook on Evaluation of Students at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management'.

The Faculty employs qualified and committed professional, administrative and technical staff. According to the SER (p. 67), more than two-thirds of those employed in professional services have a high level of professional education. Regarding the professional support, students said that they know who to turn to and how to solve any potential problem. Students also stated that professional staff process their queries quickly and they complimented their approachability. Furthermore, students confirmed the availability of teaching staff at pre-arranged consultation slots and that they regularly reply to queries via email or the e-learning platform. In addition, students stated that they would like to have a mobile application for e-learning platform Lumens5+ in order to enhance communication with teachers.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- Increase working hours of the Student Office in Opatija and Zabok.
- Create a mobile application for e-learning platform Lumens5+.

#### Quality grade

**High level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 67-68),
- Acts and Regulations on Studies and Studying at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
- On-site document analysis and review of the Faculty's facilities,
- Meeting with students.

Based on the SER (pp. 67-68), the site visit and meetings, the Panel determined that the Faculty provides adequate support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

The Faculty, as a component of the University of Rijeka, within the University Counseling Center has an established Office for Disabled Students. The coordinator for

students with disabilities at the Faculty connects students with disabilities, teachers, Faculty staff and the Office for Disabled Students. This Office provides support in addressing specific student needs according to the type of disability and consistently monitors their needs. The Faculty also informs students about the institutions and associations closely related to the aforementioned issues.

The Office for Disabled Students provides teachers with the information on ways of adjusting teaching and examining to the needs of students with disabilities. According to document analysis, the Faculty and teachers adjust teaching processes to the individual needs of students from vulnerable and under-represented groups. Students who have some motor and visual difficulties are allowed a longer time to write their examinations. The Faculty ensures peer support for students with disabilities. Examples of good practice are also highlighted in the SER (pp. 67-68) and they were confirmed during the site visit. However, students in Zabok stated that they don't have the possibility of involving themselves in peer support projects and other related student activities.

Regarding resources to support students from vulnerable and under-represented groups, the Faculty has not invested in building ramps and elevators for students with motor difficulties due to conservation rules from the Ministry of Culture (as the main building is a 'Listed' building). However, at the moment the Faculty is building an annex which will be fully tailored to the needs of students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.

### Recommendations for improvement

- Encourage involvement of students in SC Zabok in peer support projects and other student-related activities.

### Quality grade

**High level of quality (conditional on the creation of the infrastructure to support disabled students in the new annex currently being built at Opatija)**

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

#### **Analysis**

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 68-70),
- Meeting with the Dean's office, meeting with the teaching staff and meeting with students,
- On-site document analysis.

According to the SER, the site visit and meetings, the Panel determined that the Faculty allows students to gain international experience, but with certain limitations. Students are continually informed, through social networks, about the possibilities of taking a part of their study abroad and via the Faculty's online pages, e-mail and information days at the Faculty. In addition to the information provided by the Faculty, students are regularly informed by the University of Rijeka (as a holder of the Erasmus Mobility Program), Mobility Agency and EU Projects and the Ministry of Science and Education.

Support is also provided to all students of the Faculty at the semester level when applying and implementing the exchange programme. Teachers and associates of the Faculty assist students in preparing the necessary documentation required for achieving mobility (admission to a foreign institution, selection of courses, etc.), and the students confirmed this during discussions. There is also an Erasmus Coordinator specializing in mobility issues within the Erasmus + programme, and a CEEPUS Coordinator providing special support to students who take part in the mobility within the CEEPUS programme.

The students of the Faculty have been granted the recognition of ECTS credits acquired at the other institution. Based on the document analysis, the Panel determined that a few ECTS credits gained at another higher education institution were not recognized, although selecting and recognizing a course at the Faculty is achieved prior to leaving for mobility.

The student satisfaction data of those involved in mobility programmes (Erasmus+ and CEEPUS) are collected through surveys performed by the programme holders. Students are required to complete the survey upon return and evaluate different aspects of the achieved mobility. For foreign students studying at the Faculty, this discussion is held within the framework of the 'Good-bye days' that takes place before their return to the home institution. Regarding competencies gained for the employment in an international environment, students stated in discussions that they

are not fully satisfied with the number of lectures given in a foreign language, as well as not being happy with the content of foreign language courses. Based on this feedback and documents supplied, the Panel felt that it is very important that students gain these competencies for employment in an international environment.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends improving procedures regarding the selection of courses and recognition of ECTS credits gained at another higher education institution.
- The Panel recommends conducting surveys among foreign students studying at the Faculty about the quality of the teaching process and different aspects of the achieved mobility.
- Provide more foreign language programmes aimed at improving communication skills of students and gained competencies.
- Increase the number of courses delivered in English with foreign lecturers at both the undergraduate and graduate level.

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 70-71),
- On-site document analysis,
- On-site interviews with foreign students.

According to the SER, the site visit and meeting with foreign students, the Panel determined that the Faculty ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students. However, certain areas raised concern and there is a need for improvement as detailed below.

The website of the international cooperation of the Faculty and the University of Rijeka provides foreign students with all the detailed information on the possibilities of enrollment and study at the Faculty. At the meeting with foreign students and document analysis, the Panel determined that information on the opportunities for enrolment and study is available in a foreign language.

The Faculty provides support to foreign students when applying and finding their way at a domestic higher education institution. The Student Office employee responsible for the coordination of foreign students provides all necessary information for enrolment at the Faculty at the moment of nomination of the home institution. The 'Buddy system' support is also provided to foreign students. Foreign students confirmed all the above mentioned activities of the Faculty and cited satisfaction with the services provided.

The Faculty collects feedback on satisfaction and needs of foreign students within the 'Good -bye day' event and before their return to the home institution. Based on the SER (p. 71), a pilot survey on students' satisfaction with the quality of the Faculty's support in the practical issues of student mobility was introduced, although examples of surveys and results were not provided during document analysis.

Foreign students are offered courses in foreign languages, primarily in English. According to the document analysis and feedback from foreign students regarding classes delivered in English, there is not a complete study programme in English and, overall, relatively few courses are delivered in English.

Croatian language courses are delivered for foreign students at the University level. Students confirmed in the meetings that they have the possibility to enrol in these, however, they were not interested in them, as they indicated.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- Conduct surveys on foreign students' satisfaction with the quality of the Faculty's support in the practical issues of student mobility on arrival and before their return to the home institution.
- Introduce a complete study programme in English, or at least increase the diversity of courses delivered in English at the Faculty.

### **Quality grade**

**Satisfactory level of quality**



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

#### **Analysis**

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 71-74),
- Acts and Regulations on Studies and Studying at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management,
- Meeting with the teaching staff and meetings with students,
- On-site document analysis.

Evaluation of student achievements is determined by the “Rulebook on Evaluation of students at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management”, which is compatible with the University of Rijeka’s Rulebook.

Before the beginning of the semester, the teachers prepare for each course a detailed course syllabus which they provide and present at the first lecture. The syllabus and detailed course syllabus for each study programme are publicly available on the web page of the Faculty and through the Lumens 5+ system. Based on the information from the SER (pp. 71-72), the site visit, and meetings with teaching staff and students, the Panel determined that the criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are clear and published before the beginning of a course. However, according to the overall grade structure for each course (mid-term and final exam making 78% of the grade for each course), the criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are not fully aligned with the teaching methods used.

The Faculty provides support to the teachers in the development of skills related to improving their teaching competencies, including testing and assessment methods. The teachers participated in workshops organized by the University of Rijeka, the Faculty and other institutions. However, according to the information from the SER and meetings with the teaching staff, the Panel was made aware of some shortcomings in teaching competencies.

Based on the SER and the document analysis, there was evidence that the Faculty carries out the evaluation of grading within the analysis of exam results. Student attitudes are also taken into account when evaluating presentations. Based on the results of the conducted analysis, the teachers adapt the teaching and evaluation methods. In discussions, students cited satisfaction with objectivity and reliability of grading.

According to the information from the meeting with students and document analysis, the Panel determined that the evaluation procedures are tailored to students who have special needs. Students stated that they have the possibility to use larger characters and numbers, can take more time for their written exams and consultation and exams for disabled students can take place in an appropriate location (i.e. on the ground floor of the main building in Opatija). Furthermore, students confirmed that they receive feedback on the results of written evaluation on the system Lumens5+ within two to three days after the exam. Students also cited that the teachers provide useful feedback on their work.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends revising and adapting methods for evaluation according to the nature of each course and intended learning outcomes.
- Methods for grading should be revised.
- Teaching competencies should be improved by increasing the number of organized workshops aimed at developing skills related to testing and assessment methods.

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 74),
- Act on Academic and Professional Titles and Academic Degree,
- Rulebook on the diploma form, certificate content and form, and the University of Rijeka's confirmation and certificate (consolidated text of 26 January 2015),
- The University of Rijeka's Decision on the recognition of extracurricular activities during which students acquire relevant competencies since February 24, 2015,
- On-site document analysis.

According to the information from the SER, and the examples of diplomas and diploma supplements provided, the Panel were assured that the Faculty issues appropriate documents that describe qualifications, achieved learning outcomes, as well as the level, content, and status of the studies.

The diploma content and diploma supplement is determined by the “Act on Academic and Professional Titles and Academic Degree”, the ‘Rulebook on the diploma form, certificate content and form, and the University of Rijeka’s confirmation and certificate’ (consolidated text of 26 January 2015) and ‘The University of Rijeka’s Decision on the recognition of extracurricular activities during which students acquire relevant competencies since February 24, 2015’.

Based on the document analysis, the Panel determined that the Faculty issues the Diploma Supplement in Croatian and English, free of charge.

#### Recommendations for improvement

No recommendations

#### Quality grade

**High level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 75-77),
- Meeting with the Alumni Association and meetings with students,
- On-site document analysis.

Based on the evidence gathered from the SER, the site visit, and meetings with alumni, the Panel obtained confirmation that the Faculty analyses the employability of its graduates. So far, two survey cycles have focused on monitoring the employability of the former Faculty students and included issues related to the status of the employed/unemployed, workplace compliance with acquired qualifications, time of employment after graduation and the desire for additional education in the area of their interest have been conducted. Furthermore, according to the document analysis, there was evidence that the Faculty aligned admission quotas with social and labour market needs and available resources.

In discussion with students, it was stated the Faculty informs prospective students about the opportunities to continue education or find employment after graduation on the Faculty’s web page. However, at interview students stated that the Faculty does not provide information about the employability of its former students. In planning future

careers, the Faculty provides support by consulting and linking students with practitioners.

In partnership with the Alumni Association, Career Days are organized to familiarize students with career opportunities. Future career planning tips are also provided by practitioners who are conducting guest lectures. Students' support in terms of planning their own career is also provided by a Career Office that operates at the University Counselling Center of the University of Rijeka. Students confirmed in the meeting that the Faculty regularly provides them with support regarding future career planning and indicated satisfaction with related procedures.

The Faculty maintains contacts with the former students. In 2010, the Faculty founded the "Association of Graduated Students of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management Alumni FMTU". The former students participate in numerous activities of the Faculty, such as Career Days, guest lectures, panel discussion, and conferences. Alumni members stated in the meeting that they were satisfied with the cooperation at the Faculty. The meeting with the alumni also revealed the lack of a formal method for providing feedback about their recommendations for improvement. In other words, although alumni members give out recommendations for improvement during meetings, the Management of the Faculty does not provide them with feedback about the implementation of their suggestions. The Panel feels that there is a need for a formal way of providing feedback to the alumni members about improvements at the Faculty.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- Establish an internal system for monitoring the employability of former students and providing access to this system to all undergraduate and graduate students.
- Provide undergraduate and graduate students with information about the employability of former students.
- Introduce a formal way of providing feedback to the alumni members about improvements at the Faculty.

### **Quality grade**

**Satisfactory level of quality**

## IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

### 4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp. 78-79),
- SER Percentage of courses delivered by teacher from the Faculty; Qualifications of teachers for the courses they teach (appointment to grade in an appropriate field),
- SER - Student-teacher ratio and alterations thereof over time,
- SER - Information on teacher workload,
- Tables 4.1a, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 from the MOZVAG database,
- On-site interviews.

There are 74 persons related to scientific and teaching activities at FMTU, (although this includes 24 assistants and post-doctoral students, who are not officially appointed as scientific grade/teaching grade staff). Of these, 47 are in a scientific-teaching position (6 are tenured, 15 are full professors, 11 are associate professors, 15 are assistant professors), 3 are in teaching (lecturers), and 13 are teaching assistants and there are 11 post-doctoral students. In addition, 14 external associates contribute to teaching.

In relation to the teachers' qualifications, the Panel observed that the required teaching and scientific qualifications are met, and that the structure, with regard to seniority, is appropriate. Teachers are obliged by law to do research, which they largely do (as discussed below in Assessment Area 5), and which should have a positive impact on teaching qualification. Teachers from the Faculty have won the award for teaching excellence at the University level twice. The documentary evidence and interviews with current full-time and part-time students and with alumni, indicated that the teachers' qualification and motivation were more than adequate.

*Table 3.1 in the Analytic supplement to the Self-evaluation report on page 2 shows the number of students per study programme for the current academic year.*

<b>Study programme name</b>	<b>Full-time students</b>	<b>Part-time students</b>
Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality; specialisations in: Tourism Management, Hotel Management (248)	396	421
Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality; specialisations in: Tourism Management, Hotel Management (249)	0	661
Business Economics in Tourism and Hospitality (253)	2	24
Medical Tourism (255)	0	9
Management of Sustainable Development (256)	7	50
Management of Sustainable Development (257)	121	119
Tourism Management (258)	45	62
Tourism Marketing (259)	36	24
Sustainable Tourism Development (260)	31	25
Hospitality Management (261)	26	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>1.414</b>

For Table 3.1, the Panel observed that teaching takes place mainly at the undergraduate level, and that most students are part-time. In comparison with the previous re-accreditation (in 2011), the total number of students (not including PhD students) has decreased by 28%, and the number of teachers has increased by 15%.

With respect to the number of teachers in relation to the number of students, the ratio of full-time equivalent teachers to the number of full-time equivalent students should not exceed 1:30, as stated by Article 6 of the 'Ordinance on the Content of Licence and Conditions for Issuing Licence Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-accreditation of Higher Education Institutions'. Based on the MOZVAG database, the Faculty's ratio is 1:29.17 which corresponds to 47 teachers (employees in scientific-teaching and teaching positions) and 1371 students (the total number of students enrolled in all study programmes). Hence, the Faculty complies with the prescribed conditions and the ratio of teachers and students is appropriate and ensures a high quality of study. Also, this ratio shows a declining trend in the last 5 years.

With respect to the data provided on teachers' workload, the Panel observed that workload varies significantly amongst the teachers. This can be explained to some extent by different levels of teaching obligations. However, more importantly, the data reflects a high workload in general and occasionally, even excessive workloads. Although in the SER is stated that individual derogations are of temporary nature and the consequence of a time gap between the retirement of one of the employees and the employment of a new staff member once the recruitment procedure is carried out, this condition remains inexplicable in view of the favourable student-teacher ratio.

A possible explanation seems to be that the definition of the workload figure refers to the offered courses and not to the courses actually conducted. Overall, the figures provided to the Expert Panel are not helpful for evaluating the actual workload in absolute terms. Moreover, it is not evident from the figures on total workload how they break down into different study levels and management positions. Table 4.3 in the Appendix to the SER is not only confusingly lengthy, but also of little use with respect to teachers' actual workload. However, during interviews with the teachers, the Panel were given comments suggesting that teaching workload is not excessive, but generally acceptable.

In summary, the Panel's impression is that teaching capacities of the Faculty are adequate. The ratio of students to full-time teachers ensures a high quality of study. Teachers' workload ensures appropriate distribution of teaching, scientific activities, professional and personal development and administrative duties. However, the data available for assessing and controlling capacities and workloads is insufficient.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The figures with respect to the number of teachers, the number of students and drop-outs, as well as teachers' workloads should be revised and broken down to study levels and programmes (including those delivered in Zabok), as at present it is not possible to thoroughly assess teaching capacities and workloads.

#### Quality grade

##### Satisfactory 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

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp79-81),

- Internal regulations prescribing the teacher recruitment procedure,
- Advertised teacher vacancies,
- An example of completed employment procedure (copy of job advertisements, composition of the selection committees, their reports and decisions),
- In addition, on-site interviews.

Teacher recruitment procedures followed by the Faculty arise from its development goals and appear to be at the level of national standards. For each year the “Plan of employment, promotion and other personal changes” is approved by the Councils at the Faculty and University levels. Also, the University Council gives approvals for public calls for job vacancies. The job vacancies are published in the Official gazette, daily press, Faculty web page and Euraxess portal.

In selecting, appointing and evaluating teachers, the Faculty considers their previous teaching and research activities. The methods for the selection of the best candidates for each position is appropriate. The evaluation and promotion of teachers into higher grades is well defined, clear and satisfactory. Indicators of excellence include scientific, teaching and professional work as well as contribution to the development of the Faculty. However, the Faculty does not apply any additional internal criteria for the promotion of teachers.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- Additional competitive criteria, that will reflect the strategic goals of the Faculty (for example, becoming the ‘leading player’ in the wider region), should be developed for the promotion of teachers into higher grades.
- While job offers are communicated through different channels, it seems appropriate in relation to the internationalisation goals of the Faculty to add some more targeted channels with European coverage.

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp 81-83),



- Examples of procedures of appointment and re-appointment to scientific/teaching grades,
- Regulations or procedures for assessing and rewarding teacher excellence,
- Strategic goals of the higher education institution,
- Information on the teachers' actual participation in teaching competencies development programmes (workshops, seminars),
- Information on the teachers' actual participation in international mobility programmes (study visits at foreign higher education institutions, etc.),
- Information on the use of sabbatical leave and teachers' rights thereof,
- Action plan for the promotion of the quality management system 2018-2021,
- Explanations in the SER,
- In addition, on-site interviews.

The SER provides evidence of professional training in the form of workshops and European projects with different aspects of academic teaching and mentoring excellence. It should be noted that the teachers also gain professional experience through the Faculty's numerous commercial (and volunteering) projects.

From the interviews, the Panel learned that the teaching competencies are being improved by considering student evaluation results and by peer review assessments. So far, nine teachers and associates have conducted a peer-teaching assessment, it was stated at interview. The so-called collaborative assessment is systematically provided through the "Action plan for the promotion of the quality management system" and introduced through a preparatory workshop. The Panel found these to be good practices. However, the Faculty should ensure that the application of the process is viewed as critically constructive and avoids detrimental effects on teachers' motivation.

The Panel feels that it is also very important to look at the Faculty's systematic support for teachers' research activities. From the SER and from interviews with the teachers, the Panel learned that the teaching workload is such that research is feasible. In attempts to increase scientific productivity, the Faculty undertakes a series of activities: rewarding papers in journals indexed in WOS and SCOPUS databases, teacher education in the field of research methods, financing of scientific projects and financing of conference attendance. While most conference costs are covered by third-party funds on a project-by-project basis, teachers praised the management's cooperation and flexibility in cases when third-party funding is insufficient.

In summary, the Panel's impression is that professional development of teachers at the Faculty is at a high level of quality.

### Recommendations for improvement

- The Faculty should further focus teachers' work inputs more on higher scientific achievements.
- To provide a fully comprehensive institutional support to the teachers in their attempts to become excellent in their scientific work, the Faculty needs to define conditions and procedures for the use of sabbatical leave and teachers' rights thereof.

### Quality grade

**High 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

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp 83-85),
- Examination of resources during the site visit,
- Information on space, equipment and infrastructure,
- Feedback from students and teachers on their satisfaction with special resources for study and student activities,
- Tables 4.8 and 4.9 from the MOZVAG database,
- Explanations in the SER,
- In addition, on-site interviews.

The Panel visited both infrastructure sites, where the Faculty's activities take place – in Opatija and in Zabok. The largest part of the teaching activity takes place in Opatija. Only part of the teaching activities takes place in Zabok. The total space capacity is 2839 m<sup>2</sup> (1,36 m<sup>2</sup> per student), which is adequate and above the regulated minimal standards. The space, equipment and infrastructure in general are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes. During site-visits, the Panel found clean and adequately

equipped classrooms, offices and libraries. However, the Panel found working conditions were less favourable in Zabok.

From the interviews, the Panel learned that despite less favourable spatial conditions in Zabok, students are satisfied with the premises and they appreciate the opportunity to study at the Faculty located in the Zagreb area.

One of the main strategic goals of the Faculty for the period up to 2020 is to provide adequate and high quality, spatial conditions for teaching, scientific and professional activities. At the site visit in Opatija, the Panel observed the Faculty has started the construction of a new Faculty building (the building's annexe). From the interviews and the SER, the Panel learned that the renovation of the current building will considerably improve the premises, equipment and the entire infrastructure for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific and professional activities.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The Faculty should plan the quality improvement of premises, equipment and infrastructure in SC Zabok.

#### 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 high-quality study, research and teaching.**

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- The SER (pp 86-88),
- Review of library resources during the site visit,
- Availability of up-to-date teaching materials via protected website,
- Subscriptions to appropriate bibliographic databases and databases with full-text access,
- Availability of the network library catalogue of the HEI,
- The number of archived final, graduate, specialist, and PhD theses in the institutional repository,
- The number of copies of required reading, relative to the number of enrolled students,

- Table 4.10 from the MOZVAG database,
- Interviews with students who provided feedback regarding the availability of the library and the availability of the literature (including remote access).

The Faculty has its own library that provides materials specific to the area of specialization, primarily in the field of tourism, and for all levels of study. The library has 24,758 volumes of books, including 4,224 copies of compulsory literature, with 300 of these being different titles, hence averaging 14 copies per title. The library is open from Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Library in SC Zabok works on Mondays 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., and from Tuesday to Friday 3 p.m. - 8 p.m. Also, the Library provides users through its Online Database Centre with large bibliographic and database services. Through the integrated library system of the University of Rijeka, it has access to the catalogues of all the libraries of the University and the databases of the electronic journals with full texts.

While the small Library at Opatija gave the impression of being functional and well-organized, teachers expressed their wish for a broader and timely access to international journals. From the students, the Panel learned that they do not often go to the library because they feel that the materials provided through the online database centre are sufficient.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommend that a question about students' satisfaction with the Library and Library services should be included in the yearly quality assessment.

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence gathered for this Standard was as follows:

- Data on income and expenditures,
- Data on sustainability and transparency of funding,
- Rationale for distribution of funds from subsidies and tuition fees,
- Regulations or decisions on the manner of use of own or dedicated funds,
- Explanations in the SER.

In addition, evidence was gathered in Tables 4.11 and 4.12 from the MOZVAG database and at interview.

The Faculty is mainly state-funded, as approximately two thirds of its income (approximately 19.5m kunas out of a total income of approximately 30.5m kunas) comes from the state or the University, and the rest is earned by the Faculty itself. This income is mainly spent on salaries and the necessary material costs. The State funds are not sufficient to cover scientific work. The rest of the income comes essentially from tuition fees (70%), sales of services (17%) and from third-party funds, which are the EU projects.

Current construction and main building re-construction costs will be partly financed by the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education (47%), while the remaining amount will be financed by the Faculty's funds and by the University of Rijeka's funds.

Income and expenses are planned by the Faculty primarily for just the next year. The most important financial threats to the Faculty are potentially increased costs of construction and the possible decline in tuition fees. Even if this happened, the Panel are aware that as the Faculty is state-funded, any deficit would (and should be) financed by the University or the state.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- The Panel recommend very close monitoring of future income and expenses and performing cost-volume-profit analysis with respect to the number of different types of students, to maintain and even increase the accrued surplus.
- There is a threat in relation to future development of the Faculty, because of a lack of sufficient funds for scientific work and therefore the Panel recommends more funds should be raised through projects and market-related activities.
- Income and expenses should be planned for the next 5 years.

#### **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

Evidence that the higher education institution and its teachers and associates are committed to high quality and quantity of scientific research was provided via the SER as follows:

- The SER (Section 5.1., pp. 89-91),
- The “Appendix to the SER” (Table 5.1., p. 77),
- The Faculty’s CROSBİ profile (Croatian Scientific Bibliography, assessed via the link provided in Table 5.1. of the Appendix to the SER).

Additionally, evidence was gathered from supplementary material provided by the Faculty (5.1.1. “List of publications of Faculty teachers and associates”), and from interviews conducted with the Dean, the Vice Dean of Scientific and Professional Activities, the teaching assistants, and, in particular, from interviews with the Heads of research projects.

Based on Table 5.1. of the Appendix to the SER, members of the Faculty have published 191 publications of the highest category according to the “Appointment to Scientific Grades”, over the last five years to 2018. Of these, 57 publications were the result of collaboration with other HEIs and scientific organisations. Overall, this amounts to 0.76 publications per teacher, per year over the past five years. In addition, the HEI has published 323 other publications according to the “Ordinance on Appointment to Scientific Grades”. Of these, 53 were the result of collaboration with other institutions. Overall, other publications amount to 1.29 per teacher per year over the past five years. In this same period, members of the Faculty have further published 244 peer-reviewed papers in conference proceedings, 27 professional papers and 39 book chapters. Faculty members hold editorships of 5 books, and authorship of 8 books published in Croatia. However, they have not been authors of any book published overseas. Over the past five years, the Faculty’s publications have been cited 492 times in the SCOPUS database (286 times in the WOS), whereas the institution’s *h*-index is 12 in SCOPUS and 9 in WOS.

Additional evidence provided by the Vice Dean for Scientific and Professional Activities showed that there has been considerable improvement with regard to both quality and quantity of publications over the past five years. This is in line with the key objectives

of the Faculty's Strategy of scientific research (Goals 1-3). The list of individual publications of the Faculty teachers and associates and the Faculty's CROSBİ profile revealed, however, that there are relatively few publications that could be described as 'high quality', in terms of traditional metrics, such as the Journal Impact Factor (JIF).

Based on information provided in the SER (p. 89), over the past five years the Faculty members have published only 3 articles in journals from the 1<sup>st</sup> quartile according to the WOS database, and overall 6 articles in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile journals according to the WOS database. Divided by the number of teachers and associates (71.1), this yields only 0.008 Q1-WOS publications per teacher/associate per year over the past five years (0.017 Q1/Q2-WOS publications). This is very far away from the goal set within the institution's vision statement, according to which the Faculty aims to be the leader of tourism-related scientific research in Croatia and the wider region (SER p.1). Recognizing that tourism is an interdisciplinary area of study which covers or is part of many other disciplines, it is striking that only one article has been published in a major tourism or hospitality journal during the past five years (i.e. "Current Issues in Tourism").

In an attempt to stimulate publications in higher quality research outlets, the institution has set up a financial incentives system in 2013. In particular, Faculty members are awarded a fixed amount of money for each article published in a journal which is indexed in one of the following databases: WOS, Current Contents database (CC), or SCOPUS (according to the Vice Dean of Scientific and Professional Activities, the reward is 3000 HRK per paper). This incentives system can be regarded as evidence of dedication to achieving both a higher quantity and quality of research. In order to channel research efforts towards higher quality or top-rated journals, the incentives system would benefit from being revised. With many journals entering the WOS Core Collection during the past few years, via the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), incentives should be more competitive rather than based on a 'fixed prize for all' (e.g. a set of incentives based on quartiles or the JIF).

General dedication to quality research is also reflected by improvements made to the Faculty's PhD programme, following the recommendations from the previous assessment by ASHE in 2017.

As stated in the SER, the Faculty strongly encourages its members to participate in international conferences, especially in those whose proceedings are indexed in relevant databases. This has yielded the publication of 244 papers at domestic and international scientific conferences over the past five years (SER p. 91). The opportunity for such kind of publications is provided by two biannual conferences

organized by the Faculty itself—i.e. ToSEE and THI. The proceedings of the ToSEE conference are included in the WOS Conference Proceedings Citation Index (CPCI), making the conference attractive for international and domestic participants.

### Recommendations for improvement

- Future evaluations of the Faculty's progress, with regard to scientific publishing, could be simplified and enhanced by providing annual data for the evaluation period in the SER. In doing so, separate data should be provided for SCOPUS and for WOS. Separate data should also be provided for journal articles and for conference papers.
- The Faculty should check their publication lists for correctness and consistency. For example, the publication list provided as supplementary material during the on-site visit (Document 5.1.1) contained many mistakes. Most mistakes were related to wrong classification of articles (e.g. listed as Q1/Q2 articles, whereas the journal is neither indexed in the WOS, nor SCOPUS). These lists are likely to be the result of self-assessments of the Faculty's individual members, whereas the source of errors is likely the fact that there is no additional check of whether provided data is correct.
- The Faculty should define key field journals in its areas of research and teaching (i.e. tourism and hospitality) based on journal prestige and traditional metrics like the JIF. For example, the Faculty may use the Clarivate Analytics Journal Citation Reports for the respective subject category (i.e. Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism) and rank relevant journals. Subsequently, the Faculty should encourage and stimulate publishing in defined top field-related journals, especially those from Q1 and Q2 according to JIF.
- The Faculty should seek means and instruments of encouraging and stimulating those researchers who have proven to be internationally-oriented and productive in their research in terms of journal and book publications. Potential measures could be financial support, reduced teaching loads, support by research assistants, conference funding or public recognition and awards.
- Since journals have a significantly wider reach and scientific relevance than conference proceedings, far more emphasis should be put on journal articles rather than conference papers, in order to gain better international visibility of both the Faculty and its individual members.
- The Faculty should encourage the publication of books with international publishers in order to gain better international visibility.

### Quality grade

**Minimum 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**

Evidence for the social relevance of the Faculty's research and transfer of knowledge was provided as follows:

- The SER (Section 5.2., pp. 91-92),
- Annexes to the SER (Annexes 1 and 2, pp. 98-104),
- The Analytic supplement to the SER (Table 5.1., p. 77; Table 5.3.a, pp. 79-81; Table 5.3.b, pp. 82-86),
- Supplementary material provided by the Faculty during the site visit, and
- Interviews conducted with the Vice Dean for Business Cooperation, the Vice Dean for International Affairs, the Vice Dean of Scientific and Professional Activities and with the Faculty's alumni.

According to Table 5.1 of the Analytic supplement to the SER, members of the Faculty have published 27 professional papers over the past five years, which amounts to 0.11 professional papers, per teacher, per year. Furthermore, the Faculty has been involved (or is still involved) in 46 professional/commercial projects over the assessment period, which may be regarded as a better indicator of the public and societal relevance of the Faculty's research. This is because publishing activities of HEIs, generally are traditionally more directed towards scientific research outlets. Over the period of five years, this amounts to 0.18 professional projects per teacher per year.

The number and scope of these professional projects (Table 5.3.b of the Analytic Supplement to the Self-evaluation report, pp. 82-86) provide evidence that the Faculty is truly an active partner in the economic trends of its county and beyond, especially if one considers the importance of the tourism sector in Croatia's overall economy. The Faculty has signed cooperation agreements with key national tourism organisations and companies, especially with those from the hospitality sector which are also partners in the Faculty's internship programme. This cooperation with the industry takes place on multiple levels (e.g. collaborative research projects, guest lectures, and internship partnerships) which creates strong synergy. The Faculty is one of the founders of the 'Kvarner Health Tourism Cluster', and the 'Health Tourism Cluster of the Krapina-Zagorje County', where its non-local study centre, Zabok is located. Faculty staff are also members of various administrative, executive, supervisory and other bodies (Annex 1 to the SER, pp. 98-99) and they have participated in 81 public presentations, panel discussions and other activities of science popularisation over the past five years (Annex 2 to the SER, pp. 100-104).

The Faculty has established a Center for the EU Projects for technical and administrative project support. Due to space constraints, the centre is currently operating only virtually.

With regard to the Faculty's scientific projects (Table 5.3.a of the Analytic supplement, pp. 79-81), their scope seems again to give evidence of societal relevance and alignment with industry trends. Except for one project funded by the Croatian Science Foundation, all projects are financed via the internal line of financial support to research projects at the level of the University of Rijeka.

#### Recommendations for improvement

- Upon completion of the annexe to the main building, the Faculty should consider ways to devise some space for the EU project center.

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory 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

Evidence that the scientific and professional achievements of the Faculty are recognized nationally and internationally was provided as follows:

- The SER (Section 5.3., pp. 92-93),
- The Appendix to the SER (Tables 5.3.a and 5.3.b, pp. 79-86, Table 5.4, pp. 87-88, Table 5.5, pp. 89-91),
- Supplementary material provided by the Faculty during the site visit (Document 5.3.1. List of recognition and awards granted to Faculty teachers and associates), and
- Interviews conducted during the site visit.

As outlined in the SER (p. 92), Faculty teachers and associates have received three awards at the national level and eight awards at the international level over the past five years. As listed in the supplementary document 5.3.1, which was made available during the site visit, among the international awards there are, for example, best conference track awards. However, these can only be considered as relatively minor awards.

Tables 5.3.a and 5.3.b of the 'Analytic Supplement to the SER', provide evidence that the Faculty is a holder of an adequate number of professional projects at the national

and international level. In particular, the number of professional EU projects, in which the Faculty is involved, is something the Faculty is (and should be) proud of.

Nevertheless, the Faculty does not hold a sufficient number of competitive scientific projects at the national and international level. As has already been stressed above, except for one project funded by the Croatian Science Foundation which was completed in May 2018, all scientific projects the Faculty has held or participated in over the past five years, are financed via the internal line of financial support to research projects at the level of the University of Rijeka. This is not entirely a negative comment, as these 'mini-grants' can clearly provide great opportunities for early-career researchers, but all of these projects have only small budgets (up to HRK 20,000 per project). Hence it can be stated in summary, that the Faculty is a holder of several small projects at the University level, whereas it is holder of only one scientific project at the national level.

National and regional recognition of the Faculty's members and their work is reflected by a number of invited lectures at national and international meetings over the past five years (13 and 24, respectively). Faculty members participated in the realisation of several conferences as members of the program committee (27) or scientific committee (30). Faculty members are active on the editorial boards of 27 journals. Four of these journals are indexed in the WOS and another five in SCOPUS. Also, Faculty members hold the Editor-in-chief (EIC) position in three journals, one of them being the Faculty's own journal *Tourism and Hospitality Management* which has recently been included in the WOS Core Collection (ESCI) (NB the SER states that the Faculty members are EIC in four journals on p.93, but two journals are in fact the same).

### Recommendations for improvement

- The Faculty is strong with regard to both national and international professional projects, whereas the Faculty is weak regarding scientific projects at both national and international level. The Panel therefore recommends strongly that the Faculty seeks publication opportunities in highly ranked journals by making more use of their professional research. Several journals (e.g. the "Journal of Destination Marketing and Management", or the "Journal of Sustainable Tourism") are currently offering opportunities for high-quality case studies and professional papers with a strong practical focus and implications.
- To increase the Faculty's visibility at the international level, it is recommended to keep close ties with international researchers with whom the Faculty members have collaborated to date, and to develop new contacts which could result with collaborative research projects and publications at an international level. The

ToSEE conference and the Faculty's journal THM would provide good platforms for this.

- The Panel recommends that the Faculty provides strong institutional support to applicants who apply and conduct competitive research projects at the national and international level (e.g. adequate space, administrative support, adequate teaching loads, etc.).

#### Quality grade

**Satisfactory level of quality.**

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

#### Analysis

Evidence that the scientific activity of the Faculty is both sustainable and developmental was provided as follows:

- The SER (Section 5.4., pp. 94-95),
- Analytic supplement to the SER (Table 4.4. – Teachers in study programmes with individual number of papers and citations over the past five years, Tables 4.11 and 4.12 Financial evaluation – Income and Expenses, Table 5.1 – Bibliography in the past five years and Table 5.3.a – Scientific projects in the past five years,
- The Faculty's Strategy of Scientific Research, other supplementary material provided by the Faculty during the site visit (document 5.4.2 – Report on progress regarding fulfilment of Strategy of Scientific Research),
- Interviews.

The Faculty has established a "2020" scientific research strategy in 2017 which is aligned with its general Development Strategy (2015-2020), in particular its vision and mission, and the higher-order Development Strategy of the University of Rijeka. This strategic document has been made publicly available and can be easily accessed on the Faculty's website under the category *Science and Research*. Overall, the Faculty's scientific research strategy has fourteen objectives.

As has been stated above, the Faculty currently falls short with regard to several key objectives (e.g. 1 - international visibility of researchers and inclusion into the European research area; 2 – internationalization of scientific research; 3 – excellence in scientific research), whereas it performs adequately with regard to several of the other objectives.

With regard to resources for scientific activities, the Faculty provides an adequate infrastructure for research activities, although there is currently a shortage of office space. With completion of the annexe to the main building, which is planned during 2019, this situation should improve. The library's offering covers many contemporary book titles and hardcopies of some of the major tourism and hospitality journals. Besides access to databases provided by the Ministry of Science and Education, the Faculty further finances subscriptions to two relevant databases (i.e. 'Tourism & Hospitality Complete' and MINTEL analyst).

Based on a special decision, the Faculty provides financial incentives to authors of articles published in journals indexed in the WOSCC or SCOPUS. Given the relatively low wages, especially those of the younger faculty members, this can be regarded as a positive measure, but which could nevertheless be improved.

According to the financial evaluation (Table 4.11 of the 'Analytic supplement to the SER', p. 74), income from scientific projects has doubled between 2016 and 2017 but made up only 3.8% of overall 'own activity' income, and only 0.5% of the Faculty's total operating income, and this is a very low figure.

With regard to the key element of scientific activity, i.e. the human resources, Table 4.4 of the 'Analytic supplements' reveals a rather uneven distribution of both the number of papers and the number of citations in Google Scholar among the Faculty's teachers. There are very few teachers that stand out with regard to the number of citations, while there are many of them with a very low number of citations. A significant proportion of the latter category of teachers is made up of tenured full professors. In terms of sustainability of scientific activity, this is certainly not good, as it means that there is a strong dependence on only a very few individuals.

### Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends that the Faculty should be more ambitious in terms of research excellence since it is in a very favourable position which it has not yet fully exploited. This favourable position relates to the fact that tourism is one of the few parts of the Croatian economy which is constantly developing, as opposed to most of the rest of the Croatian economy, and that the Faculty's focus is precisely on this part of the Croatian economy. Not only is this so, but the Faculty also holds close ties with the tourism industry. This should give the Faculty a comparative advantage over many other HEIs from the wider field of social sciences with regard to both publishing opportunities and attracting research grants.
- Income from scientific research projects is very low and needs to be increased.

- The incentives/award scheme should be revised in a way that it becomes more competitive and stimulates publishing in higher-impact journals, rather than treating all WOS/SCOPUS journals in the same way.
- Citation data from WOS or SCOPUS for individual teachers should be provided in future reports.

### Quality grade

**Minimum level of quality.**

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

### Analysis

Evidence that the scientific and professional activities of the Faculty improve its teaching process was provided as follows:

- The SER (Section 5.5., p. 96),
- Supplementary material provided by the Faculty during the site visit (document 5.5.2 – List of undergraduate, graduate and doctoral theses which resulted from a research project of the Faculty; document 5.5.3 – List of research and professional papers co-authored by students; document 5.5.5 – Example of a research project led by students),
- Interviews conducted during the site visit.

As stated in the SER on p. 96, over the past five years Faculty teachers have published 64 papers co-authored by undergraduate and graduate students, and 134 papers co-authored by doctoral students. The Faculty has further established a special programme to finance research projects led exclusively by students. So far, one grant has been given to students (the programme was introduced in 2017/2018). Based on interviews conducted with the research and teaching assistants, the teachers, and the Faculty's alumni, there is evidence that both scientific and professional research results are used to enhance the teaching process.

### Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends increasing the funding for student-led projects.
- Consideration should be given to targeting higher impact journals for co-authored papers.

### 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	

<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<i>I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.			X	
1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.			X	
1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.				X
1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, 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



<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<i>II. Study programmes</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the 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	

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

<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.			X	
4.2. 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	

<i>Quality grade by standard</i>				
<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 Fakulteta za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu Sveučilišta u Rijeci / Re-accreditation of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management University of Rijeka**

## **PROTOKOL POSJETA/VISIT PROTOCOL**

**Reakreditacija  
Fakulteta za menadžment u turizmu i  
ugostiteljstvu  
Sveučilišta u Rijeci**

**Re-accreditation of the  
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality  
Management  
University of Rijeka**

### ***Edukacija Stručnog povjerenstva***

### ***Training of Panel members***

*Mjesto događanja:*

**Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje  
Donje Svetice 38/V, Zagreb**

*Venue:*

**Agency for Science and Higher Education  
Donje Svetice 38/V, Zagreb**

	<b>Ponedjeljak, 19. studenog 2018.</b>	<b>Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>
<b>9:00 – 11:30</b>	Edukacija članova Stručnog povjerenstva (kratko predstavljanje rada Agencije, upoznavanje sa sustavom visokog obrazovanja u Hrvatskoj, upoznavanje s Postupkom reakreditacije, Standardima za vrednovanje kvalitete i načinom pisanja završnog izvješća)	Training for the expert panel members (short presentation of ASHE, introduction to the higher education system in Croatia, introduction to the re-accreditation procedure, standards for the evaluation of quality and writing the final report)
<b>11:30 – 11:45</b>	Pauza za kavu	Coffee break
<b>11:45 – 13:15</b>	Priprema Stručnog povjerenstva za posjet Fakultetu za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu Sveučilišta u Rijeci (rad na Samoanalizi) Pitanja za posjet	Preparation of the expert panel members for the site visit (working on the Self-evaluation) Questions for the site visit
<b>13:15 – 14:15</b>	Radni ručak	Working Lunch

**Reakreditacija  
Fakulteta za menadžment u turizmu i  
ugostiteljstvu  
Sveučilišta u Rijeci**

**Re-accreditation of the  
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality  
Management  
University of Rijeka**

## **PROTOKOL POSJETA**

*Mjesto događanja:*

***Prilaz dr. Franje Tuđmana 15  
49210 Zabok***

## **VISIT PROTOCOL**

*Venue:*

***Prilaz dr. Franje Tuđmana 15  
49210 Zabok***

	<b>Ponedjeljak, 19. studenog 2018.</b>	<b>Monday, 19th November 2018</b>
<b>15:30 – 16:30</b>	Sastanak sa studentima (otvoreni sastanak za studente preddiplomskog sveučilišnog studija Poslovna ekonomija u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu – smjerovi: Menadžment u turizmu i Menadžment u hotelijerstvu – SC Zabok)	Meeting with the students (open meeting for the students of Business Economy in Tourism and Hospitality – Study modules: Tourism Management and Hotel Management – SC Zabok)
<b>16:30 – 17:00</b>	Obilazak Fakulteta za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu (knjižnica, uredi studentskih službi, informatička služba i učionice)	Tour of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (library, student services, IT services, classrooms)

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**ugostiteljstvu**  
**Sveučilišta u Rijeci**

**Re-accreditation of the**  
**Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality**  
**Management**  
**University of Rijeka**

## **PROTOKOL POSJETA**

*Mjesto događanja:*

**Primorska 42, p.p. 97**  
**51410 Opatija**

## **VISIT PROTOCOL**

*Venue:*

**Primorska 42, p.p. 97**  
**51410 Opatija**

	<b>Utorak, 20. studenog 2018.</b>	<b>Tuesday, 20th November 2018</b>
<b>09:00 – 10:00</b>	Sastanak s dekanom, prodekanima i tajnikom	Meeting with the dean, vice deans and secretary
<b>10:00 – 11:30</b>	<i>Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (analiza dokumenata)</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)</i>
<b>11:30 – 12:15</b>	Sastanak s radnom grupom koja je priredila Samoanalizu (voditelji tema unutar Samoanalize), pomoćnikom dekana za kvalitetu i ECTS koordinatorom	Meeting with the working group that compiled the Self-Evaluation (leaders of the working groups), dean's assistant for Quality Assurance and ECTS coordinator
<b>12:15 – 13:15</b>	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch</i>
<b>13:15 – 14:15</b>	Sastanak sa studentima (otvoreni sastanak za sve studente)	Meeting with the students (open meeting for all students)
<b>14:15 – 15:00</b>	Sastanak s alumnima	Meeting with the alumni
<b>15:00 – 15:45</b>	Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima – predstavnici strukovnih i profesionalnih udruženja, poslovne zajednice, poslodavaca, organizacija civilnog društva, stručnjaci iz prakse i vanjski predavači	Meeting with external stakeholders - representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, non-governmental organisations, professional experts, external lecturers
<b>15:45 – 16:30</b>	Dodatni sastanak o mogućim otvorenim pitanjima (prema potrebi)	Additional meeting on potential open questions (if needed)
<b>17:30 – 19:30</b>	Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva – refleksija o viđenom i priprema za idući dan posjeta	Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit

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Fakulteta za menadžment u turizmu i  
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Sveučilišta u Rijeci**

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Management  
University of Rijeka**

## **PROTOKOL POSJETA**

*Mjesto događanja:*

**Primorska 42, p.p. 97  
51410 Opatija**

## **VISIT PROTOCOL**

*Venue:*

**Primorska 42, p.p. 97  
51410 Opatija**

	<b>Srijeda, 21. studenog 2018.</b>	<b>Wednesday, 21<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	<i>Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (analiza dokumenata)</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)</i>
<b>10:30 – 11:15</b>	Sastanak s prodekanom za nastavu	Meeting with the vice dean for education
<b>11:15 – 12:00</b>	Sastanak s voditeljima studija	Meeting with the heads of the study programme
<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch</i>
<b>13:00 – 14:30</b>	Obilazak Fakulteta za menadžment u turizmu i ugostiteljstvu (knjižnica, uredi studentskih službi, ured međunarodne suradnje, informatička služba i učionice) i prisustvovanje nastavi	Tour of the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (library, student services, international office, IT services, classrooms) and participation in teaching classes
<b>14:30 – 15:15</b>	Sastanak s nastavnicima u stalnom radnom odnosu (osim onih na rukovodećim mjestima)	Meeting with full-time teaching staff (members of the management are excluded)
<b>15:15 – 16:00</b>	Dodatni sastanak o mogućim otvorenim pitanjima (prema potrebi)	Additional meeting on open questions (if needed)
<b>17:00 – 19:00</b>	Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva – refleksija o viđenom i priprema za idući dan posjeta	Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit



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**University of Rijeka**

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**51410 Opatija**

## **VISIT PROTOCOL**

*Venue:*

**Primorska 42, p.p. 97**  
**51410 Opatija**

	<b>Četvrtak, 22. studenog 2018.</b>	<b>Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018</b>
<b>09:00 – 10:30</b>	<i>Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (analiza dokumenata)</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)</i>
<b>10:30 – 11:15</b>	Sastanak s prodekanom za znanstvenu i stručnu djelatnost	Meeting with the vice dean for science and professional activities
<b>11:15 – 12:00</b>	Sastanak s voditeljima znanstvenih projekata	Meeting with the heads of research projects
<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch</i>
<b>13:00 – 13:45</b>	Sastanak s asistentima	Meeting with teaching assistants
<b>14:45 – 15:15</b>	Sastanak s prodekanom za poslovne odnose i prodekanom za međunarodnu suradnju	Meeting with the vice-dean for business cooperation and the vice-dean for international affairs
<b>15:15 – 15:45</b>	<i>Interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members</i>
<b>15:45 – 16:05</b>	Završni sastanak s dekanom, prodekanima i tajnikom	Exit meeting with the dean, vice deans and secretary
<b>17:00 – 19:00</b>	Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva – izrada nacrtu završnog izvješća i rad na dokumentu Standardi za vrednovanje kvalitete	Joint meeting of the expert panel members – Drafting the final report and working on the document Standards for the evaluation of quality

	Petak, 23. studenog 2018.	Friday, 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2018
<b>09:00 – 13:00</b>	Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva – izrada nacrtu završnog izvješća	Drafting the final report
<b>13:30</b>	Radni ručak	Working Lunch

**Odlazak recenzenata iz Opatije/Departure of Panel Members from Opatije**

## SUMMARY

The Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management of the University of Rijeka comprises a mainly young and highly motivated team. A very large proportion of the staff are female, including almost all senior managers, and they are generally aware of the positive aspects of the Faculty, and also the issues they are currently facing. The Expert Panel believes that staff are committed to the Faculty's and University's strategy and wish to put this into action effectively and efficiently. Internal quality assurance is well understood and implemented and of a satisfactory standard. The Faculty has adopted a quality assurance policy, which is in line with the University policy and strategy, and it systematically collects and analyses data on its processes, resources and results, and uses them to effectively manage and improve activities. The Faculty publishes the data, but it is not always as clear or accurate as it should be and must in future be made more consistent. Nevertheless, the Faculty also uses mechanisms for preventing unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination. Documents and on-site interviews revealed that the Faculty has responded positively to recent internal and external evaluations. Based on several different sources, the Panel is convinced that the Faculty is strongly committed to its social role and makes significant contributions to the development of the local community.

The Faculty has interesting, varied and relevant courses and study programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. However, although there are formal legal barriers at both the national and University level to the modification of programmes, there appears to be very inconsistent understanding and implementation of learning outcomes, with some staff using them appropriately in course design and related assignments, whilst other staff appear to make little use of them. This situation has arisen, despite the fact, that learning outcomes have been a requirement for several years in HEIs in Croatia. This issue is recognised by the Faculty management, and one senior manager at interview, actually asked the panel for advice on implementing the learning outcomes. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the Faculty organises training courses for staff to harmonize the number of learning outcomes, their alignment across all programmes and between different courses and their link to assessment (with inducements for staff to attend such courses and appropriate sanctions for those staff who do not comply). During the site visit, it was confirmed that the Faculty ensures adequate student support at all levels. There are good formal procedures for dealing with student issues and the students themselves reported at interview that staff are approachable and deal with many issues on an informal basis. The Faculty ensures support for vulnerable students, including those with disabilities. The protected status of the main building means that access for disabled student is currently not easy, but the new annexe when built, should mean this is no longer a

problem. The Faculty has also implemented a 'buddy system' in relation to foreign students and is to be commended for this. It is also to be commended for its use of Turnitin with all students.

The teaching staff are generally well qualified and motivated. They appear loyal and helpful; the same holds true for the non-teaching staff. Until just a few years ago, the student to staff ratio was very high, but this has been significantly reduced recently and should benefit students. However, the Panel noted that some staff (including the Dean) still have very heavy workloads. In relation to this situation, the Panel were also made aware during the site visit that overtime payments are made. The library is generally good, but according to staff and students is under-used, with students preferring to access material remotely on-line. The Faculty is involved in a large number of funded projects. However, almost all of these involve small amounts of financial support, which comes mostly from the Faculty or the University itself and are local/regional community-based projects. There are a significant number of scientific publications, and many of these are concerned with the community-based projects in which the Faculty is involved. However, the scientific productivity in relation to publications in high impact tourism (and related) journals is very low. The Panel therefore recommends that the Faculty must prioritise targeting quality, high impact tourism and hospitality journals, if it is to achieve its mission statement of being the top-rated HEI in Croatia for tourism and hospitality.

Many of the comments above in relation to quality assurance, study programmes, students, teachers and scientific work apply equally to the Faculty's campus at Zabok. Nevertheless, the state of buildings, facilities and teaching resources, especially IT equipment, is not as good in Zabok as Opatija, and the Panel recommends these should be improved as soon as possible. However, overall, the Panel believes that the Faculty currently meets all requirements, on at least a satisfactory level of quality, and has provided the necessary evidence to support this.