REPORT

of the Expert Panel

on the

RE-ACCREDITATION OF

Polytechnic of Požega

Date of the site visit:

17/3/2014

March, 2014

Contents

INTRODUCTION

This report on the re-accreditation of the Polytechnic of Požega was written by the Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education, on the basis of the self-evaluation of the institution and supporting documentation and a visit to the institution.

Re-accreditation procedure performed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) full member, is obligatory once in five years for all higher education institutions working in the Republic of Croatia, in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The Expert Panel is appointed by the ASHE Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to perform an independent peer review based evaluation of the institution and their study programs.

The report contains:
- a brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- a list of good practices found at the institution,
- recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure), and
- detailed analysis of the compliance to the Standards and Criteria for Re-Accreditation (...).

The members of the Expert Panel were:
- Professor David J. Pollard, Leeds Business School, Leeds Metropolitan University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

- Professor Silvia Sumedrea, "Transilvania" University of Brasov, Faculty of Economics, Brasov, Romania

- Professor Tito Žimbrek, Faculty of Agriculture University of Zagreb, Croatia

- Professor Ivan Pogarčić, Polytechnic of Rijeka, Croatia

- Maja Kos, student, College of business and management „Baltazar Adam Krčelić", Croatia

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

- Maja Briški - coordinator

- Gordana Cukar - translator

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

- The Management;

- The Working Group that compiled the Self-Evaluation and representatives of the Quality Assurance Team;

- Teachers including teaching assistants and external associates

- The students, i.e., a self-selected set of students present at the interview;

- Vice deans and heads of departments

- Administrative staff during the tour of the premises

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk, and the classrooms at the Polytechnic of Požega where they held a brief question and answer session with the students who were present.

Upon completion of re-accreditation procedure, the Accreditation Council renders its opinion on the basis of the Re-accreditation Report, an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution and the Report of Fulfilment of Quantitative Criteria which is acquired by the Agency's information system.

Once the Accreditation Council renders its opinion, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation by which the Agency recommends to the Minister of Science, Education and Sports to:

1. **issue a confirmation** to the higher education institution which confirms that the higher education institution meets the requirements for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities, in case the Accreditation Recommendation is positive,

2. **deny a license** for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities to the higher education institution, in case the Accreditation Recommendation is negative, or

3. **issue a letter of recommendation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should remove its deficiencies. For the higher education institution the letter of recommendation may include the suspension of student enrolment for the defined period.

The Accreditation Recommendation also includes an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution as well as recommendations for quality development

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

Polytechnic of Požega

ADDRESS:

Vukovarska 17 / 34000 Požega

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

Dinko Zima, Ph.D., sr.lect.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE (e.g. chairs, departments, centres)

Organisational elements of the Polytechnic of Požega are its departments. Studies are organisational elements within departments. Departments of the Polytechnic are as follows:

1. Department of Agriculture, with the following professional studies:

- Viticulture-Oenology-Pomology, and

- Food Technology

2. Department of Social Sciences, with the following professional studies:

-Accounting

-Commerce

-Administration

-Specialist professional graduate study of Commerce

Activities of a department are managed by a head of the department. The department head and the Council are bodies of the department.

At the Department of Agriculture, special organisational units have been established to advance the profession, perform a practical portion of the teaching activities, professional and scientific activities within the Viticulture-Oenology-Pomology study and the technology study.

Special organisational units of the Department of Agriculture are:

-    teaching base of Vineyard Cottage and Wine Storage, and

-    teaching facility of Wine Cellar and Laboratory (which also includes a teaching test plot – a perennial vineyard and orchard)

The Department of Social Sciences is one of the organisational units of the Polytechnic of Požega and therefore perform studies, professional and scientific work directly.

The professional services of the dean`s office are: secretary`s office, financial and accounting service, students` service, IT-technical service and the Polytechnic Library.

Students and external stakeholders, representatives of Alumni, entrepreneurs and public bodies take part in activities of individual bodies and committees at the Polytechnic of Požega. The

students are represented in the Professional Council and Department Councils at the Polytechnic.

The students are members of various committees (Committee for quality assurance and improvement, Committee for internal periodical assessment of the QA system, Committee for promotion) where they have an equal role in decision making. The external stakeholders are represented in committees (Committee for quality assurance and improvement, Committee for internal periodical assessment of the QA system, committees for periodic audit of study programmes, Committee for international cooperation and cooperation with businesses, Committee for promotion, committees for development of studies on new study programmes) where they can bring forward their experience related to knowledge and skills of students performing practical training or holding jobs with them.

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES (and levels)

The following study programmes are performed at the Polytechnic of Požega:

1. PROFESSIONAL STUDY OF ACCOUNTING
2. PROFESSIONAL STUDY OF COMMERCE
3. PROFESSIONAL STUDY OF ADMINISTRATION
4. SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL GRADUATE STUDY OF COMMERCE
5. PROFESSIONAL STUDY OF VITICULTURE-OENOLOGY-POMOLOGY
6. PROFESSIONAL STUDY OF FOOD TECHNOLOGY

NUMBER OF STUDENTS (part-time/full-time/final-year)

Total number of full time students: 641

Total number of part-time students: 837

Total number of students: 1478

(data from the MOZVAG information system for support in evaluation procedures of study programmes)

NUMBER OF TEACHERS (full-time)

Number of full time teachers: 27

(data from the MOZVAG information system for support in evaluation procedures of study programmes)

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS (doctors of science, elected to grades, full-time)

Number of full time teachers that obtained PhD degree: 10

TOTAL BUDGET (in kuna): 13.523.780,51

MSES FUNDING (percentage): 61%

OWN FUNDING (percentage): 39%

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

(development of higher education institution in the last 16 years)

The Polytechnic of Požega was established 21 May 1998 as a public school of higher education. It has 1478 students and delivers five professional study programmes in Accounting, Commerce, Administration, Viticulture-Oenology-Pomology and Food Technology at bachelor level and one specialist professional study of Commerce at graduate level.

The basis for establishment of the Polytechnic of Požega were the existing professional studies (former 6th degree of education) of the University of Osijek, which were removed from the Osijek University and established as a new institution of higher education pursuant to Article 168 of the Institutions of Higher Education Act (Official Gazette 59/96) and the Regulation on establishment of the Polytechnic of Požega.

In 2001, the higher education studies were partially restructured following a Decision of the minister of science and technology of the Republic of Croatia of 26 June 2001, and a Decision of the Senate of the J.J.Strossmayer University in Osijek of 18 June 2001, when some of the professional studies were restored to the University of Osijek. Since the academic year of 2001/2002, only those professional studies based in the city of Požega remained at the Polytechnic of Požega.

on 7 February 2006, the Polytechnic of Požega concluded an Agreement on use of real estate in Vukovarska Street 17 in Požega with the city of Požega. On the basis of the Agreement, the Polytechnic uses and manages real estate owned by the city of Požega encompassing an area of 7658 m², in Požega cadastral municipality. The Agreement is based on provisions of Article 1 of the Real-Estate Donation Contract made between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Croatia as the donator and the city of Požega as the beneficiary of the donation. The Contract transferred ownership of the real estate from the Ministry of Defence to the city of Požega, for the purpose of permanent use of the Polytechnic of Požega.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. There was strong evidence of effective structural and communicative cohesiveness between teachers and managers
2. Effective organizational structure and formalized accompanying documents
3. Availability of teachers for student consultations and strong relationships between teachers and students. There was robust evidence that students could express their opinions, suggestions and complaints in accordance with the formalized system that includes their participation in the Polytechnic's key bodies and with the possibility of ensuring that implementation was carried out through student questionnaires. Feedback on their opinions and suggestions has also been formalized through student representatives in the Polytechnic's bodies and via the Student Union.
4. The use of ECTS points realistically reflect student workload throughout the study programmes
5. Strong relationships between the institution and external stakeholders and alumni, including effective systems for gathering information from these groups on the adequacy of existing study programmes and suggestions for improvement
6. The development of a business incubator and the effective communication of the purpose and function of this innovation to both staff and students. This development might be utilized as a key area for growth within the institution and for the further

development of external stakeholder relationships. One major benefit might be in further developing student internships and students' entrepreneurial skills

7. The Institution's mission is stated in an effective manner within the strategy 2014 - 2017

8. A young and enthusiastic teaching staff who are motivated for further scientific and professional advancement in which they also participate, supported by the Polytechnic, for example through a fund for the professional and scientific advancement of teachers, covering the costs of meetings and conferences.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Part-time student obligations are not stated effectively

2. The institution's web-site is only in Croatian language thus limiting international exposure and co-operation

3. A lack of sufficient numbers of full-time staff for maintaining the quality of teaching for all enrolled students

4. The forecast of student enrolments is not in line with institutional resources

5. There is a current lack of facilities for international mobility of students and staff.

6. There is a lack of facilities for visiting foreign students

FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Consistent encouragement of independent student learning

2. Excellent conditions for the implementation of exercises, professional field lectures and internships as well as for writing students' final papers. A particular example are the facilities for teachers and students at the particular facility (vineyard and cellar with equipped laboratory and other accompanying equipment) of the undergraduate professional study programme in Viticulture-Oenology and Pomology. Producing and selling products from this facility provides additional income for the Polytechnic which is allocated for the improvement of basic activities.

3. Effective feedback provided to students

4. Effective interaction between staff and students

5. The development of the business incubator

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Specific recommendations for improvement of quality that HEI should implement in accordance with the Criteria for the assessment of quality of polytechnics and colleges which are based on the ESG:

1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

- There should be a more effective statement of monitoring procedures and measures of progress within the institutional strategy
- The institution should be able to demonstrate how functional mechanisms for monitoring and improvement of teaching quality will operate in practice
- The institution's documentation should more fully demonstrate how the outcomes of the current programmes of study align with the institutional mission
- The institution's documentation fully state how the quality procedures and practices will be evaluated and improved over time
- While the institution possesses adequate ethical procedures for both teachers and students, their mechanisms are largely unknown owing to the small number of cases that have arisen. It is recommended that the ethics procedures are communicated on a regular basis to both students and members of staff.

2. Study Programmes

- The institution should more fully justify the setting of enrolment quotas taking into account the needs of society
- Given the relatively poor rate of passing examinations, there is a need for the institution to more closely synchronise enrolment quotas with teaching quality levels
- Teaching staff should ensure the provision of supplementary learning resources for students for each class

3. Students

- The institution should continue to monitor the high level of provision provided for students and ensure steps are taken to deal with any problems that might adversely affect the high quality of student support and assessment
- The institution should provide additional appropriate facilities for students to become more acquainted with their student representatives and the Student Union and Ombudsman
- The institution should strive to ensure and preserve student anonymity in the student questionnaire system

4. Teachers

- The institution must ensure that a sufficient number of full-time teachers are employed to ensure the sustainability and quality levels of study programmes
- While the institution invests effectively in staff development, growth of staff numbers should be perceived as a priority
- The institution has failed to take into account the number of full-time teachers in relation to its student population and thus the optimal ratio between staff and students has not been maintained. It is suggested that additional full-time staff should be recruited or the student intake reduced (or a combination of these) to effect a reduction in the staff/student ratio in order to achieve the appropriate teacher ratio and to diminish the need for the employment of external lecturers and associates and therefore ensure the Polytechnic's sustainability
- The system of allocating of teaching and other work to individual members of staff should be further formalised as it is not fully clear.

5. Research and Professional Activity

- The institution should more fully demonstrate the links between professional and research activities and its mission and strategic plan.

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- The institution should take steps to attract students from other higher education institutions through the provision of accommodation and a more effective disclosure of its study programmes on its web-site, including the effective use of languages such as English and German on its web-site

- The institution should take further steps to encourage further international co-operation and mobility of its teaching staff. Outward international teaching staff mobility is implemented only through very short sojourns (up to a week), which is insufficient for obtaining international experience and for starting joint research papers and projects. It is necessary to use financial and other means (mandatory foreign language courses for teachers) to stimulate longer sojourns by the institution's teachers at similar higher education institutions abroad. The implementation of further international collaborative partnerships should be extended and exchange programmes encouraged to promote exchanges of both staff and students.

- The institution should take steps to expand its international membership of associations of similar institutions

- The institution should take immediate steps to attract students from abroad through the provision of information on its courses in a language other than Croatian on its website and through the provision of adequate accommodation.

- Similarly, the institution should take steps to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided in order to attract teachers and from abroad through the extension of collaborative programmes and the development of appropriate facilities within the Polytechnic.

7. Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

- The institution should plan to provide additional resources including more laboratory space and computing facilities for institution's multiple learning facilities. Additional resources for English language teaching should also be provided throughout the student programme and for staff members as required
- The ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff should be re-evaluated to ensure sufficient administrative provision
- Non-teaching staff development should be documented more effectively and appropriate staff development opportunities provided for individual members of staff aligned with their needs and the institution's strategy.
- The current standard of laboratory equipment should be re-assessed to ensure that the level of provision meets recognized international standards
- The provision of technical equipment for teaching should be re-assessed in line with the strategic intent of the institution
- Additional library space and stock should be provided to augment current provision.
- Financial plans should be re-assessed in line with the institution's strategic intent and its provision for the current student population and additional funds secured as necessary
- While the institution provides internal funding for staff development, the allocation of financial resources should be monitored to ensure that financial resources are allocated effectively so as to achieve the institution's mission and other procedural requirements

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE TO THE STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

1. Institutional management and quality assurance

1.1 The institution possesses a current strategy but is due to be replaced by a new strategy (2014 – 2017) in the near future, the new strategy having been developed in association with key internal and external stakeholders. The new strategy content seems appropriate, judging from the self-evaluation document and the evidence provided by the management team, however, there should be a more effective statement of monitoring procedures and measures of progress within the institutional strategy. The mission of the Polytechnic is clearly stated within the new strategy documents.

1.2 The institution has a well-developed structure with appropriate decision-making bodies. The design of organizational units seems appropriate for the institution concerned and there is a clear chain of command from the Dean through department heads and subordinate and support sections. The structure of the institution is well-supported by appropriate documentation.

1.3 The study programmes seem broadly commensurate with the institution's mission, however as the strategy is about to be replaced by a new document, it will be necessary to re-examine current and planned study programmes to ensure compatibility is maintained. The institution's documentation should therefore more fully demonstrate how the outcomes of programmes of study align with the institution's mission.

1.4 The institution has a well-developed set of policies and procedures to improve and ensure maintenance of appropriate levels of quality within the institution. The procedures include students and other internal and external stakeholders. The institution, however, should be able to demonstrate how functional mechanisms for monitoring and improvement of teaching quality will operate in practice.

1.5   The institution has implemented well-formulated systems for monitoring and improving teaching quality, however there should be more documentation to show how quality procedures and practices will be evaluated and improved over time.

1.6   The question relating to research is not applicable for the Polytechnic

1.7   The institution suggested that there were systems in place for dealing with unethical behaviour in teaching and this was confirmed during discussions. The documentation also suggested that relevant people were informed about these systems. However, evidence suggests that there seems to be a varying level of knowledge within the institution concerning the content and operation of such systems. It is recommended that the ethics procedures and practices are communicated to students and staff on a regular basis.

2. Study programmes

2.1   The polytechnic has developed effective procedures for monitoring and improving the quality of study programmes involving external and internal stakeholders on a periodic basis. There is robust evidence in the self-evaluation document, institutional documentation, action plans and as a result of discussions to satisfy judgement in this matter.   The Institution should ensure that the procedures for monitoring and improving quality of study programmes are regularly re-evaluated to ensure best practice.

2.2   There was little evidence that the Polytechnic took into account the needs of society in general when designing its course portfolio, although there was a great deal of evidence to suggest that they did involve a number of external stakeholders in such processes. The institution should more fully justify the setting of enrolment quotas taking into account the needs of society and the needs and preferences of potential students – but see 2.3 below. There needs to be more evidence for the portfolio of study programmes meeting these needs.

2.3 For enrolment quotas to come into line with institutional resources, early and significant change is needed. A lack of sufficient numbers of full-time staff for maintaining the quality of teaching for all enrolled students was evident and the staff-student ratio significantly exceeded that stipulated. The current level of 1 – 37.84 is far in excess of that stated in the Ordinance on the Content of Licence and Conditions for Issuing Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, carrying out a Study Programme and Re-accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10), a fact which confronts the Institution with a serious problem in the short term. Furthermore, the forecast of student enrolments is not in line with institutional resources and, given the relatively poor examination pass rates, there is a need for the institution to synchronise enrolment quotas with teaching quality levels more effectively.

2.4 Course learning outcomes define the skills and knowledge expected of students on the completion of their study programme and these are effectively documented and communicated to students. There was ample evidence that students were aware of what was expected of them for each of their course units.

2.5 Teachers and students testified that assessments were closely aligned with learning outcomes and were effectively documented for student and staff use, as well as for Quality Assurance. Examination of appropriate materials demonstrated a wide range of assessment strategies, including exams and practical work, commensurate with the type and level of the individual modules.

2.6 There was ample evidence that the number of ECTS points credited for individual modules clearly reflected the workload of students. Teaching staff were aware of the need for such synchronisation. The student workload was divided into various activities such as lectures, exercises, etc.

2.7 Course and programme content was developed through a system of benchmarking with comparable institutions in Croatia and elsewhere, and at a comparable level of attainment, as well as consultations with other stakeholders.

2.8   Teaching methods used at the Polytechnic included lectures, seminars, exercises and practical classes. Students were strongly encouraged to learn independently and a range of resources was available to help them achieve this goal.

2.9   Although teachers provided supplementary resources, it tended to be on a spasmodic basis. It is recommended that supplementary resources should be provided for each class and documented accordingly.

2.10   Students have several opportunities to apply their knowledge. A particular strength of the Polytechnic is its integration with local organizations that provide internships. Also, a series of practical settings is provided through the Polytechnic's own resources. An outstanding example is in a particular facility (vineyard and cellar with equipped laboratory and other accompanying equipment) of the undergraduate professional study programme in Viticulture-Oenology and Pomology. Another strong example is the development of a business incubator and the effective communication of the purpose and function of this innovation to both staff and students. This development might be utilized as a key area for growth within the institution and for the further development of external stakeholder relationships. One major benefit might be in further developing student internships and students' entrepreneurial skills

3. Students

3.1   Documentary and other evidence showed that the Polytechnic evaluated the competencies of applicants. The institution also performed regular analyses of their admission criteria, taking into account student success. The institution is confronted with a common problem experiences by many Croatian HEIs in that some students only enrol to gain their student rights without any intention of following a course of instruction. The Polytechnic has developed strategies including student mentoring and the provision of additional study and counselling facilities to assist new students who find study problematic.

3.2   The Polytechnic provided a range of extra-curricular activities for students, which was corroborated by the students themselves. Outside a particular issue with the location of one facility, students praised the Polytechnic for their provision.

3.3   The Polytechnic provides extensive facilities for counselling and mentorship and the close association between students and staff is a witness to this. Evidence obtained from students corroborated statements in the self-evaluation document which set out the extent of these facilities in a more formal context.

3.4   There were strongly developed systems for assessing knowledge development and the methods to be used for individual modules were published and easily accessible by students. Teacher feedback was effective and timely and there were formalised procedures for student appeals. Students displayed a detailed knowledge of the appropriate systems which provides evidence of good communications as well as effective documentation.

3.5   The Polytechnic has developed systems with which to initiate and maintain contacts with former students. Various statistics were available on the first destinations of many students and some kept in touch with the Polytechnic on an on-going basis. Strong relationships between the institution and external stakeholders and alumni exist, including effective systems for gathering information from these groups on the adequacy of existing study programmes and suggestions for improvement.

3.6   The Polytechnic publishes details of its programmes of study on its web-site and communicates with its immediate environment using other communication methods. Much of this information is in the Croatian language which may be a limiting factor in advertising the Polytechnic outside the country – see section 7 of this report.

3.7   Evidence gathered from students and the self-evaluation document suggests that the Polytechnic has developed robust systems for student feedback and the voicing of students' opinions. Student representatives are duly elected according to regulations and student representatives sit on a range of Polytechnic committees. There was strong evidence that students could express their opinions, suggestions and

complaints in accordance with the formalized system that includes their participation in the Polytechnic's key bodies and with the possibility of ensuring that implementation was carried out through student questionnaires. Feedback on their opinions and suggestions has also been formalized through student representatives in the Polytechnic's bodies and via the Student Union. The institution should, however, provide additional appropriate facilities for students to become more acquainted with their student representatives and the Student Union and Ombudsman

3.8 Feedback to students is a crucial element in teaching and learning and the students were of the opinion that feedback was both useful and timely. Their close relationship with members of staff allowed for different types of feedback, from written comments on scripts to face-to-face meetings if appropriate. Social media could also be used for feedback and for discussions, based on feedback, between students.

4. Teachers

4.1 Although it can be said that the qualifications of teachers are broadly in line with the strategic goals of the Polytechnic, the number of full-time teachers for the student population is inadequate as noted above in sections 2.2 and 2.3 above. The institution is overly dependent on part-time and associate staff who, while having appropriate qualifications, may lack the requisite teaching experience and commitment to the institution. In line with recommendations made earlier, the Polytechnic will have to involve itself in a recruitment drive for full-time staff in order to meet the staff-student ratio minima set out in the Ordinance on the Content of Licence and Conditions for Issuing Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, carrying out a Study Programme and Re-accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10).

4.2 The institution has a strong and commendable policy for staff development as noted earlier but has not dealt adequately with staff leavers nor with staff retirements. The latter issue may be the result of having a predominantly young teaching staff but

nonetheless, appropriate contingency plans should be developed to cover staff leavers.

4.3   As noted in 2.3 above, the Polytechnic has failed to ensure an optimal ratio between students and full-time teachers and it is strongly recommended that early action is taken to rectify this situation. This may involve both an increase in full-time staff and at the same time a reduction in student quotas until the situation is brought under control.

4.4   The Polytechnic has a strong personnel development policy whereby staff is encouraged to increase their qualifications and to participate in academic meetings and conferences, thereby helping to fulfil the institution's mission.

4.5   The allocation of workload is generally understood to be fair and equitable and teachers were of the opinion that the system works well. There is, however, a lack of documentation covering this aspect of teaching and this requires some attention by management.

4.6   The need to balance workload with external teaching and other commitments is appreciated by teaching staff and there are processes in place to ensure that the quality of teaching is not impaired. Any external work has to receive the express permission of the Dean.

5. Research and professional activity

5.1   The institution has broadly adopted guidelines concerning the existing and planned professional and research activities although there is a lack of evidence on the formalization of priorities in line with the mission and strategic plan. This latter issue may be one of development as the new strategy is yet to be implemented. The institution should therefore more fully demonstrate the links between professional and research activities and its mission and strategic plan.

5.2   The Polytechnic has appropriate procedures in place to ensure that professional and research activities are effectively carried out. There is a system in place for teaching

staff to make formal reports on conferences attended, meetings attended, etc. Individual records and plans are maintained to monitor staff development.

5.3   The Polytechnic has developed a network of co-operation with other Higher Education Institutions and other industrial organizations and the new strategy provides for an expansion of this network.

5.4   The Polytechnic has developed effective systems to support professional activity and monitors appropriate evidence.   Evidence shows that the Polytechnic proactively supports such activity.

6. International cooperation and mobility

6.1   Unfortunately, the Polytechnic does not enable or facilitate mobility of students from other higher education institutions although there are plans in place to change this. One feature which makes things difficult for foreign students is that much of the information on the Polytechnic's website is in Croatian and there is a lack of appropriate accommodation for visiting students. The polytechnic is addressing both these issues but will need to make them a priority if foreign students are to be attracted in the near future.

6.2   In direct contrast, it is possible for students of the Polytechnic to complete part of their studies abroad. Evidence gained from students shows that they are very keen to take advantage of these opportunities in the main.

6.3   The mobility and co-operation of teachers is encouraged but co-operation seems more common than mobility. This may be due to the teaching loads allocated to teachers and the lack of full-time teaching staff, alluded to earlier in section 4. and elsewhere.

6.4   As noted earlier, the institution is a member of various associations and networks effectively. But – as also noted earlier - the Polytechnic has plans to develop these further in line with its new strategy.

6.5   As noted above, the Polytechnic has limited facilities for attracting foreign students and will need to address this factor as a priority to achieve the relevant part of their new strategy.

6.6   In a similar vein, while some work has been done to attract foreign teachers, much still needs to be done to communicate the attractiveness of the Polytechnic and to provide adequate facilities for visiting teaching staff.

6.7   The Polytechnic has developed links within the Erasmus programme and other European projects and will be seeking to further foster this work in the next few years.

7. Resources: administration, space, equipment and finances

7.1   The institution possesses a well-designed set of buildings for teaching and allied purposes and there are plans for expansion into adjacent buildings. However there is a lack of space for certain activities related to independent study which should be rectified, including group study spaces. The institution should plan to provide additional resources including more laboratory space and computing facilities for institution's multiple learning facilities. Additional resources for English language teaching should also be provided throughout the student programme and for staff members as required

7.2   The Polytechnic has secured an adequate ratio between teaching and non-teaching staff, however if the number of teachers increases, it may be necessary to review the situation.

7.3   Evidence obtained from the self-evaluation document and from the site visit suggests that the Polytechnic has well-developed policies for the development for non-teaching staff in line with the institution's mission. Such development includes attendance on courses, in service training and the possibility of increasing the qualifications of staff

members. Records are kept on individual staff development. However, it will be necessary to set procedures in place to evaluate these systems on a regular basis as the Polytechnic expands.

7.4 Laboratory equipment and relevant usage protocols sometimes comply with international standards but there are instances such as the design of some laboratories which may cause concern, for example in the case of escape in case of fire. Laboratory spaces should be re-surveyed to ensure that both the physical layout and the equipment allocated meet the appropriate standards.

7.5 Computers are generally available throughout the institution both for classes and for staff use. Some computers are dedicated to particular classes but others are generally available and students often have their own laptops. The Polytechnic has broadly succeeded in installing modern equipment but it will be necessary to review this over time. There is a lack of detailed procedures to ensure that equipment is kept up to date.

7.6 The library contains conventional book stock and provides electronic access to a range of e-books and other computer-based information systems. The size of the library and the reading room is a little concerning, given the number of enrolled students. Consideration should be given to allocating extra study space for quiet reading and independent learning activities, and the book stock reviewed in the light of the expansion of student numbers.

7.7 Institutional funds are derived from various sources including government funding, income from professional activities and local community support. From the evidence available, it seems that, broadly speaking, the financial aspects of the Polytechnic's operations are in line with the institution's strategy. However downward fluctuations in student numbers and therefore student fees may impact the sustainability of the Polytechnic's financial health and the situation will require managerial monitoring. Funding and the systems pertaining to funding are transparent and are discussed within the Polytechnic during appropriate committee meetings.

7.8   The institutions own funds are allocated to promoting research and various professional activities and are undertaken using relevant procedures. The allocation of funding should be relevant to the new strategy about to be installed. The allocation of funding will require some attention as part of the performance management aspect of the new strategy.