

May, 2013

## COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT PANEL FOR CARRYING OUT RE-ACCREDITATION OF THE EFFECTUS – UNIVERSITY COLLEGE FOR LAW AND FINANCE

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#### INTRODUCTION

## Short description of the evaluated institution

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: EFFECTUS – University College for Law and Finance

ADDRESS: J. F. Kennedy Square 2, Zagreb

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Robert Kopal, PhD, College Professor

#### ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:

For the purpose of organising, coordinating and performing of academic, scientific and professional activities, as well as of business operations management and with a view to provide supporting platform for the performance of regular activities at the college EFFECTUS, two interconnected subsystems have been established and organised: the academic teaching subsystem and business administrative subsystem.

EFFECTUS academic teaching subsystem is responsible for: quality control and all activities of the teaching organisation and direct teaching, the development of new and improvement of existing studies and other aspects of education within the framework of EFFECTUS regular operation, the development of publishing, professional and scientific activity in the field of research and development with special emphasis on the teaching process. Management of the academic teaching subsystem falls within the jurisdiction of the Dean, Vice-dean, College Board and departments.

The business administrative subsystem of EFFECTUS encompasses all common administrative tasks within the scope of EFFECTUS's operating activities. These include administrative and logistics support, procurement, accounting and finance, legal affairs, and pertaining business organisational processes that ensure and foster the effective performance of EFFECTUS on the market as well as high quality academic teaching. The business administrative subsystem is managed by the Dean receiving assistance from appropriate business administrative support services. Executive and implementation activities are performed by managers of organisational units according to the needs of the subsystem organisational structure.

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES:

• Professional study programme Finance and Law (the programme lasts three years and

has 180 ECTS credits)

• Specialist graduate professional study programme Financial Management (the

programme lasts two years and has 120 ECTS credits)

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:

219 = total number of students

(Data obtained during the meeting with the Management)

NUMBER OF TEACHERS:

8 full-time (thereof 2 College Professors), 32 external associates (thereof 7 College Professors)

(Data from the Table 4.1. Staff Structure of the Self-Evaluation Report)

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS:

2 full-time employees with a PhD degree (data from the Table 4.3. List of teachers of the Self-

**Evaluation Report)** 

TOTAL BUDGET (in kunas): In calendar year 2011 = 1.819.294,00kn

MSES FUNDING: /

OWN FUNDING: 100%

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#### SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

The EFFECTUS – University College for Law and Finance was founded on 17th January 2008 by three legal entities and one natural person. In May 2008, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports issued the EFFECTUS a licence for performing higher education activity and carrying out two study programmes – professional study of Finance and Law, and specialist graduate professional study programme of Financial Management. In autumn 2010, the first generation of students at EFFECTUS – University College for Law and Finance enrolled onto the first year of the professional study and the first year of the specialist graduate study. In the first academic year (2010/2011) chaired by the Temporary Dean Ivan Idžojtić, M.Sc., operation of the College was marked with efforts made to ensure basic requirements necessary to organise the studies, enrolment procedures for the first generation of students and ensuring basic conditions for teaching.

In October 2011, the EFFECTUS – University College for Law and Finance College Board proposed, and the Administrative Committee confirmed the appointment of the new head of the institution, Robert Kopal, Ph.D., who was mandated for a 4-year term.

During the first two years EFFECTUS operated at Savska 66, Zagreb. All lease contracts with tenants were terminated in autumn 2012. Adequate premises were found at the present location, J. F. Kennedy Square 2, and the lectures started on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2012. A total area of over 1,000 square meters was leased, renovated and facilitated in time to meet the teaching requirements.

**Vision** of EFFECTUS – University College for Finance and Law is "to become the first choice for higher professional economic education at both a national and regional level by utilising an integrated approach to the study of finance and law and to continue the excellence achieved in all areas of activity."

**Mission** of EFFECTUS – University College for Finance and Law is "to provide top quality teaching, human resources, links with business and academic institutions, and international activities to educate professional to meet the current and future needs of the labour market, thus answering the question 'what don't I know that I don't know?', whilst innovating in performance and the provision of an up-to-date syllabus. Our mission is to allow students to aspire for more, to ask questions and request information, to make them want the skills and competencies that make them competitive and winners. We want to improve the way that knowledge is transferred

by using a push-pull mechanism that increases the practical applicability of the acquired knowledge and allows learning outcomes to be directly applied to everyday business life. High quality education is a pre-requisite for achieving a competitive advantage in the labour market and ensuring personal integrity, and the consequent effects of these elements at the macro level are remarkable."

## The work of the Expert Panel

For its work the Panel drew upon the Self-Evaluation Report, prepared by the EFFECTUS – University College for Finance and Law, and a site visit to the institution carried out on 22 May 2013. During the visit to the College the Expert Panel held meetings with the representatives of the following groups:

- The Management;
- The Working group that compiled the Self-Evaluation Report;
- Representatives of the Department for Quality Assurance;
- Teachers;
- The students.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, Student Office, teachers' offices and the classrooms at EFFECTUS. The Panel also visited some lectures where they held a brief question and answer sessions with the students who were present.

Based on the public call for experts published by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), the Accreditation Council of ASHE nominated the Expert Panel for carrying out reaccreditation of the EFFECTUS – University College for Finance and Law. A five-member panel has been selected according to ASHE criteria, composed of 2 international experts, 2 national experts, and one student member. Members of the Expert Panel have necessary competencies in the fields covered by the activities of evaluated higher education institution. Presence of the student in the Panel made it easier to approach students at EFFECTUS and to understand problems they are facing in the course of their studies. During the training for the experts and prior to the site visit to the higher education institution (hereinafter HEI) the Panel nominated their Chair who spoke on behalf of the Panel, communicated joint opinions, comments and recommendations for improvement.

Assessment of EFFECTUS is based on *the Criteria for the Assessment of Polytechnics and Colleges* document. All panel members participated in decision-making and assessment/grading and reached the unanimous decision on all criteria addressed in this Report. Therefore, the Report is the result of the joint contribution of all Panel members. By signing the document *the Criteria for* 

the Assessment of Polytechnics and Colleges, the experts confirm that they approve the quality grades for all criteria.

The Panel used the following documents in the re-accreditation procedure:

- the Self-Evaluation Report by EFFECTUS prepared according to ASHE's document Guidelines for Drafting Self-Evaluation Reports of Polytechnics and Colleges and delivered to ASHE before the site visit as the main document on the basis of which certain questions have been asked in order to better understand the functioning of the HEI,
- the Criteria for the Assessment of Polytechnics and Colleges,

Work regulations, internal procedures and acts, student questionnaires' results, and student manuals were presented to the Panel during the site visit to the institution.

Prior to the site visit to EFFECTUS all panel members had a training organised by ASHE to provide them with information about tasks, procedure and purpose of re-accreditation.

The Panel spent a day at EFFECTUS as scheduled and engaged in dialogue with the College management, teaching and non-teaching staff, and students. The Panel also had a tour of the premises (classrooms, library, IT room, student office, and other offices).

Between the interviews with various groups the Panel exchanged opinions and took notes about their observations and conclusions necessary for making decisions on quality grade of the institution in line with the assessment criteria. At the end of the site visit the Panel awarded final quality grade for all criteria listed in *the Criteria for the Assessment of Polytechnics and Colleges*. Each member of the Panel expressed his opinion regarding each of the criteria. The Panel considered all available documents and notes from the meetings in order to carry out efficient assessment of each quality criterion. The Panel required additional explanations on certain points from the Self-Evaluation Report that seemed unclear from the College management. Very often, the same set of questions were posed to different groups of interviewees, such as management, teachers and students, in order to get the most comprehensive overview of different quality criteria.

#### General remarks:

The opinions, comments and recommendations of the Expert Panel carrying out re-accreditation of EFFECTUS, made on the basis of all available documents and information gathered during the site visit to the College, The Report does not reflect all views and opinions of the Panel in the reaccreditation procedure. If the Panel was to carry out more elaborate examinations and in-depth analysis of the HEI, this might draw attention to some issues that are not mentioned in this Report. Therefore, apart from the comments and recommendations for improvement by the panel in the subsequent part of this document it is also recommended that EFFECTUS continuously works on improving the functioning of the College regarding quality criteria other than those mentioned in this Report, which are, nevertheless, necessary for the more efficient overall functioning of the institution. Furthermore, the Panel has taken into account during the grading of the criteria and giving recommendations that EFFECTUS is a young institution.

## DETAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

## 1. Institutional management and quality assurance

- 1.1 In line with its mission, HEI developed a strategic plan in its *Strategic Development Framework 2011 2015* document. This document sets forth detailed strategic activities and strategic objectives, operational plan and monitoring mechanisms of HEI. Since the evaluated institution is still very young, it is necessary to systematically implement activities defined in its strategic documents.
- 1.2. Organisational processes are developed and formalised (regulations, quality policy, other legal documents on mobility, human resources development, etc.). It is evident from the Self-Evaluation document and the interviews with the staff and the Dean that HEI has developed an effective organisational structure. It is recommended that HEI systematically implements these official processes in practice.
- 1.3. Two existing study programmes are in line with institutional mission. However, it is necessary to work further on internationalisation of the higher education institution.
- 1.4. Higher education institution has quality policy and procedures that include collection and analyses of relevant data, with the purpose of ensuring and improving the quality of all institutional activities. The institution has adopted different documents and acts relating to quality assurance, including the Quality Assurance Manual, and the Regulations on the Quality Assurance System, as well as separate regulations on procedures relating to the effectiveness of study. HEI has also established the Quality Assurance Department. Continue to invest in quality and ensure efficient activities that will maintain and raise the level of quality. It is necessary to provide regular and official feedback to teachers, students and non-teaching staff on survey results and the measures that have been taken, as well as the results of quality improvements.
- 1.5. The institution collects and analyses relevant data with an aim of ensuring and improving the quality of its activities. However, the institution does not conduct questionnaires for teachers and non-teaching staff, which would be necessary. In order to improve the quality of all activities it is necessary to introduce procedures of informing students and teachers on the results of

student questionnaires. It is also recommended to analyse survey results by taking into account all students and years of study and compare these results with results from previous years in order to identify trends and ways of improving and eliminating present shortcomings.

1.6. The institution has developed effective mechanisms. The Committee for Monitoring Teaching Quality, which holds its sessions six times per year, as well as the Teachers' Council thematic sessions on teaching quality, held three times a year, also contribute to the quality of teaching. Furthermore, student questionnaires, which are conducted twice a year, provide sources of information on the quality of teaching, which gives space to react to some issues on time and to make corrections if necessary. Monitoring quality indicators such as SWOT analysis carried out by HEI helps to raise the level of quality at the institution. Continue with activities according to the plan and introduce abovementioned questionnaires for teaching and non-teaching staff, and procedures of informing students and teachers on the results of student questionnaires.

1.7. Existing documents that ensure the highest level of ethical behaviour at HEI are: *the Ethical Code*, and *the Regulations on Disciplinary Responsibility of Students*. In order to implement and control these mechanisms the institution has also established its *Disciplinary Committee*. Continue in the same manner.

## 2. Study programmes

- 2.1. Mechanisms for proposing, approving, and delivery of new study programmes are regulated by the Regulations on Quality Assurance, the Regulations on the Evaluation of Study Programmes, and the Regulations on the Improvement of Study Programmes. Learning outcomes have also been formally defined. It is recommended that the institution involves other stakeholders in the implementation of these procedures (e.g. new study programmes should be developed in collaboration with the Croatian Employment Service, chambers of commerce, business partners and other relevant stakeholders in Croatia and abroad).
- 2.2. The needs of society have not been fully taken into consideration in the process of proposing enrolment quotas. Therefore, it is necessary to develop formal procedures and benchmarking in

collaboration with the Croatian Employment Service, chambers of commerce, business partners and other relevant stakeholders in Croatia and abroad.

- 2.3. The enrolment quotas are in line with the institutional resources for quality teaching and pass rate analysis. Since the quotas have still not been reviewed it is essential to systematically monitor these elements and to make corrections if necessary.
- 2.4.. Module descriptions (syllabi) for each module with information concerning learning outcomes, learning inputs, teaching mode, duration and type of exams, recommended literature are missing (only general learning outcomes are formulated on the website and p. 39 SE). It is strongly recommended to define detailed module descriptions especially learning outcomes. Learning outcomes should constantly be monitored, evaluated and improved.
- 2.5. Teachers at a study programme ensure that the assessment of student learning is aligned with defined learning outcomes, that the full range of learning is being assessed, and that the assessment is appropriate to the qualification level. It is necessary to regularly monitor, evaluate, and improve methods for the assessment of student learning.
- 2.6. There is no systematic approach of calculating ECTS credits, i.e., evident inconsistency in the calculation of student workload. It is necessary to adopt a formal procedure for the calculation of ECTS credits and to ensure that the number of ECTS reflects the realistic estimate of student workload. One of the questions in the student questionnaire should definitely be about whether the number of ECTS credits for courses reflects realistic student workload. HEI should regularly review and update the number of ECTS credits for each course in order to ensure realistic estimate of student workload.

It is recommended that the ECTS are broken down by semester.

2.7. Study programmes delivered at HEI conform formally to Bologna principles. However, it is recommended that the institution carries out comparative analyses of its existing and future study programmes and similar programmes of higher education institutions abroad (benchmarking) in order to have equivalent programmes and to ensure higher level of mobility. Thus it will become obvious that in the quoted renowned foreign HEIs the workload/semester of part-time students is 50% of that of full-time students. The Panel doubts whether part-time students can manage the same workload/semester as full-time students. Given the higher

education system in Croatia and its legal framework, it is recommended that the HEI maintains the focus of its programmes in the field of economics and does not expand to the field of law.

- 2.8. Teachers use teaching methods that are appropriate for subject matter and different ways of learning, and encourage independent student learning. They use different teaching strategies in order to encourage students for critical, innovative and creative thinking. Carry on in the same manner.
- 2.9. Appropriate supplemental resources that have been made available by the teachers, including electronic databases and other sources that aid in acquisition of knowledge, contribute to efficient and modern teaching methods. Carry on in the same manner.
- 2.10. As appropriate to defined learning outcomes, students have opportunities to reinforce and apply their learning in the context of practical applications, particularly by means of well-organized internships. Individual approach should be emphasized. Carry on in the same manner.

#### 3. Students

- 3.1. There are two systems for admission of students, i.e., they can enrol either on the basis of the results of the National Secondary School Leaving Examination (via National IT system for applications to higher education institutions NISpVU), or the results of the college entrance exam (direct application to HEI). HEI should consider the assessment of specific competencies of applicants upon admission (e.g. critical thinking) especially for those applicants who are admitted on the basis of the college entrance exam results. It is necessary that the HEI regularly monitors, evaluate and improves regularly its admission criteria, taking into consideration students' academic success.
- 3.2. As stated in the Self-Evaluation, HEI supports students in their extracurricular activities. The institution organises trainings and workshops, and there are plans on supporting sports activities in the future. It is recommended that the institution implements these plans, and to consider introducing other extracurricular activities.

- 3.3. The institution has a plan to establish the Student Career and Counselling Centre. Certain type of counselling, mentorship and professional orientation for students are currently carried out by internship heads. The scope of the work of the future Student Career and Counselling Centre should include counselling in business environment, career planning and directing, help with writing CVs and testing, organizing professional workshops, introducing students to the labour market needs, finding internships and employment, etc.
- 3.4. Discussions with students show student satisfaction with the level of the student standard at HEI. Invest efforts to maintain and improve this standard at all levels of the institution.
- 3.5. Methods and procedures seem to be clear. Assessment methods include written and oral exams, practical work, presentations and seminar papers. Grades represent a total of different components for each course. Students are informed about the structure of examination methods for each course and their portion (%) of the final grade in introductory lectures at the beginning of the academic year. The institution has set its Student Appeals Procedure and has a student ombudsman. The formal procedure of appeals and hearing has been established and communicated to students. Continue in the same manner.
- 3.6. This criterium is not applicable because EFFECTUS is an exceptionally young institution.
- 3.7. Students can express their opinions and give suggestions for improvement through their membership in different committees where they can influence the decision-making and problem-solving processes on issues that concern them. Continue in the same manner.
- 3.8. The institution regularly informs the public about its study programmes, learning outcomes, qualifications and employment opportunities on the Internet, through the press and other public media, organisation of Open days and other communication channels. Continue in the same manner. With regard to the name of the school, it is necessary to point out that students acquire a formal qualification in the field of economics (but not a formal qualification in the field of law) upon completion of their studies.
- 3.9. Students can give their opinion and recommendations for improvement through their representatives in different committees, as well as through student questionnaires and evaluation of teachers. Continue in the same manner.

3.10. Students are informed about the measures implemented based on their opinions and recommendations for improvement of the quality of studying and the measures that have been taken in order to solve the problems that affect them. Continue with activities as before and reconsider introducing the formal feedback procedure.

#### 4. Teachers

- 4.1. Number and qualifications of the teachers are in line with strategic goals of the institution and adequately cover core disciplines. It is recommended that the College, being a young institution, increases the number of full-time teachers and decreases the number of external associates. Thus to secure stability and quality of the programme.
- 4.2. The institution has well-developed policies for teaching staff that ensure their professional development, as needed to advance the institution's mission. The institution encourages lifelong learning of teachers by organising workshops and trainings for them and sending them to conferences and other professional and scientific events. The costs of such activities can be partly or fully covered by HEI itself, in line with the existing regulations. It is recommended that the HEI defines and implements policies and rules for professional development of teaching staff in line with the increase in the number of students and its institutional development.
- 4.3. HEI has defined key elements to be considered in assessing competencies of its teachers (publishing professional and scientific papers, participation at conferences, work on projects; continuous development of teaching, professional and/or scientific competencies; grading of teachers in student surveys, etc.). Since the institution is planning to raise the quality of competencies of its teaching staff, it is recommended to increase the number of teachers with the highest academic qualification and to co-fund doctoral studies of its teachers.
- 4.4. It is recommended that the HEI formally defines transparent methods for measuring total teacher workload. It is necessary to increase the number of full-time teachers in order to ensure equitable distribution of teacher workload. It is also recommended that the institution implements teacher questionnaire.

4.5. HEI has adopted a procedure which ensures that teaching and other activities of the employed teaching staff are not affected by their external commitments. This procedure is implemented. Continue with activities as before.

4.6 CVs and years of practical experience of teachers are missing in the Self-Evaluation Report.

## 5. Professional and research activity

- 5.1. The institution has formally adopted guidelines concerning the existing and anticipated professional and research activities, formalizing its priorities and procedures for conducting research in line with its mission and strategic plan the Regulations on Professional, Scientific, and Research Activities, and the relevant strategic document have been adopted.
- 5.2. The institution implements mechanisms which ensure that research and professional activities are efficiently carried out and in line with its defined strategy. Heads of Departments have a task to submit to the R&D Committee evaluation forms for their department members for the previous academic year. On the basis of these forms the Committee will conduct analysis and make decisions on the previous period and give proposals for the implementation of objectives from the Strategy for the forthcoming period. Every teacher and associate has to regularly submit information on his/her professional and research activity to their Heads and enter data on published works into the internal information system. The institution should continue with activities in the same manner while defining professional and research activities on individual and department level for each year.
- 5.3. The institution clearly envisions and provides for cooperation with other professional organisations and industry. Adequate number of cooperation agreements has been signed. It is recommended that the institution increases the number of professional projects and projects carried out with industrial partners, with the possibility of internationalisation and training for future scientific projects.
- 5.4. In line with its mission, the institution supports professional activity and monitors its evidence (as stated in section 5.2.). However, this aspect of HEI should be intensified (as stated in section 5.3.).

## 6. Mobility and international cooperation

- 6.1. The institution enables and facilitates mobility of students from other higher education institutions. The study programme delivered at EFFECTUS can be compared to similar programmes of higher education institutions abroad. The institution is planning to deliver adequate number of programmes in English language in order to attract incoming students. Continue in the same manner.
- 6.2. Students have opportunities to complete a part of their programme abroad. At the beginning of the academic year 2011/2012 the institution was awarded the Erasmus Charter, and necessary steps have been taken in facilitating student mobility. It is recommended that the College adopts further measures for promoting student mobility and to signs new cooperation agreements, along with the existing ones, with a view of increasing the level of both outgoing and incoming mobility of students.
- 6.3. Higher education institution partly encourages international cooperation and mobility of its teachers. The basic conditions for teacher mobility have been met and first mobility experiences have been recorded. It is recommended that the HEI systematically encourages and formalises international cooperation and mobility activities of its teachers.
- 6.4. The institution is not a part of international associations of similar institutions. It is recommended that activities in this field are initiated and regularly developed.
- 6.5. The institution has undertaken an adequate amount of activities for attracting students from abroad. It is recommended that the HEI organises further activities for the purpose of increasing the number of foreign students, e.g., by signing new cooperation agreements along with the existing ones.
- 6.6. As a new higher education institution, EFFECTUS has signed a sufficient number of interinstitutional cooperation agreements (through Erasmus, bilateral projects, etc.). It is recommended that the institution continues with the good practice of signing bilateral agreements with international institutions.

## 7. Resources: administration, space, equipment and finance

- 7.1. The institution provides appropriate learning resources for all enrolled students. These resources include classrooms, laboratories and equipment, library resources, computers, individual and group study spaces, and other. Carry on with activities as before.
- 7.2. HEI maintains an appropriate ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff. Keep such a ratio in the future.
- 7.3. The institution has developed policies that ensure professional development of non-teaching staff, in line with the institution's mission. It is recommended that the HEI systematically implements adopted policies, e.g. by providing financial support for professional training programmes of non-teaching staff.
- 7.4. IT and other necessary equipment of the HEI and usage protocols comply with the recognized international standards. Carry on with activities in the same manner.
- 7.5. The institution secures modern equipment, technology and technical support for all relevant activities, which is largely utilized in accordance with the mission. Carry on with activities in the same manner.
- 7.6. Size, usability and availability of the library, as well as the equipment therein, ensure adequate support to student learning and research. It is recommended that HEI provides more study space to students in the library taking into account the trend of increase in the number of students.
- 7.7. Financial sustainability is ensured in accordance with HEI's mission, enabling all students to successfully complete their study programmes. Sources of funding and all the conditions related to funding are transparent. In these challenging economic times, it is positive that the College revenues rose by 5% last year, and that the expenses were reduced by 8%. Since the money from scholarships is the only currently available source of market income, it is recommended that the institution uses different sources of market income (e.g. research projects, professional projects, services, etc.).

7.8. Institution's own funds are used adequately to raise the quality of teaching, in line with institution's mission and other documents. Given the trend of increase in the number of students, it is recommended that HEI invests more into teaching and research activity.

# FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

It has been taken into account during the grading of the criteria and giving recommendations that EFFECTUS is still a young institution. After taking into consideration the information available in the frame of the re-accreditation procedure of the EFFECTUS University College for Law and Finance, the answers to the Panel's questions during the site-visit, and the tour of the institution, the Expert Panel has identified the following strong and weak points:

#### **ADVANTAGES**

- Well-defined institutional management and quality assurance at strategic and implementation levels,
- Well-defined and delivered study programmes that are unique in the Croatian context,
- Students are satisfied with the level of standard offered at HEI,
- Ratio between students and full-time teachers is optimal,
- Research and professional activities are efficiently carried out and in line with HEIs defined strategy,
- Students and teachers participate in mobility programmes (for incoming and outgoing mobility)
- The institution provides mostly adequate resources (professional services, space, equipment, finances) for its activities and development in line with its mission.

#### **DISADVANTAGES**

- Small number of full-time teachers and a large number of external associates, especially considering the anticipated increase in the number of students,
- Relevant external stakeholders are not involved in procedures of defining student enrolment quotas and study programmes,
- There is no questionnaire for teaching and non-teaching staff,
- There is no systematic approach of calculating ECTS credits and no break-down by semesters, i.e., there is some inconsistency in the calculation of student workload, and

- detailed learning outcomes, learning inputs, teaching methods, types of exam, literature are missing,
- Small number of professional projects and projects in collaboration with the industrial partners; lack of research projects,
- The institution is not a part of international associations of similar institutions,
- Potential lack of study space in the library, especially considering the anticipated increase in the number of students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY

This section contains some of the most important recommendations for improvement of quality for each criterion according to the Expert Panel's assessment. The purpose of these recommendations, regardless of awarded grades, is overall quality enhancement of the evaluated institution.

## 1. Institutional management and quality assurance

Since the evaluated institution is still very young, it is necessary to systematically implement activities defined in its strategic documents. Regarding quality policy and corresponding measures, it is recommended that the institution introduces questionnaires for teachers and non-teaching staff as well as procedures of informing students and teachers on the results of student questionnaires and the measures that have been taken, as well as the effects of quality raising. In the segment of institutional management and quality management it is necessary to continue with the initiated activities according to plan and to implement strategic and other acts and policies in practice.

## 2. Study programmes

It is recommended that the institution also involves other stakeholders in the implementation of the procedures for proposing, approving, and delivery of new study programmes (e.g. new study programmes should be developed in collaboration with the Croatian Employment Service, chambers of commerce, business partners and other relevant stakeholders in Croatia and abroad). Furthermore, the needs of society have not been fully taken into consideration in the process of proposing student enrolment quotas. Therefore, it is necessary to develop formal procedures and benchmarking in collaboration with the Croatian Employment Service, chambers of commerce, business partners and other relevant stakeholders in Croatia and abroad. It is also essential to monitor relevant elements in order to re-assess the enrolment quotas if necessary.

The institution should adopt a formal procedure for the calculation of ECTS credits and remove inconsistency identified in the calculation of student workload. ECTS should be shown separately by semester.

It is recommended that the institution carries out comparative analysis of its existing and future study programmes and similar programmes of higher education institutions abroad (benchmarking) in order to have equivalent programmes and to ensure higher level of mobility. It should be clarified how the same workload/semester for full-time and part-time students is manageable. Given the higher education system in Croatia and its legal framework, it is recommended that the HEI maintains the focus of its programmes in the field of economics and does not expand to the field of law.

It is strongly recommended to establish a module description for each course including learning outcomes, learning inputs, teaching methods, type of exam, obligatory and recommended literature.

#### 3. Students

HEI should consider the assessment of specific competencies of applicants upon admission (e.g. critical thinking) especially for those applicants who are admitted on the basis of the college entrance exam results. It is necessary that the HEI regularly monitors, evaluate and improves

regularly its admission criteria, taking into consideration students' academic success. It is recommended that the HEI implements the plans it has on supporting sports activities in the future as well as to consider introducing other extracurricular activities. The Panel supports the initiative for establishing the Student Career and Counselling Centre. The institution regularly informs the public about its study programmes. However, with regard to the name of the institution, it is necessary to point out that students acquire a formal qualification in the field of economics (but not a formal qualification in the field of law) upon completion of their studies.

#### 4. Teachers

It is recommended that the College, as a young institution, increases the number of full-time teachers and decreases the number of external associates, especially considering the anticipated increase in the number of students. It is recommended that the HEI defines and implements policies and rules for professional development of teaching staff (e.g. lifelong learning). Since the institution is planning to raise the quality of competencies of its teaching staff, it is recommended to increase the number of teachers with the highest academic qualification and to co-fund doctoral studies of its teachers. It is recommended that the HEI formally defines transparent methods for measuring total teacher workload. It is necessary to increase the number of full-time teachers in order to ensure equitable distribution of teacher workload.

## 5. Scientific and professional activity

The institution implements mechanisms which ensure that research and professional activities are efficiently carried out and in line with its defined strategy, and taking into account the measures and procedure that have already been undertaken, it is recommended that the institution continues with activities in the same manner while defining professional and research activities on individual and department level for each year. In the segment of cooperation with similar professional associations and industry, it is recommended that the institution increases the number of professional projects and projects carried out with industrial partners, with the possibility of internationalisation and training for future scientific projects.

## 6. Mobility and international cooperation

It is recommended that the College adopts further measures for promoting student mobility and to signs new cooperation agreements, along with the existing ones, with a view of increasing the level of both outgoing and incoming mobility of students. It is also recommended that the HEI systematically encourages and formalises international cooperation and mobility activities of its teachers. As the institution is not a part of international associations of similar institutions, it is recommended that the HEI initiates and regularly develops these activities. Finally, it is recommended that the HEI continues with the best practice of signing collaboration agreements with international institutions.

## 7. Resources: administration, space, equipment and finances

It is recommended that the HEI systematically implements adopted policies that ensure professional development of non-teaching staff in line with the institution's mission, e.g. by providing financial support for professional training programmes of non-teaching staff. It is recommended that HEI provides more study space to students in the library taking into account the trend of increase in the number of students. Since the only source of market income is the money from student scholarships, it is recommended that the institution uses different sources of market income (e.g. research projects, professional projects, services, etc.).

Finally, given the trend of increase in the number of students, it is recommended that HEI invests more into teaching and research activity.