



**REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
University of Rijeka
Academy of Applied Arts**

**Date of preliminary site visit:
6 June 2022**

**Date of on-line re-accreditation:
7–10 June 2022**

July 2022

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INTRODUCTION

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

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

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent Expert Panel for the evaluation of Academy of Applied Arts University of Rijeka.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- Prof. David Quin, Lecturer in Animation, Institute of Art Design and Technology, Dublin, Ireland, Panel chair,
- Ass. prof. dr. art. Snježana Ban, Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia,
- Prof. Jitka Goriaux Pelechova Ph.D., Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts (DAMU), Prague, Czech Republic,
- Dr. sc. Jelena Zanchi, sen. lect., Arts Academy, University of Split, Republic of Croatia,
- Antonio Špernjak, student, Academy of Fine Arts, University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia.

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

- Management,
- Self-Evaluation Report Committee,
- Students,
- Heads of study programmes,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- Assistants and junior researchers,
- Heads of doctoral programmes and leaders of research projects,
- Representatives of the business sector, potential employers.

Croatian Expert Panel members went to the preliminary site-visit on 6 June 2022, during which they had a tour of the work facilities, laboratories, art studios, IT classrooms, student administration office and classrooms, and attended sample lectures, where they held a brief Q&A session with students.

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

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts on the basis of University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts Self-Evaluation Report, other relevant documents, the preliminary site visit and on-line meetings.

The Report contains the following elements:

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

In the analysis of the documentation, preliminary site visit to the University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts, online meetings and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Marina Grubišić coordinator, ASHE,
- Davor Jurić, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Igor Opić, interpreter at the preliminary site visit and during the online meetings, ASHE,
- Vedrana Vojković Estatiev, translator of the Report, ASHE.

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

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

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

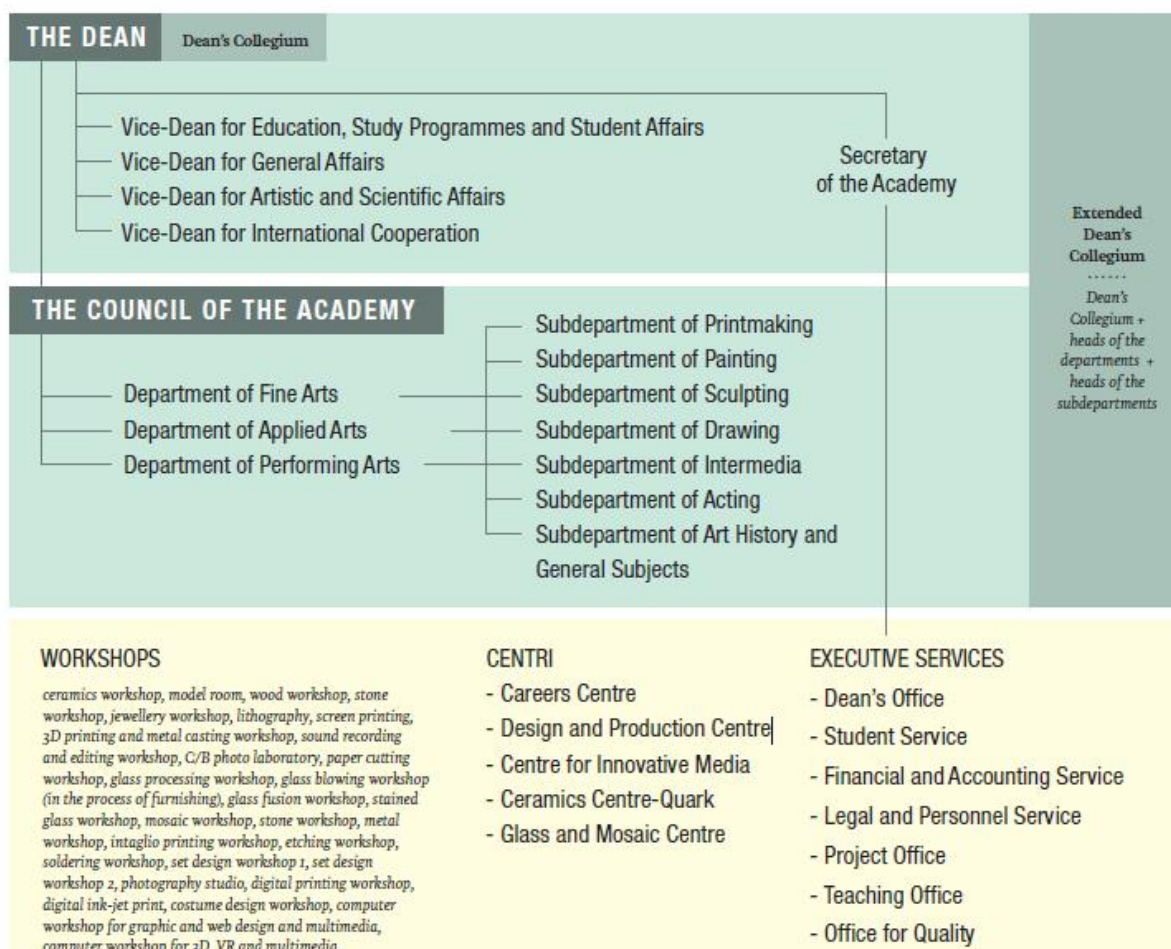
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Academy of Applied Arts, University of Rijeka

ADDRESS: Rijeka, Slavka Krautzeka 83

DEAN: Prof. dr. art. Letricija Linardić, full professor

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:



APURI organisational structure - from SER page 11

STUDY PROGRAMMES:

- Fine Arts Pedagogy, undergraduate university study programme,
- Fine Arts Pedagogy, graduate university study programme,
- Applied Arts, undergraduate university study programme,
- Applied Arts, graduate university study programme; specialisations in: Applied Sculpting, Applied Painting, Performing Design for Theatre and Film,
- Acting and Media, undergraduate university study programme,
- Visual Communications and Graphic Design, graduate university study programme,
- Acting, graduate university study programme,
- Graphic Design and Visual Communications, undergraduate university study programme.
- Media arts and practices, graduate university study programme *

* The Faculty didn't conduct the study programme

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:

Table 3.1. Number of students per study programme for the evaluated academic year

Study programme name	Full-time students	Part-time students
Fine Arts Pedagogy (2097), undergraduate university study programme, Rijeka	51	0
Fine Arts Pedagogy (2098), graduate university study programme, Rijeka	40	0
Applied Arts (2099), undergraduate university study programme, Rijeka	83	0
Applied Arts; specialisations in: Applied Sculpting, Applied Painting, Performing Design for Theatre and Film (2100), graduate university study programme, Rijeka	29	0
Acting and Media (2108), undergraduate university study programme, Rijeka	7	0
Visual Communications and Graphic Design (2112), graduate university study programme, Rijeka	28	0
Acting (2113), graduate university study programme, Rijeka	2	0
Graphic Design and Visual Communications (2163), undergraduate university study programme, Rijeka	28	0
Total	268	0

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NUMBER OF TEACHERS:

Table 4.1.a Staff Structure - FOR UNIVERSITIES in the evaluated academic year

Staff*	Full-time staff		Cumulative employment		External associates	
	Number	Average age	Number	Average age	Number	Average age
Full professors with tenure	2	58	-	-	3	60,33
Full professors	11	59,18	-	-	2	58
Associate professors	10	52,5	-	-	6	54,17
Assistant professors	8	45,38	3	41	7	44,71
Scientific advisor (permanent/ with tenure)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scientific advisor	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior Research Associate	-	-	-	-	-	-
Research Associate	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teaching grades	4	41	4	41	3	54,33
Assistants	8	38,75	3	35,67	14	31,86
Postdoctoral researcher	2	40	-	-	-	-
Employees on projects	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expert assistants	-	-	-	-	-	-
Technical staff	1	38	-	-	-	-
Administrative staff	10	45,4	2	37	-	-
Support staff	-	-	-	-	-	-

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SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

The education of art teachers in Rijeka began back in 1963 and was developing through various university institutions until 2005, when the Academy of Applied Arts was founded. In that period, the Academy was delivering study programmes in Applied Arts and Art Education, on un-dergraduate and graduate level, lasting 4 + 1 years. Sixty students were enrolled the first year, 30 in each study programme. The first year of study

programme was general, after which students chose their main art module sculpting, painting or printmaking. In the third and fourth year, students could choose among many elective subjects in applied arts. The one-year graduate programme allowed graduate students to create a work of art, guided by a mentor of their choice. The study programmes at the Academy are specific for their selection of modules, great number of elective courses, close work with mentors and flexibility of topics for graduate work. Such a wide choice allows students to build their own study structure, based on their personal interests and abilities. This concept of study served as the framework for developing other study programmes at the Academy. In 2006, the Academy moved to a renovated and newly furnished building of approximately 7000 square meters, located on the University of Rijeka Campus.

In 2013, the study programmes of Art Education and Applied Arts changed their structure from 4+1 years to 3+2 years. The change was introduced to strengthen the mobility and comparability of the studies with the studies offered by other European academies. From 2010 to 2013, the Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts was a partner in the EU project Adriart. The result of this collaboration was a two-year study programme of Media Arts and Practices, which was accredited and granted licence to work in 2013. However, in 2016, the Council adopted a decision to suspend the study because there were not enough candidates. A revision process was initiated and since then the study program has been in suspension.

In 2016, undergraduate study programme of Acting and Media and the two-year postgraduate specialist study programme in Acting, Media and Culture were transferred from the University to the Academy of Applied Arts. The postgraduate study has not been launched yet. In the same year, a two-year graduate study programme in Acting received licence to work, representing a logical continuation of studies in performing arts. By modernizing the Applied Printmaking module as part of the graduate study programme of Applied Arts in 2018, the Academy launched the graduate studies of Visual Communications and Graphic Design. In 2020, the Academy's undergraduate study programme in Graphic Design and Visual Communications was accredited. The programme replaced the previous Module of Applied Graphic Arts. In further development of the graduate study programme in Applied Arts, new changes were introduced, which resulted in the accreditation of three study majors: Applied Painting, Applied Sculpting and Design for Theatre and Film.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. A lot of effort has gone into the preparation of the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), which is well presented and contains a range of hyperlinked documents. The Report has been very helpful to the Panel in the course of its work.
2. The centres and the Academy Project Office are commendable strategic initiatives. The Academy must be encouraged to properly resource, sustain and support the future work of these important centres. The role of the centres must be given a little time to evolve and the centres must not be viewed as a solution to every problem at the Academy.
3. Artistic research and graduate practice has an international and even an interdisciplinary character, with a commendable range of interesting and important projects. International and interdisciplinary practice must continue to strengthen, deepen and develop at the Academy and must impact on the development of the undergraduate study programmes.
4. The Academy has made some progress on the employment contracts of assistant teachers and this is to be encouraged. This work must continue.
5. The Academy must also be commended on the high quality of many of the elective courses. Some of the Academy classes and departments are technically very well equipped.
6. Some new study majors/orientations (Design for Theatre and Film) and newly revised programmes (Visual Communications and Graphic Design) do represent modern, contemporary study programmes. These should become a pedagogical model for study programme revision, modernisation and updating across the Academy.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Many of the Academy procedures either do not work at all or work too slowly, are ineffective or simply do not exist. When things go wrong, staff and students need simple and immediate procedures which tell them how to act, who to contact and how problems will be solved.

2. Mutual respect at the Academy is addressed by too many existing policy documents: some relating to staff, some relating to students, and some to both. Many students and staff are unfamiliar with the basic principles of mutual respect and do not understand basic rights, especially those of students. The Panel strongly recommends that a single, clear and concise mutual respect policy be developed at APURI, which applies to both students and staff. This new policy should be easily understood and widely publicised.
3. Student surveys do not work. Student opinions are collected and the student voice is heard, but too little action is taken by the Management and staff. The report of the Panel will deal with this in detail. This is a serious issue at any educational institution and improvement must be a top priority for the Academy. Student opinion is an essential quality assurance tool at any higher educational institution in Europe.
4. Learning outcomes have not been revised sufficiently in the period since the last institutional review and a recent review had a distinctly 'top-down' character, rather than directly involving teachers in the process of change. Too many professors, teachers and APURI managers still do not understand the importance of learning outcomes in a modern pedagogical approach. These challenges must be addressed as a priority.
5. Too many senior Academy professors still cling to outdated and discredited approaches in terms of pedagogy, programme development, assessment and feedback. Too many APURI teachers see themselves solely as 'artists', whilst being engaged and paid as professional educators by the Academy and by the Croatian state. Many APURI teachers simply do not have the pedagogical skills and competencies to function properly as teachers in a truly student-centred twenty-first-century pedagogical system. Urgent retraining is required for most, if not all, APURI staff, the Management and teachers. Some male professors still espouse completely unacceptable views on gender. The report of the Panel will recommend additional training and more work on the 'popularisation' of modern art teaching methods, learner-centred education, assessment, feedback, gender issues and quality assurance.
6. Many departments do not have regular working discussions with other departments – they meet for administrative meetings, academic councils and votes, etc. but are very isolated in their own activities. Regular and effective working collaboration (not talking shops) between all APURI departments will only make the Academy stronger.
7. It is terribly disappointing to see that little or no work has been done in seven years (since the last accreditation process in 2015) on the development of an Academy library. There seems to be a distinct lack of understanding of the importance of student and staff access to modern contemporary art, design and media literature, whether in analog or digital form. There also seems to be a persistent dislocation

between the importance of so-called theoretical learning and the practical aspects of any art, design and media study programme. The Academy has done some (project) work on connecting between academic and practical learning. The lessons from such project work must be used across the Academy to improve and strengthen the learning outcomes and artistic practice of students and graduates.

8. Though the Panel does understand the difficult history of the Acting and Media programme, the Academy is encouraged to continue the full integration and a more equitable resourcing of this department in the culture, processes and life of the institution.
9. Too many very commendable and highly capable external teachers have been very precariously employed for many years, without contracts at the Academy. Many external teachers work in positions of high responsibility in their study programmes and departments – they need early contracts and the support of senior professors, teachers, the Management and the institution.
10. Many departments still seriously lack technicians and technical support. The Academy also seems to be VERY lacking in functional area staff, technical support, night security staff and even cleaning staff.
11. The website is adequate but needs further development and should become an important information resource for Academy students, staff and applicants. Translating some sections of the website into foreign languages would also help the Academy's international profile.

LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. A lot of effort has gone into preparing the SER, which is well presented and contains a range of hyperlinked documents. It has been very helpful to the Panel in the course of its work.
2. The centres and the Academy Project Office are commendable and potentially innovative strategic initiatives. The Academy must be encouraged to properly resource, sustain and support the future work of these important centres.
3. Artistic research and graduate practice has an international and even an interdisciplinary character, with a commendable range of interesting and important projects. International and interdisciplinary practice must continue to strengthen, broaden, deepen, internationalise and develop at the Academy.

The Panel members thank all the Academy staff, the Management and teachers for their efforts to help them in their accreditation work. The Panel would especially like to commend the Academy on their students and alumni, and to express the wish to do everything in their power to help the Academy improve and enhance the educational outcomes of their students in the future.

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

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

Analysis

Administratively, all regular quality assurance functions and processes appear to be working at APURI, with student data regularly gathered by means of obligatory surveys and questionnaires, and with managers and staff meeting regularly to review processes and make improvements to study programmes, to Academy processes and to the student experience. On paper, and from a documentary, regulatory and administrative point of view, all seems well. However, policy documents must lead to effective procedures. Effective procedures lead to constant improvements in quality.

APURI has institutionally lost its way in terms of effecting timely and meaningful procedures to solve urgent problems of students and staff. Fundamentally, quality assurance procedures must improve the learning experience of our students, to enhance their learning and to increase and modernise their learning opportunities. Our graduates should not only have learned what is needed now, but should have the skills, tools and capabilities to imagine and create truly innovative work and the art and cultural industries required for the future development of society and the world. One of the core principles at any educational institution must be the ongoing, neverending development of study programmes and learning outcomes, using quality assurance tools, valued input from students and stakeholders, and the imagination and experience of highly talented staff.

This study programme and learning outcome development process has, with a few exceptions, seriously lost its way at APURI.

Furthermore, APURI staff, through a pattern of condoned, ignored and habitual behaviour, have now broken several important tools and mechanisms which any quality assurance system, at any institution in the world, would depend upon as triggers to indicate that immediate, urgent institutional change is necessary. Student surveys are

the prime example of such a broken tool at APURI. The recommendations of previous evaluation reports have not been sufficiently acted upon.

At APURI, warnings are being ignored, complaints are being hidden and the perception of a management culture of 'sweeping things under the rug' (not the words of the Expert Panel, but rather the words of several APURI students, staff and alumni) has taken hold. This culture must change immediately.

The Expert Panel would recommend the development of a single, short, clear and concise APURI mutual respect policy for both students and staff. Clear procedures should be outlined in the policy, with contact people (staff and student representatives responsible for the operation of the policy) assigned.

Many APURI departments do not have regular working discussions with other departments – they meet for administrative meetings, academic councils and various administrative voting sessions, etc., but are very isolated in their own activities. Regular and effective working collaboration meetings (not talking shops) between all APURI departments should be established and will only make the Academy stronger.

Two of the SWOT analyses conducted for the SER were very impressive.

The SWOT analysis conducted by the Department of Performing Arts gathered some excellent data and should be the basis of a line-by-line APURI action plan, with a strict time schedule and a budget allocation.

The SWOT analysis conducted by external stakeholders is another fine piece of work, which has gathered excellent, fair and honest data and has been shared with the Academy with the sole intention of improving teacher, student and institutional engagement with enthusiastic stakeholders, who obviously understand and value the importance of APURI in the cultural life of the city and of Croatia.

In discussions with the Panel, both stakeholders and alumni enthusiastically expressed strong interest in being involved with Academy processes and developments (including working directly with students and assisting with study programme development) in much more formalised, regular (several times a year, not just once 'every so often') and structured ways (through workshops, case study presentations and structured information gathering and focus groups).

Many experienced and enthusiastic internal stakeholders (staff members, teaching staff) are not being consulted or listened to. Too many staff, even senior staff, have no clear understanding of the institution's decision-making processes, rationales or strategies. There is far too much inconsistency across programmes and departments, with some well-established departments doing very well indeed, with plenty of equipment, materials and resources, lots of teaching hours, nicely appointed spaces and the ear of the Management. Other departments have to struggle with too many casually employed staff expected to work in positions of high responsibility and leadership, with unfairly inadequate allocations of space, resource and equipment. This is institutionally inconsistent and unfair, and weakens the cohesive, collegial atmosphere at APURI.

There still seem to be serious staffing problems at some departments, with large numbers of very casual (so-called 'external') teachers being employed for up to 12 years without contracts, without any clear understanding of how or when contracts might be issued and, worst of all, expected to work in positions of great responsibility and leadership, dealing directly (and very effectively) with students, teaching classes, writing whole courses and conducting assessment and feedback. These external teachers are extremely impressive, talented and committed people, with a very firm focus on achieving great outcomes for their students. The Academy should make it a top priority to issue contracts to these teachers as soon as possible and to ensure that 'external' teachers are not left regularly waiting for more than five or six years with no clear understanding of how or when their contracts might be issued. The Management should make a real effort to regularly and transparently explain the recruitment and contract-issuing realities, constraints, processes and timelines to all relevant staff.

Many senior teaching staff at APURI are in urgent need of modern pedagogical training and professional development. Many managers and teachers have completely outmoded and inappropriate (and, frankly, unprofessional) attitudes to teaching practice and to basic student-centred concepts like assessment and feedback, a learning outcomes approach, ECTS, study programme development and even mutual respect. Pedagogical retraining must become a priority for all the staff at APURI. The University provides workshops and classes of this kind, and these should easily be developed and adapted (probably with the assistance of external or international collaborators) in order to be completely relevant to the modern teaching and learning of art, design and media curricula. However, APURI staff must understand that constantly updating their pedagogical skills is a pressing and essential priority, for themselves (in order to acquire contemporary pedagogical coping skills) but most importantly for their students.

Learning outcomes have not been revised sufficiently in the period since the last institutional review and a recent review had a distinctly 'top-down' character, rather than directly involving teachers in the process of change. Too many professors, teachers and APURI managers still do not understand the importance of learning outcomes in a modern pedagogical approach. These challenges must be addressed as a priority.

One conspicuous staff appointment which was not dealt with in any great detail in the SER was the very necessary appointment of an Academy librarian. The Academy has chosen not to establish any library, claiming to prefer 'alternative' (poorly planned and largely undescribed) 'solutions' instead.

The quality assurance problems at APURI are not large and can easily be solved. The data already exist and staff and the Management are well aware of most or all of the problems. The Academy is well placed to solve its problems, to improve the learning experiences of students and graduates, and to bring a vital contemporary flavour to all aspects of its art practice, study programmes, research activities and cross-sectoral links and networks.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI should establish a single and effective institutional mutual respect policy, which applies to both students and staff. Students and staff at the Academy need to be properly acquainted with this policy and, in the event of any incident, clear and simple procedural steps should be set out to resolve all issues publicly and transparently. Contact people (senior staff and student representatives responsible for the operation of the policy) should be assigned. Bad or unprofessional behaviour on part of students or staff must be called out, dealt with and corrected through retraining or through disciplinary procedures. Genuine complaints must be listened to and acted upon immediately.
- Revise (or establish) critical incident procedures at APURI – what happens when something serious goes wrong with a student, who should be contacted, who should deal immediately with the incident, who should be informed (including external agencies like police, doctors and lawyers)? The new procedures should be brainstormed and tested to see if they are workable, fit for purpose, clear and understandable.
- The system of dealing with the data gathered from students at APURI needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must understand that such student data are confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- The data gathered by means of APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience, to improve teacher performance and to improve the study programmes at APURI. At the moment, these data are not being used to improve quality.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students must 'buy-in' to a safe survey process if quality assurance is to work properly again at APURI.
- External stakeholders, professional organisations, civil society organisations and alumni need to be involved in quality development across APURI through far more regular (several times each year), formal, documented and acted upon mechanisms (through workshops, case study presentations, structured information gathering and focus groups). Pedagogical retraining must become a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI.
- Involve all APURI teachers and management staff directly in an ongoing and never-ending process of learning outcome revision, development and

modernisation. Learning outcomes have not been revised sufficiently in the period since the last institutional review and a recent review had a distinctly 'top-down' character.

- Prioritise a clear and transparent, timelined procedure for the allocation of contracts to 'external' teachers. Review the workload of teaching staff. Review and revise the way in which assistant teachers are 'used' in order to reduce their technical and administrative role and to maximise their teaching contact time with students. Employ more technicians, cleaning staff and security staff (especially night security staff) at APURI.
- A line-by-line APURI action plan should be established based on the SWOT analysis of the Department of Performing Arts staff. This urgent action plan should have a strict time schedule and a generous budget allocation.
- The social role of the institution now needs reimagination and a contemporary and strategic reframing to build on the enthusiasm and engagement of stakeholders, the vibrancy of Rijeka's cultural life, the strength of APURI's graduate and research projects, and APURI's historical prominence in the city and in the broader region.
- Completely revise the focus of all APURI quality assurance and enhancement policies, processes and procedures so that they become firmly student-centred, so that APURI quality assurance processes focus on improving and enhancing the learning experience of students, and so that APURI graduate attributes and outcomes can be truly relevant for the twenty-first-century world.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

II. Study programmes

Analysis

In general, study programmes at APURI are in line with the mission and the strategic goals of the higher education institution, especially as APURI is the only higher education institution in Croatia with study programmes oriented at applied arts, with the recommendation to develop further in this specific field. For example, as APURI notes in its strategy (mission and goals), there are 'possibilities' of expanding into the AV industry (sound, music, gaming, TV production).

However, the Academy's current programme offerings would need to be pedagogically modernised and strengthened across the board before any ventures into 'new programme

development areas' should be contemplated. Also, Academy staff would need deep retraining in terms of modern study programme design and development, with a particular focus on programme learning outcomes and graduate outcomes. Too many of the senior APURI staff who spoke to the Panel had the most confused ideas about study programme development.

In general terms, modernised and progressive approaches need to be adopted equally across all APURI departments and study programmes (not just two study programmes). Twenty-two years into the 21st century, there should be a much greater focus at APURI on interdisciplinarity and cohesion with theoretical courses. Theoretical lecturers described their struggle to make students and other lecturers understand the importance of theoretical learning. It is quite clear that many APURI students and lecturers do not understand the need to link theory and practice if the strongest, most progressive twenty-first-century art, design and media are to be created.

Sadly, a lack of modern pedagogical skills and education is a serious problem for anyone who claims to be a teacher at a European educational institution in 2022. 'Artist practitioners' cannot guarantee an education – at best they can facilitate a 'transfer of knowledge'. This is not an adequate educational approach for the 21st century. Students do not only need to 'learn what the professor knows' but need to learn how to learn for themselves and how to develop their artistic practice for themselves.

'Very personalised relationships' with students do not compensate for a lack of understanding of a learning outcomes approach, or for the absence of assessment criteria. Many APURI heads of department do not see any problems, because they do not understand the issues involved. Everyone concerned, APURI managers, dean, heads of department, coordinators and teachers, need to urgently develop and modernise their pedagogical skills and competencies.

There are progressive artistic or research projects at APURI, as well as elective courses, online subjects as part of YUFE, extracurricular activities and some twenty-first-century study programmes, but there needs to be a greater emphasis on the consistency of the approach taken across the entire Academy. Some study programmes are struggling to develop and others are drifting in terms of strategy and the clarity of their programme outcomes. According to teaching staff, the Art Education and Applied Arts programmes have become 'completely intertwined'. A clear redefinition of such programmes is now very necessary, reestablishing clear and modern differentiations in terms of programme learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

There seems to be little structured analysis of the justification for delivering study programmes. However, in meetings with the Expert Panel, APURI staff were very vague about the metrics for success in relation to study programmes.

There seems to be a lot of confusion between the status and purpose of elective and mandatory courses. It is not clear why Ceramics has not become a mandatory course, because teachers said that there is great and sustained student interest in the subject,

especially in its application in art and sculpture. Within the study programme, Ceramics as a mandatory course would make it more closely related to the Centre for Ceramics-Quark, which is now based on elective courses. One lecturer perceptively pointed out that two of the new centres are based on elective courses and that without making elective courses mandatory, things will not change. Some elective courses at APURI are leaders of change towards more contemporary or interdisciplinary approaches, but still their 'juniority' in the study programme pecking order persists, with the Academy favouring many well-established, traditional, immutable and sometimes quite tired study programme offerings.

There are strong ambiguities at APURI between fine art and crafts, which have certainly blurred within contemporary art. It seems necessary to point out the obvious to senior APURI staff: if learned the modern way, clay, glass and ceramics can be equally high-art material exhibited in contemporary art museums, and can be presented or welcomed as a very viable and specific niche within any twenty-first-century academy of applied arts. APURI's focus should be on developing and offering high-quality, modern applied art study programmes. A strong focus on modern ceramics practice would allow APURI to strongly differentiate itself from other academies in Croatia and across Europe. Proposals to strengthen such a concrete programme struggle to gain acceptance at the Sculpting Subdepartment and at APURI because contemporary and modern interdisciplinary art practice is not clearly understood by many APURI staff.

At the graduate level, programmes do foster commendable interdisciplinary forms and methods of work, project-problem teaching, and teamwork. Teaching staff were uncertain when asked whether the lessons from such strong graduate programme practice could be 'pasted across' to update and modernise APURI's undergraduate study programmes.

Equipment varies from department to department, with excessively large differences between departments and different programmes. Some Academy classrooms are very impressively equipped. Others have insufficient resources and equipment and have problems with space or organising classes because of inadequate allocations of permanent employees (Acting and Media is a good example of a roundly unsupported, under-resourced programme).

APURI is broadly conscious of the needs of society and has strong historical and working links with the city of Rijeka and with galleries, businesses and other cultural enterprises in the city and in the region. There is no room for complacency here. Many stakeholders called for more collaborations with the Academy, and detected a certain 'fatigue' in terms of APURI staff and student engagement. The field of pedagogy is potentially in a good position to develop cooperation between the Art Education study programme and art museums and galleries (as contemporary and popular mediators of cultural content). Potential collaborations will also allow for a reassertion of the obvious differentiations between Art Education and Applied Arts.

An alumni survey and result analysis has been carried out – some examples were provided, feedback from questionnaires, information from graduates of BA and MA programmes.

APURI has started formalising its cooperation with external stakeholders (employers, the public and private sector, and civil society) and there is an increasing number of collaborations with local external stakeholders and with other faculties of the University. However, many of the collaborations described with other University faculties were distinctly unimaginative and largely centred around ‘creating pieces of art for faculty buildings.’ This is not strong and imaginative twenty-first-century interdisciplinary collaboration.

Recommendations for improvement

- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority, training and development subject for all teaching and management staff at APURI.
- Make pedagogical retraining a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI.
- Stop pursuing the current ‘top-down’, vice-dean and management reviews of learning outcomes across the institution. Learning outcomes are the business of every teacher or professor. A strong working understanding of learning outcomes, modes of assessment, assessment criteria and ECTS must be core competencies for anyone who claims to be a teacher at any higher education institution in Europe.
- The system of dealing with the data gathered from students needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must be informed that such data are confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- The data gathered through APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students must ‘buy-in’ to the process if quality assurance is to start to work properly again at APURI.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

III. Teaching process and student support

Analysis

There is no clear evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes on many APURI study programmes. APURI learning outcomes are, for the most part, fundamentally flawed: either poorly written or 'written as content' and wholly unrelated to criteria for assessment. APURI reviews of academic achievement take place on a regular basis, but these focus on pass rates and progression rates.

It is unclear if APURI is providing evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes on the study programmes. Students complain about unclear learning outcomes, unclear assessment criteria and unfair exam procedures, but little or nothing is done to improve the situation. Student surveys are conducted, but the data from these surveys are not being used reliably to identify and solve problems.

APURI does publish a useful information package on its website; it is clear enough with a PDF document that consists of all the necessary information regarding every study programme. It contains the necessary documents, terms of procedure, additional requirements (there is even precise information about portfolio assessment) for enrolling in each study programme and frequently asked questions. Not surprisingly, most students confirmed through surveys that they get enrolment information on the web (43.6%). Students confirmed the information on the web is useful.

APURI does cooperate with high schools with the largest number of interested candidates and sends them online admission packages. For the last two years they have been carrying out surveys which are completed by candidates as soon as they have enrolled in the first year of undergraduate studies.

More open days would be recommended at APURI, since Acting and Media are (almost) the only study programme that has done this and on Facebook it can be seen that it went very well. Basic portfolio development should always be an important open day activity at any academy.

Current students did tell the Expert Panel that there was a persistent lack of timely information about enrolment (especially enrolment dates, locations and times). APURI staff and teachers were frequently unavailable or uncontactable when applicants, parents or teachers from other cities were looking for information about enrolment dates and times. Students pointed out that enrolment information should be available early each year, well in advance of enrolment dates. APURI students are still often contacted (frequently by phone) to answer basic enrolment questions for applicants as APURI enrolment dates approach. Current students suggested that APURI enrolment information should be 'more efficient at the official level'. Some of this may be a historical problem and the improved information on the website may only have been recently updated (starting around 2019/2020).

There should be clear APURI email contacts for new applicants, and those APURI contacts should be available to answer basic applicant questions. Enrolment information should be published on the website well in advance of enrolment dates. APURI must recognise

that enrolment is a very stressful and confusing experience for applicants and their families. Every effort must be made to guide and welcome the applicants through the process as effortlessly as possible.

In case of additional questions, APURI students do contact the Student Service, which students confirmed was very useful, helpful and responsive.

Recommendations for improvement

- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority, training and development subject for all APURI teaching and management staff.
- Learning outcomes must become the business of every teacher or professor at APURI. All APURI teachers and professors must be directly involved in writing and revising their own learning outcomes. A strong working understanding of learning outcomes, modes of assessment, assessment criteria and ECTS must become core competencies for every APURI teacher or professor.
- Learning outcomes must never be written as content. They must be written using active verbs (see Bloom's taxonomy). Learning outcomes must clearly spell out what students will be able to do on successful completion of each module or course.
- Continue to improve the website information about study programmes, for applicants, stakeholders and for current students.
- Make a special effort to have clear and simple enrolment information (dates, times, locations and responsive contact emails) very conspicuously available for applicants, their parents and their teachers on the home page of the APURI website as enrolment dates approach.
- The Academy should practice more open days open for the public (especially for future students), and departments should be available for a visit. All study programmes and departments at APURI should be encouraged to actively participate in such open day initiatives.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Analysis

APURI has made efforts over the past five years to increase staff numbers and, despite Ministry restrictions, has managed to get new staff appointed. For each teacher whose employment was completed, teachers were hired, but at the same time additional jobs

were created for assistants. The procedure of election to the title of teacher is in accordance with laws and regulations, which ensures their adequate qualification.

Many professors, especially full and associate professors, have too many teaching hours. A different distribution of teaching hours could partly solve the problem of the large number of hours for some teachers.

In general, assistant professors are close to the standardised teaching hours (300 hours). Most assistants have almost double the standardised teaching hours (they should be working 150 hours).

Numerous teaching staff mentioned that they are lacking technicians in workshops, as well as assistants (currently 14 assistants work as external associates). Since the last accreditation some improvements have been made (and 8 new assistants have been appointed). Many external teachers have been collaborating with the Academy for more than 10 years without a clear perspective of their employment status. From any international point of view, this is incomprehensible. Across Croatia, there is something of an expectation that 'external' teachers are usually given contracts after a maximum of six or seven years.

The ratio of students and full-time teachers at the higher education institution ensures a high quality of study and is within the legal norms. There is certainly enough space at the Academy to host more students. Low student to teacher ratios permit personal and direct approaches to each student, which is very important for this kind of study programme.

Teacher workload ensures appropriate distribution of teaching, scientific/artistic activities, professional and personal development and administrative duties. Teachers have a lot of teaching hours, but they still participate in a number of scientific/artistic projects. If they are given additional administrative tasks, it happens that the assistants, already quite busy, have to take on additional tasks. By increasing the number of administrative staff, teachers could be partially relieved and assistant workload would also be improved.

Because a lot of teachers have too many teaching hours, it is no surprise to see quite a poor level of research and other activities (Table 4.4). Many more activities have been mentioned in meetings and action plans.

The Project Office has been established to improve teachers' artistic activities and professional and personal development. This should prove to be useful administrative support for teachers.

Teachers are qualified for the course/courses they deliver, although many teachers do need urgent pedagogical training and a modernisation of their teaching and assessment approaches. Methods and criteria of teacher selection are defined by different laws, regulations and norms and, generally speaking, teacher election procedures are aligned with the relevant legislation.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI needs to conduct a review of teaching and working hours to make sure that hours are distributed fairly and that particular groups of teachers (assistants, for example) are not excessively tied up in more administrative roles.
- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority training and development subject for ALL teaching and management staff at APURI. Though teachers are qualified for the courses they deliver, they urgently need modern formal teaching qualifications to bring them up to speed with current practice in art and design education.
- Make pedagogical retraining a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI. All staff should have a strong working knowledge of student-centred learning, learning outcomes, assessment and feedback, and ECTS.
- APURI must do whatever it can to incentivise teacher take-up of available staff pedagogical training and development opportunities. APURI teachers and professors desperately need structured, modern pedagogical training.
- The Project Office could and should be also engaged in supporting the activities concerning the improvement of teaching competencies.
- Use European mobility funds to send APURI teachers to other art and design institutions across Europe, to job shadow and to experience the most up-to-date art education learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- To increase the transparency of the entire promotion and progression system, APURI departments should clearly define their criteria and update the list of staffing needs each year. It would be useful for this information to be published on the web.
- Teachers' offices are not equipped for artistic work. If needed, some extra space could easily be provided by reorganising the current use of space.
- Establish an Academy library to provide the necessary core texts for the students of Academy study programmes.
- APURI staff (teachers and managers) must learn to understand the very necessary, symbiotic links between 'theoretical' or academic learning and practical learning in twenty-first-century art education.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

V. Scientific/artistic activity

Analysis

The Self-Evaluation Report mentions that from 2017 to 2021, APURI staff (internal and external members) authored over 50 internationally recognised publications, which is a very important shift from the previous period.

The SER also mentions an impressive number of artworks produced by APURI staff.

In accordance with the recommendations of the previous accreditation report, art research and practice have been acknowledged as valid research methods, which is highly commendable. In collaboration with University experts, the criteria for applying for open calls have been changed in order to help artistic projects meet the requirements of scientific open calls. This is very good practice.

The Academy has already achieved various forms of cooperation through projects and cooperation with the local community. It has recognised the potential of such initiatives and established a Project Office to help teachers develop and structure their project proposals. The Expert Panel recognises the potential of APURI educational initiatives (workshops, lifelong learning, summer schools, student exhibitions, student performances). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of these initiatives have been impossible to implement, but the option of conducting some of these online has also been noticed and should be encouraged, even if the pandemic comes to an end. Such programmes could greatly contribute to the broader national and international visibility and prestige of APURI.

From this accreditation period, APURI has implemented a system of rewarding the artistic and scientific achievements of its employees (the practice of commending is mentioned in the Self-Evaluation Report). A system of similar commending and awards for student work has already been implemented.

The different study programmes agree that they receive sufficient administrative support from the Academy in terms of research and/or artistic projects, yet some of them would appreciate greater support in terms of technical and space requirements.

APURI (co)organises meetings, symposiums, conferences and webinars, with both national and international impact. For example, conferences during the Glowing Globe projects: Science-Fiction-Art (2019), Sound of Silence (2020), Artificial Art Alienated (2021) and Ethics and Aesthetics in Postdigital Art (forthcoming in 2022) are clearly interdisciplinary and international. APURI scientific-teaching staff members participate in numerous conferences outside of the Academy.

Recommendations for improvement

- It seems that in the current situation – in terms of both staff and the already running artistic /research projects – a PhD programme should be created and promoted at APURI.
- Some APURI staff already participate in the activities of the UNIRI doctoral school, including thesis mentoring. The project of an international and interdisciplinary PhD in art research, mentioned during the meetings, is to be absolutely supported and should become a best practice model for teachers across APURI.
- Work hard to raise the international profile of APURI.

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

In terms of quality assurance policy documentation, p. 17 of the SER includes details and hyperlinks to numerous relevant documents, including the 'Quality Policy, University of Rijeka Regulations on Quality Assurance, the APU Regulations on Quality Assurance and Improvement System, the APU Study Quality Handbook 2019, and the University of Rijeka Study Quality Handbook 2022, where the president of the APU Quality Committee was one of the editors'.

The Panel's discussions with teachers and the Management, as well as the SER, clearly detail the regular and systematic institutional evaluation of all activities.

Administrative documentation is generated on study programmes, the teaching process, student support, support to students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, learning resources, scientific/artistic activity, professional activity, etc.

All the normal functions and processes of quality assurance seem to be working at APURI, with student data regularly gathered through obligatory surveys and questionnaires, with managers and staff meeting regularly to review processes and to make improvements to study programmes, to Academy processes and to the student experience. On paper, and from a documentary, regulatory and administrative point of view, all seems well.

However, institutional policy documents must lead to effective institutional procedures. Effective procedures must lead to constant improvements in quality.

APURI has institutionally lost its way in terms of effecting timely and meaningful procedures to solve urgent problems of students and staff. Fundamentally, quality assurance procedures must serve to improve the learning experience of students, to enhance their learning and to increase and modernise their learning opportunities, so that graduates will not only have learned about what is needed now, but will have the skills, tools and capabilities to imagine and create truly innovative work and the art and cultural industries required for the future development of society and the world. One of the core principles for any educational institution must be the ongoing, neverending development of the study programmes and learning outcomes, using quality assurance tools, valued input from students and stakeholders, and the imagination and experience

of highly talented staff. This study programme and learning outcome development process has, with a few exceptions, seriously lost its way at APURI.

Furthermore, APURI staff, through a pattern of condoned, ignored and habitual behaviour, have now broken several important tools and mechanisms which any functioning quality assurance system (at any institution in the world) would depend upon as triggers to indicate that immediate, urgent change is necessary. Student surveys are the prime example of such a broken tool. The recommendations of previous evaluation reports have not been sufficiently acted upon, or have been ignored.

At APURI, warnings are being ignored, complaints are being hidden and the perception of a management culture of 'sweeping things under the rug' (not the words of the Expert Panel, but rather those of several students, staff and alumni) has taken hold. This culture must change immediately.

At APURI, issues of mutual respect are covered by numerous different policies, some applying to staff and others applying 'only' to students. As a result, some staff and students may have developed an impression that mutual respect means one thing to staff and something else to students. At worst, this can lead to a hierarchical approach. The Expert Panel asked teachers whether a mutual respect policy existed and the response was... 'the University took care of this, but it's just a matter of Management following it. The Academy is part of the University but it has strange ways of acting.'

The Expert Panel would recommend the development of a single, short, clear and concise APURI mutual respect policy for students and for staff. Clear procedures should be outlined in the policy, with contact people (staff and student representatives responsible for the operation of the policy) assigned and trained. Any mutual respect policy must operate mutually, and must apply to all staff and all students.

Many APURI departments do not have regular working discussions with other departments – they meet for administrative meetings, academic councils and various administrative voting sessions, etc. but are very isolated in their own activities. Regular and effective working collaboration meetings (not talking shops) between all APURI departments should be established to discuss common problems and best practices, to understand commonalities between departments, and to find ways of working together on collaborations and on strategic developments.

Two of the SWOT analyses conducted for the SER were very impressive: those done by external stakeholders and the Department of Performing Arts.

This is excellent data and should be carefully interrogated, line by line, in order to address and rectify the open and honest concerns and suggestions of the Department of Performing Arts students and staff. This SWOT demands a line-by-line action plan response, with a strict time schedule and a budget allocation.

In the case of the SWOT analysis conducted by external stakeholders, again, much of these are excellent, fair and honest data, shared with the Academy with the sole intention of improving teacher, student and institutional engagement with enthusiastic

stakeholders, who obviously understand, value and are concerned about the importance of APURI in the cultural life of the city and of Croatia. Again, an urgent APURI action plan should be based on these stakeholder views, with a fixed timescale and with allocated resources.

Mutual respect was also mentioned by more than one stakeholder in the meeting with the Expert Panel. 'Communication between professors and students should be improved. Direct communication and mutual respect between teachers and students.' It's a serious problem when external stakeholders are noticing and highlighting teachers' unprofessional (the stakeholders' words) attitude and lack of respect towards their own students.

In discussions with the Panel, both stakeholders and alumni enthusiastically expressed strong interest in being involved with Academy processes and developments (including working directly with students and assisting with study programme development) in much more formalised, regular (several times a year, not just once 'every so often') and structured ways (through workshops, case study presentations and structured information gathering and focus groups).

APURI does have many project links with cultural enterprises, galleries, artistic activities and research projects, in the city and the local area, nationally and internationally. However, these links and networks are not being used sufficiently as a resource to help with the development of the institution, the study programmes, the proposal and development of new study programmes, and the improvement of the student and graduate experience. Stakeholders report a disinterested 'fatigue or complacency' in the attitude of APURI students and staff with regard to the cultural activities of the city and urge even more links, deeper links with the institution. APURI graduate and research projects and the Centre for Innovative Media do have strong links with contemporary practice, but have few links with the core undergraduate educational activity at APURI. Many aspects of APURI's basic teaching and learning business continue in very siloed, old-fashioned ways, unrelated to cultural activity in the city and detached from much of the contemporary art world or needs of society, students and graduates. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on international projects and collaborations – some continue, but noticeably fewer than before.

Many experienced and enthusiastic internal stakeholders (staff members, teaching staff) are either not being consulted or listened to. Too many staff, even senior staff, have no clear understanding of the institution's decision-making processes, rationales or strategies. There is far too much inconsistency across programmes and departments, with some well-established departments doing very well indeed, with plenty of equipment, materials and resources, lots of teaching hours, nicely appointed spaces and the ear of Management. Other departments have to struggle with too many casually employed staff expected to work in positions of high responsibility and leadership, with

unfairly inadequate allocations of space, resources and equipment. This is institutionally inconsistent and unfair and weakens the cohesive collegial atmosphere at APURI.

The focus of the APURI quality policy is not firmly on students, on improving the quality of APURI processes so that the learning experience of students is improved and enhanced and so that APURI graduate attributes and outcomes can be relevant for the twenty-first-century world. In conclusion, the APURI quality policy is not strongly student-centred.

There are still serious staffing problems at some departments, with large numbers of very casual (so called 'external') teachers being employed for up to 12 years without any contracts, without a clear understanding of how or when contracts might be issued and, worst of all, expected to work in positions of great responsibility and leadership, dealing directly (and very effectively) with students, teaching classes, writing whole courses and conducting assessment and feedback. These external teachers are extremely impressive, talented and committed people, with a very firm focus on their students achieving great outcomes. The Academy should make it a top priority to routinely issue contracts to these teachers as soon as possible and to ensure that 'external' teachers are not left regularly waiting for more than five or six years with no clear understanding of how, why or when any contracts might be issued. The Management should make a real effort to regularly and transparently explain the recruitment and contract-issuing realities, constraints, processes and timelines to all relevant staff. The Panel understand the national restrictions in place, but other Croatian universities and institutions are doing a better, fairer job of this contractual issue. APURI should talk to them.

Many teachers also asserted that there was a distinct lack of technical staff in many departments. Assistant teachers roundly complained about the way in which teaching hours were being allocated and used, and suggested that simple changes would allow them to be freed up to teach more, if they were required to do fewer technical and administrative tasks.

It is noticeable that many teaching staff at APURI are in urgent need of modern pedagogical training and professional development. Many managers and teachers have completely outmoded and inappropriate (frankly unprofessional) attitudes to teaching practice and to basic student-centred concepts like assessment and feedback, a learning outcomes approach, ECTS, study programme development and even mutual respect.

Pedagogical retraining must become a priority for all staff at APURI. The University provides such workshops and classes and these should easily be developed and adapted (probably with the assistance of external or international collaborators) in order to be completely relevant to the modern teaching and learning of art, design and media curriculum. APURI staff must understand that updating their pedagogical skills is a pressing and essential priority, for themselves (in order to acquire contemporary pedagogical coping skills) but most importantly for their students.

The quality assurance problems at APURI are not large and can easily be solved. The data already exist and staff and the Management are well aware of most or all of the problems.

The Academy is well placed to solve its problems, to improve the learning experiences of students and graduates and to bring a vital contemporary flavour to all aspects of its art practice, study programmes, research activities and cross-sectoral links and networks. Now is the time for change.

Recommendations for improvement

- Establish an effective APURI mutual respect policy, which applies to both students and staff. Students and staff at the Academy need to be properly acquainted with this policy and, in the event of any incident, clear and simple procedural steps should be set out to resolve issues publicly and transparently. Contact people (staff and student representatives responsible for the operation of the policy) should be assigned and trained to implement the policy. Bad or unprofessional behaviour on the part of students or staff must be called out, dealt with and corrected through retraining or through disciplinary procedures. Genuine complaints must be listened to and acted upon immediately.
- Revise (or establish) critical incident procedures at APURI – what happens when something serious goes wrong with a student, who should be contacted, who should deal immediately with the incident, who should be informed (including external agencies like police, doctors and lawyers)? The new procedures should be brainstormed and tested to determine if they are workable, fit for purpose, clear and understandable.
- The system of dealing with the data gathered from students needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must be informed that such data are confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- The data gathered through APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI. At the moment, these data are not being used to improve quality.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students must ‘buy-in’ to the process if quality assurance is to start functioning properly again at APURI.
- External stakeholders, professional organisations, civil society organisations and alumni need to be involved in quality development across APURI through far more regular (several times each year), formal, documented and acted upon mechanisms (through workshops, case study presentations and structured information gathering and focus groups).

- Prioritise a clear, transparent, timelined procedure for the allocation of contracts to 'external' teachers. Review the teaching workload of teaching staff. Review and revise the way in which assistant teachers are 'used' in order to reduce their technical and administrative role and to maximise their teaching contact time with students.
- Employ more technicians, cleaning staff and security staff (especially night security staff) at APURI.
- An APURI action plan should be established based on the SWOT analysis of the Department of Performing Arts staff and the SWOT analysis done by external stakeholders. This urgent action plan should have a strict time schedule and a generous budget allocation.
- The social role of the institution now needs reimagination and a contemporary and strategic reframing to build on the enthusiasm and engagement of stakeholders, the vibrancy of Rijeka's cultural life, the strength of APURI's graduate and research projects and APURI's historical prominence in the city and in the broader region.
- Completely revise the focus of ALL APURI quality assurance and enhancement policies, processes and procedures so that they are firmly student-centred, so that APURI quality assurance processes focus on improving and enhancing the learning experience of students and so APURI graduate attributes and outcomes can be truly relevant for the twenty-first-century world.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

APURI has fixed some of the problems identified by the 2015 report. However, some serious issues have not been rectified and in the seven years since the last accreditation process, new problems have also arisen.

The 2015 evaluation identified tensions between chairs and departments. Now, there is a distinct 'inconsistency' in the way different departments and study programmes are

treated, prioritised and resourced at the Academy. This needs to be levelled up, with space, resources, finances and teaching hours more fairly distributed.

In 2016, the undergraduate study programme of Acting and Media and the two-year postgraduate specialist study programme of Acting, Media and Culture were 'transferred' from the University to the Academy of Applied Arts. The 'arrival' of the new study programme necessitated the creation of a Subdepartment of Acting at the Academy. This subdepartment has not been properly integrated into APURI. The new subdepartment feels detached from the institution, from the other departments and from APURI Management and rightly feels it is not being properly or fairly resourced.

The problem of differentiation between MA and BA levels identified in 2015 seems to have been mostly fixed (see section 2.2, p. 65 below), with some inconsistencies persisting.

However, learning outcomes across the undergraduate study programmes are still a huge problem, and many teachers are not interested in learning how learning outcomes are meant to work, or how learning outcomes are meant to be connected or related to criteria for assessment.

Effective procedures for monitoring and improving the quality of the study programmes (including students and stakeholders) have not been developed and this remains a serious problem at APURI.

With a few exceptions, too many teachers, professors and managers at APURI simply do not understand or respect modern processes, modes and mechanisms for study programme development. Mechanisms for monitoring the quality of study programmes (especially the student survey system) have been effectively 'broken' by staff to the point where students are now afraid to express what they think about teachers or the courses which they are taking.

The Academy has not established effective mechanisms and structures for the improvement and development of teaching, learning and assessment skills.

Too few APURI staff engage with the pedagogical development workshops and courses which are provided by the University. Even younger assistant teachers bemoan the fact that older professors should urgently update their teaching methods and external stakeholders seem regularly embarrassed by the attitude of APURI teachers towards their students, and by their obvious disrespect for basic principles of mutual respect.

Finally, problems with the Academy 'library' (a bookshelf of professor-owned books) were identified in 2015 and proper development of the 'library' was encouraged. These problems have conspicuously and quite deliberately not been addressed since then.

There is a distinct lack of understanding amongst APURI teaching staff of the necessity in 2022 to link undergraduate practical study with theoretical study. As a result, the importance of an Academy library is simply not understood or prioritised by APURI staff. This is seriously inhibiting the learning outcomes of students and graduates.

Recommendations for improvement

- All teachers, professors and managers at APURI need to understand and respect modern teaching, learning and assessment processes. Many more APURI staff need to engage with the pedagogical development workshops and courses which are provided by the University.
- Modern study programme revision and development must become a strategic priority, training and development subject for all teaching and management staff at APURI.
- Make pedagogical retraining a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI.
- Revise APURI internal evaluations and reviews in order to act upon the very real and pressing everyday teaching and learning concerns of students and teaching staff.
- Properly integrate the Subdepartment of Acting into APURI. The new subdepartment needs proper integration with the other 'more established' departments and needs fair allocations of space, staff, funding and resources.
- The 'inconsistencies' in the way different departments and study programmes are treated, prioritised and resourced at Academy needs to be levelled up. Space, resources, finances and teaching hours must be fairly distributed.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

In terms of regulatory compliance and the generation of policy documents and mechanisms, APURI very publicly supports and preserves academic freedom. "The quality policy is based on expertise, knowledge, skills and ethics in the assumed responsibility for the implementation of the quality policy, to which all employees of the Academy contribute. Ethical principles in the activities of the University of Rijeka, as well as the Academy, are regulated by the Code of Ethics of the University of Rijeka.'

In fact, it could be argued that some senior APURI academics are taking their academic freedom and autonomy almost too far, deciding for themselves to teach in the way they choose to teach (even if their way is completely old-fashioned, outdated and largely irrelevant to the needs and requirements of other teaching staff, the institution and society. Most importantly, some teachers are ignoring the needs and requirements of twenty-first-century students.

With academic freedom comes great responsibility. Some senior APURI staff are choosing to exercise their freedoms, whilst ignoring their responsibilities. This brings the academic integrity of these staff members into question. Too often, senior staff expressed their identity as artists, almost totally independently of their identity as 'professional educators'. Too often, students are being told to 'work their problems out through art', when APURI quality assurance processes and senior staff are effectively ignoring their concerns or are vigorously pushing back against student voice and against any form of criticism.

Teachers are refusing to recognise the very real need to update and modernise their individual teaching competencies and skills. Senior managers do not understand the basic principles and processes of modern European study programme development. Senior staff, both teaching staff and managers, are ignoring or routinely dismissing the very real needs, requirements and concerns of other teaching staff, their external stakeholders and their students.

The fundamental principles advocated by the Code of Ethics of the University of Rijeka are 'human rights, respect for person's integrity and dignity, equality and fairness, academic freedom, professional behaviour, compliance with laws and legal proceedings. Unacceptable behaviours, in accordance with the code, are: discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and any form of prejudice.'

'Bullying' is not mentioned in the general descriptor of the fundamental principles of the Code of Ethics. At APURI, everyday gender-based, inappropriate, unacceptable, bullying 'comments' are being made, unchallenged by anyone and unreported, because there is no clear procedure for making complaints and for having such bullying incidents effectively dealt with.

One instance was cited of a teacher 'not teaching here anymore' as a result of unprofessional behaviour (towards other teachers and students). Eventually, student complaints were heard and the teacher was dismissed. What was not mentioned in this explanation was that at least one junior teacher felt compelled to 'quit' because of their 'horrible' treatment at the hands of the teacher in question, having had no effective action taken by the APURI Management based on the inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour towards them.

At least one other extremely serious and protracted incident involving a student who seriously harassed or attacked other students was explained as an 'incident of serious mental health'. The Dean explained that, 'this was sexual harassment not violence, a student who harasses through Viber and messaging. This person was physically and mentally ill: we monitored him with parents and teachers, so that the student was able to complete his studies'.

There was no mention of how (or if) the incidents were resolved for victims.

The Dean insisted, 'It's not true that the Academy didn't react. We have a big project dealing with these kinds of topics.' Once again, no matter how great the research projects

relating to such topics or issues are, if their results are not used to inform, develop, improve and enhance institutional policies and procedures, then the institution will not end up with appropriate and effective behaviours.

Too often, the reports of student victims were repeatedly and protractedly ignored or dismissed as unimportant, too many staff did nothing to act on student concerns, and students were eventually advised to contact the police themselves to 'resolve any issues'. Clearly, APURI does not have any effective, immediate, automatic, critical incident procedures which are sensitive and sympathetic to victims and which have the protection of students as their core principle.

Students told the Expert Panel, 'I got some help from the Ethics Committee, but not all of the Committee's recommendations were implemented by the Management. They are keeping very quiet about it. This student did some other acts of violence against other students. The Academy heard everything but they did nothing. All of the students knew about it. Nothing was done about it.'

Too many students do not believe anything effective will be done. Those correctly making the complaints are often targeted as 'the problem'.

Even some external stakeholders mentioned the 'unprofessional and inappropriate' attitude of some APURI teaching staff towards their students and cited a need for teachers to 'understand basic principles of mutual respect'.

'The Academy has its own Ombudsperson within the Student Union of the Academy. Student representatives participate in the work of the Academy Council and have all the rights as other members of the Council. At each Council meeting, students report on their activities and possible problems. Conflicts and irregularities are resolved on different levels, if possible among colleagues, and then at chairs or departments, in the Ethics Committee and Disciplinary Committee, or by involving the Dean, depending on the type of misconduct.'

As can be seen from the above, APURI is not short of administrative mechanisms, policy documents and paper procedures and the student ombudsman is potentially a welcome and useful initiative. However, the current scaled response starts by attempting to 'resolve problems among colleagues' and only then escalates to chairs and departments and then becomes more structured, with the Ethics Committee and the Disciplinary Committee involved, or by involving the Dean.

A scaled response usually takes time. There should be clear and immediate action responses in case of serious or critical incidents. Not every response should start by 'trying to resolve the problem among colleagues.' Often, the situation will have gone way past a local resolution by the time any official complaint is made. Sometimes a scaled response is completely inappropriate.

Contracted employees at APURI will ultimately be protected by aspects of Croatian employment law. External teachers, casual staff and students are in a far more precarious and vulnerable position, have fewer protections, are totally dependent on senior staff for

the resolution of problems, are very low in the APURI administrative hierarchies and will struggle to have conflicts and irregularities effectively resolved.

'The Academy has provided a tool for authenticating graduate papers (Turnitin), applies the Code of Ethics of the University of Rijeka and has established the Ethics Committee of the Academy.'

It must be pointed out that Turnitin is merely a text-matching tool. The tool is only as good as the user: the professor or the academic manager who is using the tool. The use of Turnitin is only effective if it fits with broader policies and procedures on professional and ethical behaviour, with students learning from the earliest point in their undergraduate studies about correct academic referencing, academic attribution and the appropriate, professional, academic use of other people's intellectual property. It is usual in educational institutions across Europe to develop a separate policy on issues of academic integrity, including plagiarism. As ever, any such policy would only be as effective as the procedures which would emanate from it.

The APURI SER does not report data on the detection of any cases of plagiarism. This is often a firm indicator that plagiarism is simply undetected at the institution. At worst, if plagiarism cannot be discovered, then institutionally 'the problem doesn't exist'. This is a serious concern.

The APURI SER does mention the Academic Writing course as part of the Academy's undergraduate study programmes of Art Education, Applied Arts, and Graphic Design and Visual Communications, where students learn the basics of academic writing and are introduced to the problems of plagiarism, copying and other violations of copyright and intellectual property.

As ever, on paper there are numerous APURI administrative and regulatory mechanisms to systematically address issues of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating etc.).

However, the Expert Panel did hear (anecdotally, at least) reports of some APURI professors 'doing deals' with students around grading, exams and assessment. 'Some students who don't put in effort through the year can get similar grades to a student who worked hard. I don't feel good if a person who didn't put in the effort gets a similar grade to me. Some professors have a deal with certain students. A student bragged that they had a deal with a specific professor.' Are such incidents officially reported? If they are not reported, the question must be asked 'why not'?

It must also be pointed out that, in a context where the data gathered by means of student feedback, surveys and questionnaires are routinely used to 'call out', identify, publicly humiliate and even threaten individual students, then we have institutionally entered a space in which students will feel safer keeping their concerns and criticisms to themselves. Many inappropriate and unprofessional incidents at APURI may be passing unreported, undetected and unresolved.

Recommendations for improvement

- Revise the University Code of Ethics (or establish an APURI code of ethics) which includes 'bullying' in its general descriptor. Establish clear and simple procedures whereby gender-based derogatory comments, harassment and other misbehaviour can be reported and quickly dealt with (i.e. correctly resolved, not hidden or dismissed).
- APURI needs to develop a mutual respect policy which applied to both students and staff. The mutual respect policy should spell out clear responsibilities and should detail simple processes for resolving mutual respect issues and incidents of unprofessional and inappropriate behaviour (including bullying and some teachers' behaviour towards students, most particularly towards female students).
- The Expert Panel would recommend the immediate development of a separate APURI policy on issues of academic integrity. Students should learn about such issues from the very beginning of their undergraduate studies, as part of their learning on correct academic referencing, attribution and the use of other people's intellectual property. APURI staff and students should clearly understand the limited role of text-matching tools like Turnitin and should understand that plagiarism is often part of a wider problem of academic integrity.
- Any incidents of possible deals between students and professors should be confronted, investigated and very publicly dealt with. Any professors engaging in such wholly inappropriate behaviour should be severely disciplined. APURI as an institution needs more transparency and professionalism in relation to this area of student support. The guiding principle is that all students and staff must have complete confidence in the assessment and evaluation procedures and standards of the institution. Right now, many APURI students do not have confidence in the evaluation, assessment and grading system.
- Review the appropriateness of the scaled response to problems which is highlighted above. Scaled responses usually take time and often put too much inappropriate pressure and responsibility on the victim. There should be clear and immediate action responses in case of serious or critical incidents and senior staff should lead in terms of responsibility. Also, not every response should start by 'trying to resolve the problem among colleagues'. Often, the situation will have gone past a local resolution by the time any official complaint is made.
- Sometimes a scaled response to critical incidents is completely inappropriate.

Quality grade:

Unsatisfactory 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

'The official website of the Academy is one of the forms of informing the public. The Academy has publicly available information about its work, including information on study programmes, admission criteria, predicted learning outcomes, qualifications, and procedures applied in teaching, learning and evaluation. In addition to the website, the Academy informs the public through public events and manifestations, as well as through advertising in the media. The new official website of the Academy contains all the essential information intended for students and external stakeholders. To ensure the quality of information published on the website, in December 2019, the Website Commission was formed. Furthermore, information on study programmes is published in full detail, and learning outcomes for each course are published in detailed implementation plans, which are only available within the institution. The website also contains news and announcements related to the activities of students and teachers, which are potentially interesting to internal and external stakeholders and the general public (e.g. exhibition announcements, plays...). To communicate with students, the Academy also uses e-mail and social networks. The e-learning system (Merlin) was minimally used in the past, but recently there has been an increasing number of teachers using it. During the pandemic period, a large number of teachers established a platform for communication via Microsoft Teams. So far, the website is in Croatian and partially in English. The navigation menu on the website consists of the following elements: Academy, Studying, Artistic Activities, International Cooperation.'

The Academy should practice open days (open to the general public) more often (especially for future students). All study programmes and departments at APURI should be encouraged to actively participate in open day initiatives, should conduct free workshops on the specific portfolio requirements for their study programmes, and should be available to answer questions from applicants, parents and teachers from schools.

Students did report a case where an APURI professor offered an applicant information about portfolio preparation 'for a fee'. The idea that any APURI professor might take advantage of an applicant to charge a fee for such basic information (as if they were providing some sort of additional tuition) should never occur. The Expert Panel sincerely hopes that any such incident was isolated. Either way, any such incident should have come to the attention of the APURI Management, should have been investigated immediately and the outcome or correction should have been made public as part of the institution's

standard quality assurance processes. Instead, it appears that the incident was never reported, never investigated and no action was ever taken.

APURI does now publish a useful applicant information package on its website. It seems to be clear enough, with a PDF document that consists of all the necessary information on every study programme. It contains the necessary documents, terms of procedure, additional requirements (there is even precise information about portfolio assessment) for enrolling in each study programme and frequently asked questions. Surveys confirmed that most student applicants get enrolment information online (43.6%) and students confirmed that the information available on the website was useful.

Current students did tell the Expert Panel that there is a persistent lack of timely information about enrolment (especially enrolment dates, locations and times) and that APURI staff and teachers are frequently unavailable when applicants, parents or teachers from other cities or other countries are looking for information about enrolment. Students pointed out that enrolment information should be available early each year, well in advance of enrolment dates. APURI students are still often contacted (frequently by phone) to answer very basic enrolment questions which applicants have as APURI enrolment dates approach. Current students suggested that APURI enrolment information should be 'more efficient at the official level'. Some of this may be a historical problem and the improved information on the website may well have been only very recently updated (starting around 2019/2020). There should be clear APURI email contacts for new applicants and those APURI contacts should be available to answer basic applicant questions. Enrolment information should be published on the website well in advance of the enrolment dates.

For additional questions, students contact the Student Service, which students found very useful and helpful.

The Academy does have data on student pass and drop-out rates (past 5 years' information included). Section 1.4 of the SER does not make clear whether pass rate analyses, drop-out rates, etc. are published on the website. The SER does allude to website information about graduate employment (and says that this information will soon be developed further).

Data show the average duration and pass rates for undergraduate and graduate study programmes within approximately seven years (within 4 years for the Acting and Media study programme).

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue to improve the website information about study programmes, for applicants, stakeholders and for current students.

- Make a special effort to have clear and simple enrolment information (dates, times, locations and responsive contact emails) very conspicuously available for applicants, their parents and their teachers on the home page of the APURI website as enrolment dates approach.
- Translate the website into foreign languages selectively and iteratively (not all at once because this is hugely expensive) and as part of a concerted plan of institutional internationalisation. This plan should include the introduction of foreign language study programmes and courses at APURI, more ambitious reciprocal teacher exchanges with partner institutions abroad (APURI teachers going abroad to teach and learn for a time, with teachers from foreign institutions coming to APURI to teach).
- The Academy should practice open days (open to the general public) more often (especially for future students) and departments should be available for a visit. All study programmes and departments at APURI should be encouraged to actively participate in such open day initiatives, should conduct free workshops on the specific portfolio requirements for their study programmes, and should be available to answer questions from applicants, parents and teachers from schools.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

As already stated, APURI has historically had a strong consciousness of its social role within the city of Rijeka, within the broader region and across Croatia. It is a little disturbing to read that key stakeholders (according to the stakeholder SWOT analysis) are observing a developing disinterest in local social and cultural activities on part of APURI students and staff. Stakeholder projects are continuing and the social role of APURI is still important, but a certain fatigue or complacency may have set in and the social role and position of the institution could do with a prioritised re-examination and a contemporary reframing.

Through artistic, scientific and research projects done in partnership with the economy (private and/or public sectors), the level of professionalism was improved between 2016 and 2020, as well as the professional competences of students, with the aim of contributing to the development of creative industries. For example, between 2014 and 2020, the Academy, in partnership with Rijeka 2020 d.o.o., participated in the EU

Commission Programme on Rights, Equality and Citizenship. In cooperation with the Croatian Business Council for Sustainable Development and Rijeka 2020 d.o.o., the Academy implemented the Diversity Mixer project, which also included the signing of the Diversity Charter. The Academy also collaborated with the City of Opatija on the Riviera 4 Seasons project.

In the Expert Panel's meeting with highly enthusiastic, engaged and committed stakeholders, opinions were heard including, 'I wish there were more collaborations. The English language is critically missing from the curriculum at the Academy. Most of the students need this. Rijeka is bursting with art and design studios. English extends your market so much if you are an artist or a designer.'

Both stakeholders and alumni expressed a strong wish to be involved much more, more regularly and more formally, in the activities and development of the institution, the study programmes and the students. All of them clearly understood the importance of APURI in the cultural life of the city and the region.

The Panel understands that educational staff across the globe are fatigued following the additional stresses and pressures of the pandemic and that a more public-facing, social role has been a difficult thing for any European educational institution to sustain and nurture over the past few years. However, it would now be important to reimagine APURI's social role in a fresh, contemporary and very twenty-first-century way.

Though the new centres are mostly only getting started, part of their role is to 'make us more visible in the community', so there is a key social component to their mission statement.

Academy students are also involved in commendable local projects.

It is encouraging to see that the Academy does have some focus on, and grants some real recognition for, socially responsible, twenty-first-century student activity such as extracurricular activity, volunteering and ecology.

The Centre for Innovative Media (CIM) was founded in 2017, with the aim of connecting new media art, science and technology, based on ethics, ecology and self-sustaining systems.

The Centre for Ceramics (established in 2018) conducts research primarily in the field of object design, and interdisciplinary research within international, interinstitutional and university-based artistic/scientific projects, as well as projects done in collaboration with the economic sector.

The centres were described as 'small, because they are just beginning, but very large in terms of plans and projects which have been started. Each centre is one person or two people; work goes slowly, months of work to get started.'

Rather tellingly and disappointingly, when asked how the university supports or resources the work of the centres, the response was, 'Not much. The centres are part of our regulations on job positions and were set up to encourage exchange and make us more visible in the community, to enable the teachers to realise their wishes and projects

which they can't do within the teaching process, develop new projects and get some funds that can be used in the Academy.'

Whilst the centres and the Project Office are mostly (with the exception of the CIM) only getting started and whilst their precise role must be allowed a little time to evolve, the work of the centres should not aim only to make the Academy 'more visible *in the community*' but also to conspicuously frame strong contemporary innovation and artistic, interdisciplinary research and projects *for the university leaders*, effectively 'making the Academy more visible within the University.' Currently, there is too much focus on merely 'creating artworks for the University.' Both the University and the Academy have to start working together on more truly contemporary, interdisciplinary collaborations: artists working with scientists, artists working with the medical profession, artists working with economists. Both the University and Academy staff must creatively imagine what such innovative, interdisciplinary activity should look like, why it should happen and how it will benefit students, the Academy, the University and the economy.

There was also a welcome (if aspirational) perspective on the potential for the work of the centres to impact positively on undergraduate studies at the Academy: 'through a stronger development of the centres and the connectivity with new and traditional domains, something will change within the study programmes. Innovation is a natural part of the artistic curriculum; it would be happening even without the centres...'

In the meeting with the Expert Panel, the Vice-Dean of General Affairs described his top priorities: 'Connecting with alternative ways of financing our development, primarily through the centres: that was one of the reasons for creating these centres. Because we are primarily arts oriented, it is not very easy to get financial support for projects; we've had some results though. Finances are one of the biggest concerns. We have cooperations with private sector, but as most of the colleagues are artists, it is not easy to establish communication. We are trying to develop the applied arts aspect more through the centre and partially by using the money from artistic projects financed by the University.'

The important function of the Project Office was also explained: 'When a project manager was engaged at the Project Office, interest in projects increased. There's an incompatibility with scientific calls: artistic projects don't always fit the criteria, but is better since the last period. The University Foundation assigned experts to change the application conditions for artistic areas and criteria have been changed. The Project Office helps with information on projects, but projects also often find us. Many teachers take the initiative and find projects to apply for, while for the others the Project Office looks up information specifically for teachers and students. The Project Office cooperates with student associations to pass project information to students.'

Once the centres are better established, the Academy needs to be much more ambitious about converting research activity into new intellectual property, new businesses, new industries and strong revenue streams for the institution.

APURI teachers are involved in local community projects and initiatives. When asked about professional development (meaning their development as teachers or the development of the academic profession), all of the teachers began speaking about their artistic practice and endeavours. 'All of us artists need to have our free time, we always get free time for certain projects for additional training. We have regulations for that. There are Ministry and city funds we can apply for.'

Very few of the staff the Panel met with had engaged with more formal teaching and learning courses. Those who had participated in the courses offered by the University pointed out the need for those courses to be repurposed towards art education: a fair point and an excellent opportunity for the Academy to explain contemporary art teaching practice to their teaching colleagues, the University pedagogues. 'Humanities and social sciences have a course each year. I did that course. It would need to be repurposed for art education. The science teachers were shocked at how we teach, how we organise our classrooms.'

Based on the evidence presented in the course of this review process, there does not seem to be much importance attached to contributing to the 'foundations of the academic profession and the accountability of teachers for the development of the university and the local community.'

The Academy Mission is spelled out on p. 4 of the current Strategy. The Academy's social role does relate directly to the institution's stated Mission and Strategy.

Recommendations for improvement

- Stakeholders are calling for more collaborations with APURI and have detected a certain 'softening' in terms of the engagement of APURI staff and students with cultural activities in Rijeka. Involve stakeholders more formally and more regularly in the activities of APURI, especially in programme development activity.
- Re-examine the social role of the institution with a view to modernising and reframing the role in a contemporary twenty-first-century way. Student and staff activities and approaches should be reimagined and re-energised.
- APURI and the University should correctly resource, staff, finance and support the new centres and the Project Office in their important work.
- Only through a necessary enhancement and improvement of their pedagogical skills will APURI teachers understand the more 'scholarly' aspects of their profession as educators. Far too many APURI teaching staff see themselves solely as artists, as practitioners – not as teachers. This must change.
- Continue the development of lifelong learning programmes, especially under the umbrella of university initiatives such as the University of the Third Age.

- Try to develop the potential over time to move lifelong learning classes from current 'amateur or hobbyist artist' courses towards fully credited (ECTS awarded) short programmes, special purpose awards and microcredentials, which people working in art and industry can use to retrain and refresh their skills and competencies.

Quality grade

Satisfactory 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

'The Vice-Dean for Artistic and Scientific Affairs is a member of the UNIRI Lifelong Learning Commission, where she and other members oversee evaluation and accreditation procedures for lifelong learning programmes. In addition to that, the Vice-Dean makes sure that quality is maintained in all programmes and performs other tasks related to lifelong learning programmes. These are the documents and forms that the Academy applies in the development of its lifelong learning programmes: Regulations on Lifelong Learning, Consolidated text of 24 July 2020; Evaluation questionnaire; Description of Lifelong Learning Programmes; Description of Lifelong Learning Programmes (Programmes for the Acquisition of Knowledge, Skills and Competences in an Accredited Study Programme); Description of Spatial and Personnel Conditions for the Implementation of Lifelong Learning Programmes; Financial Analysis form; List of Teachers and Associates Participating in the Implementation of Lifelong Learning Programmes; Quality Assurance and Monitoring of Programme Performance.'

The final line of the Academy's mission statement also alludes to the needs of society: 'Teachers and students in partnership with the local community and civil society through implementation creative projects respond to the needs of society and the economy artistically and professionally based solutions.'

Details of the Academy's lifelong learning programmes are outlined from p. 33 of the SER: 'The Academy delivers a Lifelong Learning programme with the aim of empowering members of the community through educational processes. In the Academy's lifelong learning programmes, participants can improve, expand or renew their knowledge and skills in specific areas of art, thus contributing to personal, social or professional development. Lifelong learning supports competitiveness and improves person's adaptability in the fluctuating labour market, allowing the participants to be more active in their social roles. In the period from 2016 to 2021, the following Lifelong Learning Programmes were accredited: Terracotta – introductory course of ceramics Spectre –

Learning about Color Value and Colour in Painting – Still Life, Portrait Painting, Digital Painting. The programmes are of practical nature, carried out in the form of workshops. They belong to the group of professional development programmes without ECTS, and are intended for all age groups.'

However, section 2.2. of the Academy's descriptor template for any lifelong learning programme '*1. Form for description of lifelong education programme - Programmes for acquiring knowledge, skills and competences within the framework of an accredited study programme*' does mention 'List of courses and/or modules (if they exist) with the number of hours of active teaching required for their implementation (and the number of ECTS points for programme types a, b, or c)'. So, despite the fact that current lifelong learning programmes at APURI 'belong to the group of professional development programmes without ECTS,' the future possibility is envisaged to develop properly accredited, ECTS assigned short programmes, microcredentials and 'special purpose awards' which would fit into the Croatian National Qualifications Framework.

In addition to the Academy's lifelong learning offerings, the University for the Third Age project was created in cooperation with the city of Rijeka.

The University for the Third Age is 'intended for citizens of the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County over the age of 55 who have completed high school or college. Educational programmes organised by the University of Rijeka offer an informal form of education that enables people of the third age to acquire new knowledge and connect the acquired knowledge with personal life experience.'

The Academy has conducted courses including 'Beginner and Advanced Painting' 'Beginner and Advanced Art Photography (online)', 'Art Photography (online)', 'Beginner Painting', 'Beginner Painting 2', 'Advanced Painting', 'Advanced Painting 2', 'Sculpting (small format)' and 'Artistic Abundance of Adriatic Cities.'

'Thinking community' was an event exploring the topics of artistic, social and activist empowerment of the community in specific contexts. It promoted art as 'a means of positive transformation of communities through interactions in public space, engaging local people, particularly the young and emphasising the importance of preserving the public space for the community.'

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue the development of lifelong learning programmes, especially under the umbrella of university initiatives such as the University of the Third Age.
- Try to develop the potential over time to move lifelong learning classes from current 'amateur or hobbyist artist' courses towards fully credited (ECTS awarded) short programmes, special purpose awards and microcredentials, which people working in art and industry can use to retrain and refresh their skills and competencies.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

II. Study programmes

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

Analysis

In general, study programmes at APURI are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution, especially as APURI is the only higher education institution in Croatia with study programmes directed towards applied arts, with the recommendation to develop further in this specific field. For example, as APURI noted in its Strategy, there are options to expand into the AV industry (sound, music, gaming, TV production). However, the Academy's current programme offerings would need to be pedagogically modernised and strengthened across the board before any ventures into 'new programme development areas' should be contemplated.

Also, Academy staff would need deep retraining in terms of modern study programme design and development, with a particular focus on programme learning outcomes, minimum intended module (or course) learning outcomes, and graduate outcomes. Too many of the senior APURI staff who spoke to the Panel had the most convoluted and confused ideas about study programme development. 'We will have better study programmes if we get better applicants,' one manager repeatedly told the Expert Panel. 'We need to have a stronger plan on getting better indicators and information related to the revision of our study programmes. The most important thing is to attract high quality candidates.' It must be pointed out that even strong applicants will struggle if a study programme is not being properly developed using effective quality assurance information and procedures.

The APURI SER states that each year, the Dean's Collegium, the extended Dean's Collegium, departments, subdepartments and the Academy Council summarise results and produce annual reports which demonstrate the development and accomplishments of the Academy's strategy. The Panel did hear from heads of departments that there was little or no possibility for regular fruitful working discussion and communication, where department heads would have space and time to discuss departmental crossovers, collaborations, problems, good practice and strategic approaches. There is great opportunity for better horizontal cooperation between all APURI departments and in general. Such everyday cooperation and collaboration would, over time, greatly help the integration and development of all departments and would progressively defuse the

current strong perception that there are well-established, well-supported and well-resourced APURI departments, as opposed to some departments which are less well-established, less supported, less resourced and even less understood by APURI leadership, the Management and other heads of department. If department heads and others feel that such a two-tier departmental system is in operation (for whatever perfectly understandable functional or historical reason), then it is a problem and it needs to be addressed. All APURI departments are entitled to develop fairly and to their full potential in order to improve learning outcomes for their students.

In general terms, modernised and progressive approaches need to be equalised across all APURI departments and study programmes (not just for two study programmes). Twenty-two years into the 21st century, there should be much greater APURI focus on interdisciplinarity and cohesion with theoretical courses. Theoretical lecturers described their struggles to make students and other lecturers understand the importance of theoretical learning. It was quite clear that many APURI students and lecturers did not understand the need to link theory and practice if the strongest, most progressive, twenty-first-century art, design and media is to be created. Students explained that APURI sometimes feels more like a course than higher education institution. Such old-fashioned attitudes were echoed in many statements made in Panel meetings with heads of departments and coordinators, 'It's not really a problem. Most of our teachers are practitioners, so there is no problem with new ideas. We don't discuss this as a big issue. Speaking of my department, it's not a problem. I haven't noticed either that there is a problem. In my experience, we have a very personalised relationship with our students. This pedagogical approach functions pretty well, regardless of the fact that we don't have this education. We can also use professional connections.'

Sadly, a lack of modern pedagogical skills and education is a very serious problem for anyone who claims to be a teacher at a European educational institution in 2022. 'Practitioners' cannot guarantee an education – at best, they can sometimes facilitate a 'transfer of knowledge', but this is not an adequate educational approach for the 21st century. Students do not only need to 'learn what the professor knows' but how to learn for themselves and how to develop their artistic practice by themselves.

'Very personalised relationships' with students do not compensate for a lack of understanding of a learning outcomes approach, or for the absence of criteria for assessment. Department heads do not see there is a problem because they do not even understand or respect the issues involved. All concerned, APURI managers, deans, heads of department, coordinators and teachers need urgent development and modernisation of their pedagogical skills and competencies.

When asked about professional development (meaning their development as teachers), all teachers began speaking about their artistic practice and endeavours. Teachers do not understand that 'professional development' in an educational context does not refer to their artistic competencies, but to their pedagogical competencies. 'All of us artists need

to have our free time; we always get free time for certain projects for additional training. We have regulations for that. There are Ministry and city funds we can apply for.' Very few of the staff the Panel met with had engaged with more formal teaching and learning courses. Those who had participated in the courses offered by the University pointed out the need for those courses to be repurposed towards art education: a fair point and an excellent opportunity for the Academy to explain contemporary art teaching practice to University pedagogues. 'Humanities and social sciences have a course each year. I did that course. It would need to be repurposed for art education. The science teachers were shocked at how we teach; how we organise our classrooms.'

Teaching assistants also told the Panel that some senior teachers have very 'traditional' and outdated models of teaching.

There are progressive artistic or research projects at APURI, as well as elective courses, online subjects as part of YUFE, extracurricular activities and some twenty-first-century study programmes, but there needs to be a greater emphasis on the consistency of the approach taken across the entire Academy. Some study programmes seem to be struggling to develop and seem to be drifting in terms of strategy and the clarity of their programme outcomes. According to the teaching staff, the Art Education and Applied Arts programmes have become 'completely intertwined' – a clear redefinition of such programmes is now very necessary, reestablishing clear and modern differentiations in terms of programme learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

There seems to be little structured analysis of the justification for delivering study programmes. Page 36 of the SER does deal with the revision and development of study programmes at APURI. 'Each study programme is planned, developed, supplemented and amended based on feedback from students, teachers and alumni, numerical indicators in the last three years, cooperation with the community and the economy, feedback from teachers in schools, etc. (in more detail in Chapter 2.4.) The description of each study programme lists the reasons for initiating the study, as well as compliance with the strategic documents of the University and the Academy, then the assessment of purposefulness with regard to the needs of the labour market and the connection with the local community through the economy, entrepreneurship and civil society.' APURI staff were very vague about the metrics for success in relation to study programmes.

There seems to be a lot of confusion between the status and purpose of elective and mandatory courses. For example, it is not clear why Ceramics did not become a mandatory course, because teachers expressed that there is great and sustained student interest in the subject, especially in its application within art and sculpture. Within the study programme, Ceramics as a mandatory course would make it more related to the Centre for Ceramics-Quark, which is now based on elective courses. One lecturer perceptively pointed out that two of the new centres are based on elective courses and that without making elective courses mandatory, things will not change. Some of the APURI elective courses are leaders of change towards more contemporary or interdisciplinary

approaches, but still their 'juniority' in the study programme pecking order persists, with the Academy favouring many well-established, traditional, immutable and sometimes quite tired study programme offerings.

There are strong ambiguities at APURI between fine art and crafts, which have certainly blurred within contemporary art. It seems necessary to point out the obvious to senior APURI staff: if learned in a modern way, clay and ceramics can be equally high-art material exhibited in contemporary art museums, and can be presented or welcomed as a very viable and specific niche within any twenty-first-century academy of applied arts. APURI's focus should be on developing and offering high-quality, modern applied art study programmes. A strong focus on modern ceramics practice would allow APURI to strongly differentiate itself from other academies in Croatia and across Europe. Proposals to strengthen such a concrete programme struggle to gain acceptance at the Sculpture Department and APURI because contemporary and modern interdisciplinary art practice is not clearly understood by many APURI staff.

At the graduate level, programmes do foster commendable interdisciplinary forms and methods of work, project-problem teaching and teamwork. The teaching staff were uncertain when asked whether the lessons from such a strong graduate programme practice could be used to update and modernise APURI's undergraduate study programmes.

Equipment varies from department to department, with excessively large differences between departments and different programmes. Some Academy classrooms are very impressively equipped. Others have insufficient resources and equipment and have problems with space or organising classes because of inadequate allocations of permanent employees (Acting and Media is an example of a roundly unsupported, under-resourced programme).

APURI is broadly conscious of the needs of society and has strong historical and working links with the city of Rijeka and with galleries, businesses and other cultural enterprises in the city and in the region. There is no room for complacency here – many stakeholders called for more collaborations with the Academy, and also detected a certain 'fatigue' in terms of the engagement of some APURI staff and students. The field of pedagogy is potentially in a good position to develop cooperation between the Art Education study programme and art museums and galleries (as contemporary and popular mediators of cultural content). This would allow the APURI Art Education programme to reach and impact new public demographics and target audiences. Potential collaborations will also allow for a necessary reassertion of the obvious differentiation between the study programmes of Art Education and Applied Arts.

Any study programme which is openly and ostensibly 'graduating students into unemployment' should look at its core pedagogical business. If graduates cannot find guaranteed gainful employment in their 'core' study discipline, graduates should be much

better prepared (in terms of soft and transferrable skills) to find useful employment in related areas of the labour market.

Planned strategies like Academy in the city or the recently established centres are only getting started but constitute an example of good practice.

An alumni survey and result analysis has been carried out – some examples have been provided, feedback from questionnaires and information from graduates of BA and MA programmes. As ever, 80% of Applied Art graduates think learning outcomes should be revised and almost 100% of the graduates believe they should be modernised.

APURI has started formalising its cooperation with external stakeholders (employers, public and private sector, and civil society) and there is an increasing number of collaborations with local external stakeholders and other faculties of the University. However, many of the collaborations described with the other University faculties were distinctly unimaginative and largely centred around ‘creating pieces of art for faculty buildings.’ This is not strong and imaginative twenty-first-century interdisciplinary collaboration.

Recommendations for improvement

- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority, training and development subject for all teaching and management staff at APURI. Get help from across Croatia or from abroad if necessary.
- Make pedagogical retraining a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI. Get help from across Croatia or from abroad if necessary.
- Stop pursuing the current ‘top-down’, vice-dean and management reviews of learning outcomes across the institution. Learning outcomes are the business of every teacher and every professor. A strong working understanding of learning outcomes, modes of assessment, assessment criteria and ECTS MUST BE core competencies for anyone who claims to be a teacher at any higher education institution in Europe.

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

One of the disadvantages pointed out in the last APURI re-accreditation held in 2015 centred around study programmes. The strong recommendation was that APURI

competencies and outcomes should be more precise and that there should be much more obvious differentiations between BA and MA level. Intended learning outcomes also needed much clearer alignment with the level and profile of the qualifications gained. Unfortunately, in the seven years since the last review, too little work has been done in this important area.

Whilst any review and improvement of learning outcomes is welcome, a very definite 'top-down' approach has been taken. The flaw in such an approach is that teachers will believe even more forcibly that learning outcomes and modern pedagogical approaches are 'nothing to do with them' or should be 'left to the experts'. A strong working understanding of learning outcomes, modes of assessment, assessment criteria and ECTS are core competencies for anyone who claims to be a teacher at any higher education institution across Europe.

Another problem is the inconsistency between different study programmes: some are struggling to develop, there are problems with study programmes which are too similar to some extent between two departments (Applied Arts and Art Education intertwined); the situation with the Acting and Media Department is not very clear (it is struggling in terms of being new department with only two permanent employees and with resources and space problems + no MA students were enrolled in 2021/2022).

In some areas the potentials and opportunities for programme development have been recognised. A new major/orientation Design for Theatre and Film (2021), the graduate study programme of Applied Arts, or graduate (2018) and undergraduate study of Visual Communications and Graphic Design (2020) have all been modernised and accredited. Three study majors: Applied Painting, Applied Sculpting and Design for Theatre and Film were also accredited in 2021.

Since the last re-accreditation, study programmes (Applied Arts and Art Education) have changed their structure from 4+1 to 3+2. The Expert Panel heard from some teachers that this modification did not bring about bigger differences, except for the advantage of mobility.

The so-called "final work" at the BA level is viewed as an opportunity for students "to round off the outcomes of knowledge and skills at the undergraduate level". The procedures for the preparation of the final work and the graduate work are published on the website. The report of the Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs says that a revision of these documents is welcome, and that an analysis and an evaluation is needed. The Vice-Dean also wrote about the poor response of teachers to this topic: only three out of 15 responded (2019/2020). 'It is difficult to 'popularise' the subject of programme development'.

Intended learning outcomes still are not clearly defined and are not consistent across all study programmes. There is no clear mapping or tuning evidence that APURI learning outcomes are consistently aligned with any Croatian or European level descriptors or qualifications frameworks.

There is no clear evidence that APURI learning outcomes clearly reflect the competencies required for employment, continuing education and or other individual or societal needs. However, some work has been conducted in this area: a workshop was conducted for teachers to demonstrate how to formulate learning outcomes and an outside stakeholder was engaged to revise learning outcomes. Although APURI did partly revise the learning outcomes of some study programmes according to the instructions (some examples were provided), the main problem is that this was done only at the MA level and these revised learning outcomes are under revision at UNIRI and have not been implemented yet. There has been too little progress in seven years and this clearly demonstrates that neither the APURI Management nor the staff understand the importance of modern learning outcomes. The regular revision of learning outcomes is clearly a very low strategic priority for many staff at APURI.

The concept of teaching and the distribution of ECTS credits per subject is not visible in each syllabus published on the Academy website, under Teachers (as the SER claims). Too many teachers do not have an available syllabus there.

There are still difficulties with BA and MA level programmes, and with programme and course outcomes. Just to name a few examples:

- For instance, Photography II has learning outcomes which are too complex for BA level,
- Graphics I has the same issue. For example, it says that at BA level the student will be *'completely capable of experimenting and shaping artistic concepts within!'* This kind of learning outcome is wholly inappropriate at BA level and clearly disrespects the guidance on the use of verbs in Bloom's taxonomy.
- Courses Sculpture III and Sculpture IV – outcomes are identical,
- Courses Sculpture in Applied Arts III and Sculpture in Applied Arts IV (elective courses) – outcomes are identical...

In many instances ECTS credits are not consistently aligned with the learning outcomes. Page 45 of the SER also asserts that 'the ECTS system has its advantages, but is often not applicable when a more flexible approach is needed, especially concerning students of art who need to be supported in pursuing their own paths of development.'

ECTS is simply a measurement of student workload. The ECTS system is completely flexible, but only if staff clearly understand ECTS and only if staff (teachers and management) in an educational institution are imaginative, flexible and fair in their interpretation and implementation of ECTS. Art institutions across Europe find no difficulties in implementing ECTS imaginatively in order to benefit the learning experiences of students.

The advice must be either to start changing the legislative framework or to interpret the existing legislation more imaginatively.

In the Panel's meeting with the Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs, it was said, 'When the new Committee started its term of office three years ago,

we analysed learning outcomes. We saw that the situation was not very good; we needed to align them with ECTS. However, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we were a little late with this revision. For some courses, ECTS credits and learning outcomes have not been harmonised. Some learning outcomes were formulated more as content and were not connected to evaluation methods. Some teachers do not understand ECTS points. We organised workshops on formulating learning outcomes and on connecting them with evaluation.'

This essential work (of formulating learning outcomes and connecting them with evaluation) is only getting started at APURI, with a lot of work to be done and with a LOT of APURI staff still to come on board the developmental process.

All the required regulatory documents (like the Regulation on Studying and Student Grading, Diploma Supplement) are provided. As a focus group with students (conducted in 2022) showed, as well as the available alumni surveys and some devastating comments in the meeting the Expert Panel had with students and with graduates, there is enormous room for improvement in the understanding of learning outcomes and grading.

One teacher explained that APURI students are not primarily interested in theoretical courses (rather, they are more practically oriented) but she concluded that students were delighted by the knowledge they received when and if there was an appropriate approach to the subject. The Panel would highly recommend a stronger connection between practical work and theoretical work. The pedagogical importance of any such connection between theoretical and practical subjects across APURI would first need to be understood by all teaching and management staff, if students are to clearly understand the connection in their studies and in their developing art practice.

Recommendations for improvement

- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority training and development subject for all teaching and management staff at APURI.
- Make pedagogical retraining a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI.
- Stop pursuing the current 'top-down', vice-dean and management revisions of learning outcomes across the institution.
- Learning outcomes must become the business of every teacher or every professor at APURI. All APURI teachers and professors must be directly involved in writing and revising their own learning outcomes. A strong working understanding of learning outcomes, modes of assessment, assessment criteria and ECTS must become core competencies for every APURI teacher or professor.

- Learning outcomes must never be written as content. They must be written using active verbs (using Bloom’s taxonomy). Learning outcomes must clearly spell out what students will be able to do on successful completion of each module or course.

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

There is no clear evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes on many APURI study programmes. APURI learning outcomes are, for the most part, fundamentally flawed: either poorly written or written as content and wholly unrelated to criteria for assessment.

APURI reviews of academic achievement take place on a regular basis, but these are focused on pass rates and progression rates. Rather tellingly, in the Panel's meeting with heads of department and coordinators it was said, 'We will upgrade our study programme in 10 years' time.' With the greatest respect, every study programme in the world needs to be revised and improved in some way each and every year.

Whether APURI is clearly providing evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes on the study programmes is highly questionable. Students complain about unclear learning outcomes, unclear assessment criteria and unfair exam procedures, but little or nothing is done to improve the situation.

Even an external stakeholder commented on an APURI 'evaluation of the best works'. 'I was a participant and a member of the commission which reviewed, evaluated and selected the best works. That was an encounter and an experience I would not like to repeat because from members of the academic community I expected more stimulating, clearer for me too, more educational explanations of individual works. I didn't hear or take any of it with me.' Once again, this is more evidence of completely opaque assessment and evaluation criteria and procedures.

The regulations (of the study programme or Regulations on Exam and Grading) are available on the website.

- Student pass rates and the number of previously enrolled students are being monitored
- A visual repository of graduate works (they are planning to make a digital repository) does not exist
- Detailed syllabuses are not published for each course on the website under Teachers (as is claimed on p. 41 of the SER): 'Detailed syllabuses are published for

each course on the Teachers page, and contain a Spreadsheet of constructive alignment in which learning outcomes are aligned and verified with the subject content, methods and forms of work.'

- Some examples of written exams and seminar papers were provided
- The Academy organises final performances and exhibitions of student artworks; some parts of final exhibition are available on the website
- The grading method is adapted to foreign universities in Europe so that students, both incoming and outgoing, are offered easier mobility and recognition of grades. This is a necessary, commendable and imaginative interpretation of assessment grades and ECTS.
- At APURI there is general student feedback available in which students, on completing their BA or MA, give their opinion on the study programme, learning outcomes, the teaching process, and other aspects of studying. APURI students make up 3.29% of the total sample of UNIRI students (numbers for 2019/2020). Some of the data are not applicable because APURI students represent only about 3% of UNIRI students, otherwise, where data are available separately: satisfaction with study programmes, teaching methods, grading, information at APURI is 3.9 (higher than previous years); satisfaction according to formal education in terms of adequate knowledge for their profession, social and economic needs and labour market is 3.89; while general satisfaction with their studies is 3.94 (it used to be a bit lower).

APURI is monitoring the number of its graduates in relation to the number of enrolled students and in relation to how many applicants eventually graduate.

- Data are available from anonymised questionnaires, evaluating the classes for each subject and thus giving feedback to the teacher. This is from an analysis of student evaluations carried out at APURI in 2021:
 - i. For 3 courses the grades were lower than 3 (total); 9 courses had at least one question rated lower than 3
 - ii. 61 professors were rated with a 5, as well as 39 teaching assistants
- The survey was conducted at the end of January (before the exam period in February)
- Some examples of graduate works were provided – they are at a satisfactory level of quality, containing the necessary elements and standards of graduate works.

In this document (and in assessment area no. 3) there are already notes on the feedback from students and external stakeholders, which show that at a regulatory level everything seems to work fine, but at a practical level there is major space for improvement.

On paper, and according to all the documents and procedures required by Croatian law and by the University, everything at APURI seems to be functioning well (with the institution compliant in terms of all regulations). However, the feedback from students

and graduates was that APURI surveys and questionnaires were 'a complete waste of time'. In addition, some students listed multiple instances of students being publicly identified by teachers 'for what they had written in the survey'. Some teachers openly printed out and read student responses aloud to class groups – a clear breach of student trust and a very clear breach of student data confidentiality. Across the board, APURI staff clearly demonstrate a complete disrespect for student confidentiality.

Some students forcibly insisted to the Panel that their (student) voice was being clearly heard by the staff. However, nothing was ever done based on that student voice.

All in all, this represents an enormous failure regarding the quality assurance system at APURI. If student opinions are being gathered but not acted upon, a fundamental learner-centred tool of quality assurance has been broken by the institution. Worse still, the student voice and the individual (confidential) survey responses of students are being used to identify, target and penalise students. This is unforgivable.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI assessment criteria must be clearly linked to learning outcomes. Assessment must be a fair, valid, clear, transparent and reliable evaluation of whether each student has achieved the intended learning outcomes for the module or course.
- The APURI 'system' of dealing with the data gathered from students needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must be informed that such data are confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- Data gathered by means of APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI. At the moment, these data are not being reliably used to improve quality.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students must 'buy-in' to a safe survey process if quality assurance is to start working properly again at APURI.
- External stakeholders, professional organisations, civil society organisations and alumni need to be involved in quality development across APURI through far more regular (several times each year), formal, documented and acted upon mechanisms (through workshops, case study presentations and structured information gathering and focus groups).

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

Feedback from students is generally not used consistently by APURI for programme development purposes (as detailed above). As was said earlier in the report, some students reported they sometimes feel like APURI is more like a course than an educational institution. Students are not very well informed about progressive artistic or research projects, online subjects as part of YUFE, extracurricular activities and APURI centres. One graduate level professor noticed that at the graduate level students became more interested because they are aware they will graduate soon and these skills will be needed, while at BA level students are overloaded and otherwise preoccupied.

There needs to be better formal coordination of planning, proposing, and adapting study programmes according to current labour needs in the area of culture. The interdisciplinarity policy of the Academy exists only as part of UNIRI strategy. For example, the Department of Fine Arts – (SWOT analysis): they point out the lack of communications and social skill (mediation) learning at BA level.

In April 2022 (extremely late in the preparation of the SER), APURI started to collect feedback from students in the form of a focus group, for the SER:

This is what the students concluded:

- Grades for practical courses sometimes tend to be arbitrary, because some teachers don't offer (clear) explanations.*
- Before choosing their mentors, the students would like to be more familiar with the teacher's work in the field of art and the profession; they mostly don't know their artwork.
- Graduate work at the BA level should be better explained.
- Digital competencies are welcome as part of study programmes, especially Art Education
- Presentation of student artwork: presentation techniques need to be included in the teaching process as early as possible; this is something students find very important for their future career and various forms of work (from art education to other forms).
- The importance of learning outcomes: some learning outcomes are clear, while others are very abstract. Learning outcomes need to be clearer and more consistent.
- Students find the enrolment information package useful. Some students did find it difficult to manage the information package, but generally students think it is

clear enough except for the part about the study programme, which should be clear and simple enough for applicants because they don't understand it now

- Some course titles don't indicate their content or learning outcomes
- Students find lectures by visiting professors and artists very useful for their future practice.

*Again, the Expert Panel notes that there seems to be little evidence of clear criteria for assessment on many of the APURI study courses, which is not so strange. After all, if many teaching staff do not understand (and seem not to care about) a learning outcomes approach to teaching and learning, then how would they be expected to relate assessment criteria to the achievement of learning outcomes?

As ever, it is unclear whether any of this student focus group data will actually be used by APURI to modernise and improve any study programmes. The data is valuable and should be used.

Professional organisation and museums did emphasize APURI could be more involved in activities of museums (the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Rijeka).

External stakeholders provided the following analysis of learning outcomes:

- Learning outcomes are inconsistent; some are too abstract and cannot be verified.
- In some cases, learning outcomes at BA level are more complex than those at MA level.
- Sometimes mandatory courses have general or worse learning outcomes than some elective courses.
- Eight courses have the same learning outcomes but different ECTS credits.
- Learning outcomes for some study programmes are insufficient
- Learning outcomes for the study programmes of Art Education and Applied Arts are either too similar or identical.

There is a document available with the revised learning outcomes at course level and programme level – there has been a significant shift in the proposed learning outcomes since the last reaccreditation (2015). However, the only available document with revised learning outcomes refers to Art Education at MA level (not completed). The Panel was informed that the main problem is that these revised learning outcomes are under revision at UNIRI, and have not been implemented yet.

Page 44 of the SER asserts: 'In periodic monitoring of the study programmes, the Academy collects information from teachers and students, opinions of the alumni, opinions of external stakeholders, and opinions and support of the teachers.'

However, this long passage of the SER rather tellingly ends with the statement, 'In order to fully develop and implement effective processes of supporting the development of study programmes, it is necessary to strengthen the Office of Teaching and Quality at the Academy.' As ever, APURI processes seem to fully comply with all regulations, whilst the

actual functional procedures result in too little structured development of the study programmes.

Recommendations for improvement

- The system of dealing with the data gathered from students needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must be informed that such data is confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- The data gathered through APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI. At the moment, these data are not being used to improve quality.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students must 'buy-in' to a safe survey process if quality assurance is to start to work properly again at APURI.
- External stakeholders, professional organisations, civil society organisations and alumni need to be involved in quality development across APURI through far more regular (several times each year), formal, documented and acted upon mechanisms (through workshops, case study presentations and structured information gathering and focus groups).

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

The development of teaching and learning, a learning outcomes approach, and the distribution of ECTS credits per subject is in many cases quite arbitrary at APURI. On the basis of documents, it can be seen that some students did file complaints, based on their comments in focus groups regarding student workload and whether it is in accordance with ECTS points and their overburden (for example, available in the report of the Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs) or based on the correspondence available between students and one teacher on WhatsApp (but this teacher does not work anymore).

According to the SER, APURI believes that the ECTS system is often 'not applicable to the field of art', so they conclude that a more flexible approach is needed. The Expert Panel would suggest that APURI staff (both teaching and management) should job shadow at art institutions across Croatia and Europe in order to revise their often unimaginative and

complacent interpretation of the ECTS system. APURI does not offer much information on this topic. Apparently, they discuss student workload at department meetings or with Student Union members, and they say revisions are made but “are most often related to new elective art subjects in which students show great interest”.

An external stakeholder who revised some learning outcomes has suggested a better distribution of ECTS credits, not only regarding learning outcomes but has also advised APURI to reconsider how those two are related to student workload, as well as a different (better!) structure, based on type of teaching delivery: lectures, practice, individual assignments, seminars, etc.

Students can earn additional ECTS credits, visible in their diploma supplement by taking up additional projects, elective courses, online courses offered as part of YUFE, extracurricular activities, etc. (Regulations within UNIRI). This is a commendable, flexible and imaginative implementation of ECTS and should be replicated across APURI. Unfortunately, most APURI staff will first have to learn (or relearn) the fundamentals of the ECTS system.

A model of good practice:

- a student project carried out as part of Rijeka – European Capital of Culture: site-specific art at Grčevo Beach. Two-semester courses were established for the project, under the guidance of professor Igor Eškinja. He offered a two-semester course titled Spatial Practices I and II during the academic year 2019/2020, in which students received ECTS points added to their diploma upon the completion of this specific project assignment.

Recommendations for improvement

- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority training and development subject for ALL teaching and management staff at APURI.
- Make pedagogical retraining a priority for all staff (teachers and management) at APURI. All staff should have a strong working knowledge of learning outcomes, assessment and feedback and ECTS.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

Practical work at the Academy is an integral part of study programmes. There is mandatory practical work – included in the course and programme (for example, training facilities and school practice for Art Education studies or the teaching base of the Croatian National Theatre Ivan pl. Zajc for Acting and Media students. Cooperation with the theatre is established if learning outcomes of the courses are related to the plays produced by the theatre, so teachers at the Department of Performing Arts decide whether or not students participate in the plays).

Optional practical work (volunteering, working on projects with teachers, taking up field classes, etc.) is also recognised.

There are examples of community volunteering as a form of active work with different social groups, children, and associations, which encourage students to acquire additional knowledge and skills. For example:

- Backpack (Full of) Culture: Academy students participate in the implementation of the project Backpack (Full of) Culture – Art and Culture in Kindergarten and School, which is conducted across Croatia.
- Students receive volunteering certificates from the Ministry of Science and Education.
- A coordinator has been appointed for volunteering and the recognition of ECTS credits through informal learning.
- UNIRI level – there is handbook for the recognition of extracurricular activities through ECTS credits.

Feedback from students in the form of a focus group:

- Students recognise the importance of student practice as crucial for their future professional skills and needs (some study programmes are oriented at involving students in specific projects and connecting them with the labour market).
- Students think that lectures and visits of experts within their fields who will share their knowledge and experience with students is another very important thing.
- Students have noticed that at the EU level, as part of Erasmus+, students can get student practice on completing the BA level and before enrolling in an MA programme.

Students are quite right about this Erasmus+ apprenticeship opportunity.

Recommendations for improvement

- External stakeholders, professional organisations, civil society organisations and alumni need to be involved in quality development across APURI through far more regular (several times each year), formal, documented and acted upon mechanisms (through workshops, case study presentations and structured information gathering and focus groups).
- Avail APURI BA graduates of Erasmus+ apprenticeship opportunities.

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

APURI does publish a useful information package on its website; it seems to be clear enough, with a PDF document that consists of all the necessary information regarding every study programme. It contains the necessary documents, terms of procedure, additional requirements (there is even precise information about portfolio assessment) for enrolling in each study programme, and frequently asked questions. Not surprisingly, most of students confirmed in surveys that they get enrollment information on the web (43.6%). Students confirmed the information on the web was useful.

Current students did tell the Expert Panel that there was a persistent lack of timely information about enrolment (especially enrolment dates, locations and times) and that APURI staff and teachers were frequently unavailable or uncontactable when applicants, parents or teachers from other cities were looking for information about enrolment dates and times. Students pointed out that the enrollment information should be available early each year, well in advance of enrolment dates. APURI students are still often contacted (frequently by phone) to answer basic enrolment questions for applicants as APURI enrolment dates approach. Current students suggested that APURI enrolment information should be 'more efficient at the official level'. APURI must recognise that enrolment is a very stressful and confusing experience for applicants and their families. Every effort must be made to guide and welcome the applicants through the process as effortlessly as possible.

- Contact details of the Student Service are immediately visible in case of additional questions; students confirmed the Student Service is very useful, helpful and responsive.
- They even have a proposition *What will I be able to do when I graduate?* This could be done more clearly for every study programme.
- APURI collaborates with high schools with the largest number of interested candidates and delivers online admission packages to them.
- For the last two years they have been carrying out surveys which are completed by candidates right after they have enrolled in the first year of undergraduate studies. This was confirmed in a brief conversation with a student (a first-year

undergraduate) when the Panel visited Rijeka. Information is collected about how candidates obtain information and how accessible and informative it is.

- The enrollment package is not useful for foreign nationals who show an interest in enrolling in the first year of undergraduate studies (they are referred to the ENIC NARIC office)
- Having open days at APURI more often would be recommended, since Acting and Media is (almost) the only study programme that has done this and it went very well. Open days should be organised for all APURI study programmes. Basic portfolio development should always be an important open day activity at any academy.

An APURI student who had some questions about the development of their applicant portfolio was asked to 'pay' an APURI professor for some additional instructions regarding the portfolio. This cannot be viewed as acceptable practice. Basic applicant information about portfolio development and the portfolio selection process should never be confused or conflated with paid portfolio preparation classes and tuition.

Recommendations for improvement

- Continue to improve the website information about study programmes, for applicants, stakeholders and for current students.
- Make a special effort to have clear and simple enrolment information (dates, times, locations and responsive contact emails) very conspicuously available for applicants, their parents and their teachers on the home page of the APURI website as enrolment dates approach.
- The Academy should practice having open days for the public more often (especially for future students). All study programmes and departments at APURI should be encouraged to actively participate in such open day initiatives, should conduct free workshops on specific portfolio requirements for their study programmes, and should be available to answer questions from applicants, parents and teachers from schools.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

The Academy collects and analyses data on its processes, resources, and results. They do have data on student pass and drop-out rates for the past 5 years – the pass rate is good. The data show the average duration and pass rates for undergraduate and graduate study programmes for a period of approximately seven years (four years for the Acting and Media study programme).

The Academy does have data on student pass and drop-out rates (past 5 years' information included). However, as discussed elsewhere, there is strong concern whether the gathered student survey data are actually used to ensure the continuity and completion of study.

Recommendations for improvement

- The system of dealing with the data gathered from students needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must be informed that such data are confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- The data gathered through APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI. At the moment, these data are not being used to improve quality.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning

Analysis

When students regularly complain about overload, inappropriate behaviour from professors, and routinely confusing assessment, anyone would have to question the student-centredness of learning at APURI.

When professors and managers have a very poor understanding of such basics as learning outcomes, ECTS and criteria for assessment, it is difficult to understand how student-centred learning is ensured at APURI. Furthermore, most professors choose not to engage with any pedagogical training and development, even when the University provides such training for free, and APURI Management openly admit that 'popularising' such staff development is difficult or impossible.

When the results of student surveys (the universally accepted 'student voice') are gathered and heard by the institution and then, apparently, are not acted upon effectively, or worse, are used to target, identify and threaten students, it is difficult to see how the basic principles of student-centred learning are being adhered to across APURI.

In addition, students complain about their lack of soft skills and any awareness of employability or the needs of the labour market. They complain that they know nothing about presenting their work after they graduate, do not know how to activate a membership in an art association, how to make and present a portfolio or the basics of how to make a living or a career from art. The Career Centre is just getting started and has begun to inform students about their opportunities after graduation, but such initiatives need improvement and sustained development.

Students who went abroad were asked to present their experience to other students upon their return. This is an example of highly commendable practice.

APURI does encourage the modernisation of teaching methods as part of the online subjects offered by YUFE (courses are introduced in the syllabuses of all study programmes at the Academy) and other extracurricular activities, Coursera courses, centres, additional projects and elective courses. However, teacher take-up of the available pedagogical staff training and development opportunities is very modest (only a handful of teachers). Student interest in YUFE activities is rather weak (report from 2020/21), so the Academy is proposing to introduce YUFE coordinators.

Some new models of teaching have necessarily arisen from the Covid-19 pandemic and some positive changes have been introduced as a result (with the Academy commendably developing an online teaching strategy for the whole University).

Some activities provide additional ECTS credits, visible in the students' diploma supplement or certificates. This practice is commendable (when implemented in a rigorous, fair, valid and reliable way) and should be extended across most or all APURI study programmes. However, APURI staff (both Management and teachers) would first need to work hard to develop a clear understanding of ECTS for themselves. At the moment, the institution, the Management and teachers do not have a clear understanding of the credit system, of student workload and its relationship to learning outcomes, and a student-centred learning approach.

Some students feel a lack of soft skills (how to present their work, how to build a portfolio, how to activate a membership in professional associations, how to set up their own business, or how to make a living from their art once they graduate). This was corroborated by graduates. A Career Centre has recently been established and hopes to inform students at undergraduate and graduate level of available opportunities, acquaint them with courses and international opportunities. This is all commendable, but it is only just getting started. The centres are potentially good initiatives, but APURI needs to continue their development and needs to embed their work strongly in the study programmes and across APURI departments.

One senior lecturer pointed out that at the graduate level students ask for more information on soft skills, because they know they will need them soon – she emphasised a YouTube channel where lectures can be seen multiple times and shared with people outside of the institution.

The Panel saw some commendable examples of teaching methods and forms of work designed and performed by Academy teachers, presented at national and international conferences (for example in the field of pedagogy or methods of public interactive art).

Recommendations for improvement

- The data gathered through APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI.
- Completely revise the focus of all APURI quality assurance and enhancement policies, processes and procedures, so that they firmly become student-centred and so that APURI quality assurance processes focus on improving and enhancing the learning experience of students in order to make APURI graduate attributes and outcomes relevant for the twenty-first-century world.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

3.4 The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.

Analysis

Students complained a lot about badly behaved professors and uncomfortable staff comments being very common, especially in relation to female students.

According to the students, the “anonymised” student feedback is being misused: the teachers know who wrote the comments (it is a small institution). At best, students often skip the detailed written feedback because they are afraid to write down their opinion and that any negative comment or constructive criticism will be used against them. Anonymity is always a problem at any art academy, where small-group teaching and learning is the norm. However, the current situation at APURI is far more toxic. The persistent behaviour of the teaching staff with regard to student surveys has now comprehensively broken the system of student voice.

As a result, student voice is not being reliably used or respected as an important lever for change at APURI. Any changes or ‘improvements’ at APURI are almost exclusively based on the opinions, priorities and very selective choices of teaching staff and Management.

The Academy has published regulations and regulatory documents, but serious questions remain as to whether such documents are consistently applied. At any educational institution, policy documents must result in active and timely procedures. At APURI, there seems to be a serious institutional disconnect between policy documentation and the operational behaviour and procedures of the Management and staff.

Some students pointed out the lack of quality information between the upper management of the Academy and students. Students were not made aware of some documents, are not sure if certain documents exist, and are uncertain about where crucial APURI policy documents can be found. Students also pointed out that the significance of important policy documents (such as policies relating to mutual respect) is not explained to students. Many staff seem to be unaware of such institutional policies, or are wilfully ignoring them. Too often, when there are breaches of APURI policies, nothing seems to happen and nothing is done.

Some teachers do not use official email or other ways of communication to provide students with information about office hours or evaluation on time. The Panel heard several examples of important basic information not being provided by professors and teachers.

There were also some student complaints about exams and evaluation, with a strong suggestion that submissions were not being properly evaluated. This is a very serious suspicion at any educational institution, because it completely undermines the essential sense of fairness, validity and reliability in the institutional assessment and evaluation processes. This cannot be casually dismissed by APURI staff as 'some isolated incidents.' If any student has a suspicion that institutional assessment and evaluation is unfair, invalid or unreliable, that suspicion must be accepted, investigated and then (even if no incorrectness is discovered) the findings must be clearly and openly publicised in order to reassert student and staff members' complete confidence in the institutional assessment and evaluation system and standards.

Sadly, the Expert Panel also heard convincing rumours of possible 'deals' between students and professors, with at least one recent case where a student was very publicly bragging to other students. Once again, such incidents should be confronted, investigated and very publicly dealt with. Any professors engaging in such inappropriate behaviour should be disciplined. APURI as an institution definitively needs more transparency and professionalism in relation to this area of student support. The guiding principle must be that all students and staff have complete confidence in assessment and evaluation procedures and standards.

There have been student reports of some inappropriate, unprofessional and frankly bad behaviour on part of a few teachers, and it was noted that one teacher did get fired because of a student petition, his disgraceful behaviour confirmed by a teaching assistant. Unfortunately, external stakeholders also brought up the issue of mutual respect in both ways (students – professors). The stakeholders insisted that some teachers at the Academy really needed to improve their attitude and approach to mutual respect and to dealings with their own students.

There have been numerous reports of teacher evaluations being misused (one anonymised questionnaire was read out by a professor in front of students 'with

criticism'). Other students were very publicly outed or identified by disgruntled professors 'because of what the student had written in the survey'.

Although there are documents governing student support, students mostly have negative experiences with teacher evaluations – small groups, fear of lack of anonymity and fear of negative reflection on grades (evaluations are conducted right before exams are held).

Some students did mention a positive experience with evaluations and the reaction of APURI (and one teacher was dismissed).

Although the Panel heard from the Quality Assurance Committee and the Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs that evaluations are analysed thoroughly in order to improve the teaching process, the students do not feel that the evaluation questionnaire changes anything. Students feel teachers are not ready to accept constructive criticism and implement changes.

- The documents say that 3 courses received a score lower than 3 in the evaluations.

- According to the APURI report, the academic year 2020/2021 saw some student complaints about teaching processes (this was the case regarding four courses). The problem was mainly the workload which was too extensive for the number of ECTS points awarded, or some teachers suddenly changing their evaluation criteria. Although it is reported that these problems have been solved, it should be noted that this area needs better monitoring and improvement.

- Information packages for new students (first-year undergraduates) do provide them with information given during an orientation practicum, where students are introduced to the current regulations, ways of evaluating and grading student work, as well as appeals and complaints procedures. The Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs confirms that student turnout at this meeting is almost 100%.

It might be necessary now to extend such an orientation practicum to all members of APURI teaching staff, because many of them seem to have disconnected totally from Academy regulations, procedures and norms in their dealings with students, in their understanding of student-centred learning, and in their assessment procedures.

- Students do feel properly informed about exhibitions in the city (and it is noted that most useful information comes from theoretical classes).

- Students noticed that they do not get enough support in reading books in practical classes and this is something that is missing from APURI syllabi. Broadly speaking, APURI study programmes are far more directed at practical work than theoretical learning. Many professors and senior teaching staff obviously do not understand or believe in the value of intertwining both types of learning in order to strengthen the fundamental learning of art practice. As a result, many of the APURI undergraduate programmes especially have a distinctly old-fashioned feel to them and twenty-first-century concepts such as interdisciplinarity are not

understood by many of the teaching and management staff. Naturally, this approach should be more intertwined.

On the issue of student support, when problems come up, a vice-dean said the students do not only have the teachers to turn to: they have an active student association and can always contact the Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs. The Management offered several examples of informal opportunities to meet with students (a picnic, for example, where 'they talk a lot'). However, at any correctly functioning educational institution, student support procedures must operate at formal and structural levels too.

The option students have of entering the Academy using a card system after working hours (24-hour campus access) is a commendable initiative. The system generally works very well, but students did point out that better security support would be useful, so students would feel safe at all times. Students reported that only one security guard visited the building once a night, and that was mainly 'to tell students to turn off the lights and to close the windows when they were finished'. Students pointed out that the main front door of the building can be 'forced' and they also pointed out that some students can give their access cards to friends, etc., who are not students at the Academy. On a related note, pilfering through the Academy building seems to be an issue. In order to avert any serious incident in the future, the Academy should review the 24-hour security in the building. If security guards are not stationed permanently in the building (which is common practice around the world), an emergency number should be available to all students in order to get a rapid security response to any incidents.

This is a very serious matter. Students must feel completely safe at all times in their learning environment.

Recommendations for improvement

- The system of dealing with the data gathered from students needs to be revised completely. Teaching staff must be informed that such data are confidential and should never be published or used to identify, target or threaten any student.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students must 'buy-in' to a safe survey process if quality assurance is to start to work properly again at APURI.
- Review and improve security staffing at the Academy, especially at night.

Quality grade:

Unsatisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

APURI has ensured access to students with disabilities (access ramp, parking, and elevator), except for the elevator which has broken down and is undergoing repair. Students reported that the elevator has been broken for about a year (a functional elevator is also necessary to enable students to carry heavy things and artworks, like clay or sculptures).

Currently, no students with physical disabilities are enrolled at APURI.

APURI did establish a Coordinator for Students with Disabilities and does cooperate in this matter with the University of Rijeka Centre for Students with Disabilities (Strategy). Adjustments are made in the teaching process when necessary.

Some professors also reported that their teaching process can be adapted for students with disabilities, mainly students with speaking difficulties, and in small groups there is almost 100% inclusion.

At the initial orientation and motivational practicum (the first year of undergraduate studies), information is provided about opportunities for students with disabilities. One graduate also reported very positive teacher-led experiences in this area whilst studying at APURI.

Students from under-represented and vulnerable groups do have an advantage in applying for enrolment.

The Covid-19 pandemic was included in this category, along with its impact on student mental health. They think they get very good mental health counselling/support for students at the University. An example of good practice is the APURI document with rules and instructions regarding the Covid-19 pandemic (a policy on online classes), which was incorporated at University level.

One professor said that, as teachers, they encourage students to express their problems through art. This is a very nice idea at some level. However, institutional inaction and failure to respond to serious incidents cannot simply be 'worked out through student art' and could (at worst) be viewed as yet another casual dismissal of valid student concerns and complaints.

A project carried out in collaboration with the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka and the Faculty of Law was cited as an example of 'dealing with problems through art', with an alumna experiencing harassment which she turned into artwork. The alumna won an award for her artwork, titled 'Sram te i stid bilo/Shame on you', but it is interesting that she herself said that, "at the institutional level her problem was ignored and swept under the rug".

A commendable APURI initiative was to organise a workshop as part of the international EU project Wom@rts - "Enterprising Art" for young artists, which promotes equal

representation of women in the labour market, and better opportunities for women's self-employment in the field of arts and creative industries. The workshop was attended by 25 artists in 2021, including alumni and students of the Academy.

However, female students stated that they they felt degraded by a particular senior professor in sculpting courses who believed that 'women were not competent to do sculpting and always needed the help of a man'. It is sad at any educational institution in 2022 to be compelled to view women as 'a vulnerable and under-represented group.'

This also supports a specific, completely outdated, 'macho' understanding of twenty-first-century (as well as 20th century) sculpture. Such a myopic attitude ignores the range of materials and methods used since the beginning of the 20th century like thread and textile, paper, cardboard and other lightweight materials, not only bronze and stone! And what about technical specialists who help realise the creative vision of artists – something that is also usual practice nowadays within contemporary art. Finally, what about conceptual praxis within sculpture?!

Worst of all, the fact that such a misogynistic attitude can be expressed quite openly, forcibly and publicly by any senior professor, uncontested by any senior institutional managers and not resulting in any investigation, disciplinary procedure, correction or retraining, sends a strong, extremely negative collective message to APURI students and staff. Such inappropriate behaviour should never be tolerated at a modern educational institution.

The vice-deans mostly think that current student anxiety is present because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The vice-deans believe students are generally anxious and depressed because of unrealised opportunities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. When asked by the Expert Panel whether students at the Academy were happy, the vice-deans responded, 'They are not as happy as they were, but this has nothing to do with how the Academy functions; it is more because of post-covid times (the need for psychological help increased 100%), small study programmes, open relationships also mean more vulnerable relations between students and teachers. There's no ombudsman at the Academy; students usually contact the teacher they have confidence in. The problems we can solve are solved rapidly.'

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented difficulties for students and teaching staff across the globe. However, many student problems at APURI are in no way Covid-19-related and the Covid-19 pandemic cannot be used as a universal, dismissive excuse for further inaction in relation to student issues.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI should establish an effective institutional mutual respect policy, which applies to students and to staff together. Students and staff at the Academy need to be properly acquainted this policy and, in the event of any incident, clear and simple procedural steps should be set out to resolve all issues publicly and

transparently and contact people (staff and student representatives responsible for the operation of the policy) should be assigned. Bad or unprofessional behaviour on part of students or staff must be called out, dealt with and corrected through retraining or through disciplinary procedures. Genuine complaints must be listened to and acted upon immediately.

- Revise (or establish) critical incident procedures at APURI – what happens when something serious goes wrong with a student, who should be contacted, who should deal immediately with the incident, who should be informed (including external agencies like police, doctors and lawyers)? The new procedures should be brainstormed and tested to determine whether they are workable, fit for purpose, clear and understandable.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

APURI is well covered with international bilateral agreements through Erasmus+ mobility. The Expert Panel heard that students are encouraged to participate in international mobility. Also, students who return from an Erasmus+ mobility present their experience when they return to APURI – a commendable initiative.

Alumni pointed out there should be stronger focus on learning a foreign language (mainly English) at APURI because of contemporary (art) world needs.

There is evidence of mobility in the last five years: 29 Croatian students at APURI practiced mobility. In the current academic year 2021/2022 – 3 Croatian students at APURI practiced mobility (Spain, Germany), while 6 students came to APURI; in 2020/2021 – 4 Croatian students at APURI practiced mobility; in 2019/2020 and 2017/2018 – 9 Croatian students practiced mobility.

Earlier mobility practice – numbers were higher (up to 9 APURI students practiced mobility). Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, this is to be expected.

To some extent, students are exposed to literature in foreign languages, foreign experiences and practices, work with foreign professors via, for example, the Centre for Innovative Media and the YUFE network (this is relatively new and two online classes are offered in English).

Erasmus+ coordinators are elected at APURI.

APURI keeps records of the correlation between completed courses and ECTS credits, and subjects that cannot be regulated through the direct correlation system are entered into the diploma supplement.

There are two active networks of the Academy within CEEPUS – these are *Adriart.ce* and *Art without Borders*.

Full-time teachers said that APURI does encourage international mobility, but official support could be better (though recently the Project Office has helped a lot). This is quite a common institutional difficulty across the world, where mobility is ‘encouraged’ but not correctly resourced or supported. APURI teachers engaged in short-term mobilities were only facilitated if they could ‘catch up with all of their work on their return’.

There still seem to be very few (or no) programmes and courses taught in English (or any other world language) at APURI.

Recommendations for Improvement

- The Academy must attempt to start introducing some courses and study programmes taught (to some extent at least) in international languages. This will help the learning experience of incoming students, but it will also give Academy students the essential international vocabulary in their chosen field of art practice.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

There is evidence of incoming mobility in the last five years: 21 foreign students came to APURI as part of the Erasmus+ mobility programme. This is a relatively modest number, but will, of course, have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

A big problem is that APURI does not deliver study programmes or courses in any foreign language, nor does it have accredited study programmes in foreign languages (i.e. English), but it is claimed that in most cases the teaching staff actively use English with incoming students. If older professors have a problem with the English language, teaching assistants jump in as some kind of ‘bridge’ (as assistants consider their role in teaching practice).

Incoming students are given the opportunity to learn the Croatian language (at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences).

According to the documents, Erasmus+ coordinators at APURI provide support to foreign incoming students who complete anonymised questionnaires which measure their satisfaction with the mobility programme experience. As ever with APURI, there must be some question as to how (or if) the data gathered is used to develop and improve the study programmes for new incoming students. An information package for incoming students does exist within the University.

The vice-deans at APURI clearly believe that incoming students are well integrated. The vice-deans encourage classes in English because learning the language is useful for Croatian students as well.

The work with incoming Erasmus+ students can mostly be characterised as individual tuition.

The Expert Panel did not get the impression that there is any planned strategy to increase the number of English language (or foreign language) classes or study programmes. There are individual initiatives that arise from cooperation with the YUFE network, which is a good starting point and platform. But all such initiatives are rather new. For now, only two tiny online courses are available in English, so this is really at the very beginning.

The vice-deans have repeatedly and enthusiastically confirmed to the Panel that they are planning to develop some kind of Coursera courses within YUFE (which will be open to students and staff). Once again, any 'integration' of Coursera courses into the pedagogical activity of APURI had clearly not been thought out, was not being planned (or even outlined) and very much looked like yet another 'starting phase' initiative for the future. On the transcript of records (and ECTS credits), the Academy does provide confirmation for incoming students, along with the transcript of records.

Recommendations for Improvement

- The Academy must attempt to start introducing some courses and study programmes taught (to some extent at least) in international languages. This will help the learning experience of incoming students, but it will also give Academy students the essential international vocabulary in their chosen field of art practice.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

Administratively and in terms of regulatory documentation, a functional APURI student appeals procedure does exist, as well as Regulations on Exams and Grading. However, there must be serious questions about how 'objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements' is actually working. Whether the current system, as implemented, is consistently fair, valid and reliable is also in question. Many students do not have confidence or trust in APURI's evaluation and assessment processes.

The Academy did offer one example of a complaint in the academic year 2020/2021, where email correspondence showed the inappropriate behavior of one teacher towards the students, regarding the teaching process and the exam, as well as inappropriate

behavior towards a teaching assistant. This is one case where APURI provided student support, so students took their exams in front of a committee who confirmed the student complaints were justified, and, finally, this teacher does not work anymore.

There were many more student complaints and feedback regarding lack of objectivity and the inconsistent implementation of assessment and grading procedures. At best, many assessment procedures and criteria for assessment were very unclear to students (and were frequently not clearly explained by professors). Professors, teachers and management staff frequently seemed to have the poorest understanding of a learning outcomes approach to education. Without a clear understanding of modern learning outcomes, it is difficult to understand how the achievement of learning outcomes could be related to fair, valid and reliable criteria for assessment. Indeed, many students and even some managers expressed the view that some APURI teachers just did not care about teaching methods, assessment, evaluation and grading.

There is no clear evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes on many APURI study programmes. APURI learning outcomes are, for the most part, fundamentally flawed: either poorly written or 'written as content' and wholly unrelated to criteria for assessment.

Teaching methods also need broad modernisation, with junior and assistant teachers bemoaning the fact that senior professors desperately need to modernise their pedagogical approaches. The Expert Panel also heard of some instances of extremely poor teacher behaviour towards students, with some misogynistic comments and attitudes voiced publicly, some distinct instances of unprofessionalism (teachers regularly not coming in for classes or simply coming in late all the time and then leaving 'after a few minutes'). Some examples of feedback from students, graduates, associates can be found in this report, under standards 2.1. and 2.4. and under assessment area no. 3.

According to the APURI report, in the academic year 2020/2021 there were some student complaints about teaching processes (4 courses). These were mainly problems with the workload, which was too high and thus not aligned with the number of ECTS points. There were also complaints about some teachers suddenly changing the evaluation criteria. Although the APURI Management claims these problems have been resolved, at least one vice-dean remarked that 'this is something that needs better monitoring and improvement'.

APURI teachers have the opportunity to take part in workshops aimed at improving teaching competencies, and they can evaluate their own teaching skills, as well as their methods of evaluating the students. These workshops are offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, which was confirmed to the Panel to be a useful opportunity to see other methods of teaching and compare them to those at APURI, though pointing out that, expectedly, in small groups there is different type of communication with students. It was pointed out that many of the teacher workshops and courses are heavily skewed towards more conventional 'lecture-based' university

teaching and learning, with very little understanding of the realities of teaching at an applied arts academy. Changing the understanding of University pedagogues in this regard could be a major responsibility and opportunity for APURI staff.

Teacher development initiatives are not something very structured across APURI. It is left up to individual teachers to engage with such professional development courses. There is a wealth of developed experience at art academies and art schools across Croatia and Europe. The Panel would strongly recommend that APURI teachers visit such comparable institutions, to job shadow and to learn about contemporary best practice. Any such learning should then be fed back across the entire APURI teaching staff as part of structured teacher-led workshops and trainings.

Missing: a visual repository of graduate works (APURI plans to set up a digital repository).

Recommendations for improvement

- All APURI teachers and professors need to modernise, revise and update their assessment skills and approaches as part of their urgent pedagogical training. All APURI teachers and professors should be writing modern assessment criteria for their own modules/courses.
- Assessment criteria must be clearly spelled out for students in APURI module or course briefing documents. Assessment rubrics could help students to understand what they need to do to improve their work for assessment. Students must know what they need to achieve in order to pass or in order to do very well.
- APURI assessment criteria must be clearly linked to learning outcomes. Assessment must be a fair, valid, clear, transparent and reliable evaluation of whether each student has achieved the intended learning outcomes for the module or course.
- Student confidence in APURI student surveys and in the process of quality assurance must be progressively improved and enhanced. Students MUST 'buy-in' to a safe survey process if quality assurance is to start to work properly again at APURI.

Quality grade:

Unsatisfactory level of quality

3.9. The higher education institution issues diplomas and diploma supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.

Analysis

The content and form of the diploma and diploma supplement are issued in accordance with regulations. The diploma supplement in Croatian and English is free of charge, in compliance with a document regulating this within APURI and UNIRI.

Students can make a request that the diploma supplement contain information on extracurricular activities, together with the earned ECTS credits (volunteering activities, Erasmus+ and CEEPUS mobility).

Learning outcomes are not included in the diploma supplement and it appears not to be obligatory across the University. Learning outcomes should be included in any diploma supplement in order to comply with national regulations and guidance.

The APURI Management is aware of this issue, but did not offer any explanation to the Expert Panel.

Recommendations for improvement

- Include (revised and modernised) learning outcomes in future diploma supplements.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

APURI is certainly committed to the employability of its graduates, though alumni (and students) persistently complain that too little is learned at the Academy about employability, career development and the needs of the labour market. This situation may be addressed by the recent establishment of the Career Centre, though the centres are very much at the initial stage only. APURI does maintain some (largely informal) contact with alumni, and they do participate in a few projects, but this area has huge potential for development.

APURI does recognise a lack of student employment as one of the biggest dangers for the Academy in future. Professors explained that this is partly a national, as well as a cultural and societal problem. For example, the labour market demands candidates who are educated to MA level, making it very hard for those at BA level to find employment.

An agreement was secured with the National Theatre and did establish the Career Centre as a commendable initiative but, as has already been concluded, the Career Centre is very much at the starting point, with high ambitions, a seemingly wide remit and the need to prove itself effective still very much in evidence. Within the Career Centre, the

Academy has started to provide students with information and skills needed for future career planning.

Within the centres, connections have been established with the economic sector to some extent, to do student practice (work on projects, etc.).

Table 3.7 presents the minimum information from the Croatian Employment Service and most statistics are not available because APURI does not have a procedure or the methodology to monitor the employability of students. Statistics regarding freelance artists are also unavailable.

APURI did get some data from questionnaires completed by alumni in 2022 (14 answers): 50% work in the profession or in a related area (28,6%). Alumni think experience gained at the Academy is completely (21.4%), mostly (42.9%) or to some extent (21.45%) related to their work.

In their meeting with the Expert Panel, APURI alumni clearly expressed the belief that more concrete preparation for life after the Academy is needed (learning a foreign language (English), more soft skills and competencies, and basic preparation for the labour market). The Panel only met one alumnus who regularly and actively cooperated with APURI within a project context (costume and set design and stage), participating and exchanging experience with current students.

Within the Art Education programme, the Academy sees potential: study programmes in an expanding field, with small changes, could also result in better employability.

APURI maintains no more than cursory contact with alumni, especially as part of some extracurricular projects. Postgraduate contact between the institution and alumni is unstructured, rather informal, random, and more of an exception than a rule. All of the alumni met by the Expert Panel expressed an interest in more regular and structured participation in the activity of the institution, in the development of study programmes and in regularly explaining employment and labour market case studies to current students. The alumni are an almost completely untapped institutional resource.

Students do feel a lack of soft skills (how to present their work, build a portfolio, become a member of some professional associations, set up their own business, or make a living from their art once they graduate). This was corroborated by graduates. The Career Centre has recently been established and hopes to inform students at the undergraduate and graduate level about available opportunities and acquaint them with courses and international opportunities, which is all very commendable but only just getting started. The centres are potentially good initiatives, but APURI needs to continue their development and needs to embed their work strongly in the study programmes and across APURI departments.

Recommendations for improvement

- Students (including undergraduate students) must learn basic soft skills and employability skills which they will need in the outside world (how to present their

work, build a portfolio, activate a membership in some professional associations, set up their own business, and make a living from their art once they graduate).

- The work of the new Career Centre is potentially a good initiative, but APURI needs to embed the Career Centre work strongly in the study programmes and across APURI departments.
- Stakeholders (including alumni) should be involved more formally and more regularly in APURI activities, especially in programme development and graduate employability activity.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis

APURI has made efforts over the past five years to increase staff numbers and, despite the Ministry's restrictive measures, has managed to get new staff appointed. For each teacher whose employment was completed, teachers were hired, but at the same time additional jobs were created for assistants. The procedure for election to the title of teacher is in accordance with the laws and regulations, which ensures their adequate qualification.

Many professors, especially full and associate professors, have too many teaching hours. A different distribution of teaching could partly solve the problem of a large number of hours for some teachers.

In general, assistant professors are close to the standardised teaching hours (300 hours) (Table 4.3). Most assistants have almost double the standardised teaching hours (they should be working 150).

Numerous teaching staff mentioned that there is a lack of technicians in workshops and a lack of assistants (in this moment 14 assistants work as external associates). Since the last accreditation some improvements have been made (and 8 new assistants have been appointed). Many external teachers have been collaborating with the Academy for over 10 years without a clear perspective of their employment. From any international point of view, this is incomprehensible. In Croatia, there is something of an expectation that 'external' teachers are usually given contracts after a maximum of six or seven years.

The ratio of students to full-time teachers at the higher education institution ensures a high quality of studying and is within the legal norms. Enough space certainly does exist

at the Academy to host more students, but a low student to teacher ratio permits personal and direct approaches to each student, which is very important for these kinds of studies. Teacher workload ensures appropriate distribution of teaching, scientific/artistic activities, professional and personal development and administrative duties. Teachers have a lot of teaching hours, but they still participate in a number of scientific/artistic projects. If they are given additional administrative tasks, it happens that the assistants, who are already quite busy, have to take on additional tasks. By increasing the number of administrative staff, teachers could be partially relieved and the workload of assistants would also be improved.

Table 4.4 of the SER shows quite a poor level of research and other activities. Many more activities have been mentioned in meetings and action plans.

To improve artistic activities and professional and personal development of teachers, the Project Office has been established. This should prove useful as administrative support for teachers.

Teachers are qualified for the course/courses they deliver, although many teachers do need urgent pedagogical training and a modernisation of their teaching and assessment approaches.

The methods and criteria applied to teacher selection are defined by different laws, regulations and norms and, generally speaking, teacher election procedures are aligned with the relevant legislation.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI needs to conduct a review of teaching and working hours to make sure that hours are distributed fairly and that particular groups of teachers (assistants, for example) are not being excessively tied up in more administrative roles.
- Make modern study programme revision and development a strategic priority training and development subject for all teaching and management staff at APURI. Though teachers are qualified for the courses they deliver, they urgently need modern formal teaching qualifications to bring them up to speed with current practice in European art and design education. All staff need a strong working knowledge of student-centred learning, learning outcomes, assessment and feedback, and ECTS.
- APURI must do whatever it can to incentivise teacher take-up of the available formal staff pedagogical training and development opportunities.
- The Project Office could and should also be engaged in supporting the activities concerning the improvement and modernisation of teaching competencies.

- Use European mobility funds to send APURI teachers to other art and design institutions across Europe, to job shadow and to experience the most up-to-date art education learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- Too many very commendable and highly capable 'external' teachers need early contracts and they need improved support from senior professors, teachers, the Management and the institution.
- To increase the transparency of the entire promotion and progression system, departments should clearly define their criteria and update the list of staffing needs each year. It would be useful for this information to be published on the web.

Quality grade:

Minimum 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

A new recruitment plan is proposed annually by the dean and it is mainly based on the number of working hours and the number of students attending different courses. Departments can suggest their priorities and the Academic Council has to approve the overall plan.

The methods of teacher selection are aligned with the legislation and internal university regulations. Priority criteria are not so evident. They are mainly based on working hours and the number of students.

Regarding the selection of new teachers, the process at APURI has been harmonised with legal provisions. Competitions for selection are visible and well promoted.

Throughout the recruitment prioritisation process, it is not very clear who is responsible for setting priorities and what exactly the procedure is for deciding on promotion and/or new employment.

To increase the transparency of the entire system, it would be appropriate for the departments (which are in charge of the quality of teaching) to clearly define their criteria and update the list of staffing needs every year. It would be useful for this information to be published on the web, so that external associates who have been cooperating with APURI for years could have transparent insight into employment priorities.

In selecting, appointing and evaluating teachers, the HEI takes into account their previous activities (teaching activity, research activity, feedback from students, etc). As ever at APURI, student feedback is poorly taken into account and no evidence or examples of the selection procedure are provided. It is hard to understand the objective criteria of appointment procedures (other than the numeric criteria mentioned above).

The higher education institution has adequate methods for the selection of the best candidates for each position and, in addition to the prescribed national minimum conditions for each position, it has prescribed 'competitive criteria ensuring the selection of excellent candidates.' It is not possible to compare the quality of possible candidates. Each year the list of candidates that are selected is published but there are no explanations nor is there any other information about the selection process.

According to the documents, the promotion of teachers into higher grades is supposedly based on the evaluation and rewarding of excellence, and APURI takes into account important achievements (such as international contribution to the scientific discipline, high-impact publications, significant scientific discoveries, successful projects, success in securing additional funds, supervision of final and graduation theses, authorship of textbooks/study materials, popular lectures). Promotion opportunities and conditions are based on legislative regulations.

However, exact and transparent criteria for teacher promotion do not seem to exist and decisions seem to be made by senior management, or solely by the Dean. These decisions are subsequently ratified by the Academic Council and by the University Senate.

When asked whether teaching excellence was rewarded at the Academy, teachers responded, 'No. There is definitely much room for improvement in terms of positive motivation. At the university level, which is the umbrella level, we do have a system of recognition. Frankly, at Academy level it's not supported.'

In May 2022, the Academy introduced 'some new regulations' for assessing and rewarding teacher excellence. This extremely recent initiative must be encouraged, even if it is very much just getting started and is inadequately described.

Too many very commendable and highly capable external teachers have been very precariously employed for many years, without contracts at the Academy. Many external teachers are working in positions of high responsibility in their study programmes and departments – they need early contracts and they need the support of more senior professors, teachers, the Management and the institution.

Recommendations for improvement

- To increase the transparency of the entire promotion and progression system, it would be appropriate for the departments (which are in charge of the quality of teaching) to clearly define their criteria and update the list of staffing needs every year. It would be useful for this information to be published on the web, so that

external associates, who have been cooperating with APURI for years, would have transparent insight into employment priorities.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

A lot of effort has been invested in supporting teachers in the implementation of their projects. A series of regulations that accurately define contracting procedures, the system of responsibility and the distribution of funds has been provided. The Project Office follows teachers throughout their projects and provides administrative support.

At the same time, almost nothing has been done to incentivise the improvement of teaching skills.

The last accreditation recommended that the Academy should help its teachers to improve their teaching competencies. Very little, if anything, has been done in this regard. The majority of professors do not consider it important at all to constantly change and modernise their approach to teaching.

In the meantime, new opportunities offered by the University have opened up: Coursera, YUFE and UNIRI CLASS, as mentioned in the SER. Teacher take-up of the available staff pedagogical training and development opportunities is very modest (only a handful of teachers).

It is much more important for students to have professors with high quality teaching competencies rather than to participate sporadically in projects that involve a limited number of students. APURI teachers have the opportunity to take part in workshops aimed at improving teaching competencies, and they can evaluate their own teaching skills, as well as their methods of evaluating the students. These workshops are offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, which was confirmed to the Panel to be a useful opportunity to see other methods of teaching and compare them to those of teachers at the Academy. APURI teachers pointed out that in small groups there is a different type of communication with students. There is also great opportunity to use European mobility funds to send APURI teachers to other art and design institutions across Europe, to job shadow and to experience the most up-to-date art education learning, teaching and assessment practices.

The system of student satisfaction surveys and assessment is poorly developed and not seriously considered at all. New regulations for assessing and rewarding teacher excellence have only been implemented in May 2022. Teaching quality and attitude

towards students are mentioned as 'criteria of excellence', but the improvement of teaching skills is not mentioned or rewarded.

APURI teachers do not participate much in international mobility, even if the Academy is increasing the number of international contacts each year. New Erasmus+ contracts have been concluded and some of them have been proposed directly by the students. In order to improve their teaching competencies, it is very important that teachers use the opportunity to engage in job shadowing through international mobilities.

In the action plans it is said that professors should be encouraged to participate in international programmes and networks (Erasmus+, Ceepus, Corsera, YUFE and others) but it is not clear how this is done.

Recommendations for improvement

- The Academy should engage intensively in modernising and improving the teaching skills of its employees through workshops, lectures, the UNIRI programmes mentioned above, conferences dealing with the issue, or job shadowing in other similar institutions.
- APURI must incentivise teacher take-up of the available staff pedagogical training and development opportunities. APURI teachers and professors desperately need structured, modern pedagogical training.
- Use European mobility funds to send APURI teachers to other art and design institutions across Europe, to job shadow and to experience the most up-to-date art education learning, teaching and assessment practices.
- The Project Office could and should be also engaged in supporting the activities concerning the improvement of teaching competencies.
- The data gathered through APURI student surveys must be used to improve the student experience and to improve teacher performance and study programmes at APURI. At the moment, these data are not being used to improve quality.

Quality grade:

Minimum 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

A lot of effort has been invested in workshop equipment and new software. Workshop technicians are needed (the assistants are currently doing their job). Still, there is a great difference in the quality of classrooms and equipment across subdepartments. The improvement of working conditions for actors has only lately been considered (in the latest action plan).

The Academy has a lot of space (a lot more than is prescribed) and it is appropriate for the delivery of some study programmes. Lately, even the garden has been equipped so that students can stay there during a break or even work (some students were working on sculptures in the garden).

Some spaces (workshops) are well equipped: the ceramic workshop with a 3D printer, 2 computer workshops, digital printers, a photo laboratory. The Academy can produce its own printed materials for exhibitions or exams. However, some areas (Acting) are being completely neglected and are not at all appropriate for lesson delivery or practical work. There is no shower for the actors. Their classrooms should be urgently equipped.

What is needed is a room where students can stay between classes. This is very easy to organise, as there is a lot of space that is poorly used and some extra space could easily be found if only classes were better organised. On the top floor, there is a room of 300 square metres that is empty. The Academy is considering renting it but perhaps the Academy library could be established there? There is enough space for all activities which are currently lacking space.

There is a problem of no security at the entrance to the premises, which makes students feel unsafe, especially if they are working late at night. The system of issuing cards to individual users is not working properly, so it is necessary to improve the security system some other way.

Users with disabilities are facing a problem in that the elevator has been out of order for a long time. The students say it has been out of order for 'a year', while the Management says that this has been the case for 'a month, and it is being fixed.'

UNIRI is working on project to improve energy efficiency and the Academy is involved (there are solar panels on the roof). There is no proof of this anywhere and no evidence of the initiative in any of the SER documentation (the Vice-Dean of General Affairs just made a passing reference to it).

Teachers have sufficient working space and they are properly equipped. Their offices are not equipped for artistic work. There are also offices for external teachers.

Offices for administrative staff have recently been refurbished to very high standards.

Recommendations for improvement

- Improve the working and teaching conditions of the Acting and Media study programme as a top priority.
- Reorganise Academy space (or use of space) to create a room for students.

- Create an Academy library, properly staffed and resourced to provide up-to-date academic art, design and media texts and other materials (analog, digital or both).
- Teachers' offices are not equipped for artistic work. Some extra space could easily be provided if necessary by reorganising the current use of space.

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

Since the last accreditation nothing has been done in order to improve the library system and the availability of relevant core texts and literature at the Academy. This is extremely disappointing. Worse still, teaching staff and the APURI Management evidently do not consider the absence of an academic library to be a problem for the institution. In the last action plan the library was not even mentioned, indicating clearly how low a priority the provision of relevant literature to students really is to the institution and its staff.

Staff and management dismissed any library concerns, saying that the University library is a mere 800 metres away and that students have access to numerous relevant libraries in the city, in local museums and in galleries. The nearby library at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences has only a few books concerning art education and the Academy cannot order any new books because they have no agreement that would allow this.

UNIRI has the University library but students rightly do not consider it a relevant source of art literature at all. Students mainly use city libraries (which can hardly be updated with the most recent examples of professional literature) and professors loan their own books to students, which is an incredibly risky, unsustainable and old-fashioned idea. This may be a nice gesture but it cannot possibly be an alternative to a functioning library (which is much more than an institution where books are stored).

A library is not just service for students but it also gives opportunities to professors to get new books and to stay updated. That is, of course, if professors care to be updated on the latest global trends in art practice.

The fact that the Academy does not understand the importance of a library gives the impression that it is an arts and crafts school with no broader academic or interdisciplinary ambitions. E-books and agreements with digital libraries could also be part of the solution but, fundamentally, the Academy has no plan to address the current library situation.

The law stipulates that the Academy must have a library or an agreement with another library.

The Law on Libraries and Library Activity states in Art. 10, para. 1: "School institutions, higher education institutions and public scientific institutes are obliged to establish a library within these institutions, i.e. higher education institutions and public scientific institutes may conclude a specific agreement with another public library to provide library services necessary for the performance of teaching and research activities, in accordance with the standards referred to in Art. 12, para. 2 of this Act."

Recommendations for improvement

- Establish an Academy library to provide the necessary core texts for the students of Academy study programmes.
- APURI staff (teachers and managers) must learn to understand the very necessary, symbiotic links between 'theoretical' or academic learning and practical learning in twenty-first-century art education.

Quality grade:

Unsatisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

On its web page, the Academy has published its financial plans and returns for the last 3 years. The Academy has recently launched a series of new initiatives which could provide additional sources of income. The opening of the centres aims to increase the visibility of the institution in public and increase collaboration with external stakeholders.

This initiative is commendable and the Panel hopes that it will provide additional sources of income that will help improve the work of the Academy. Once again, the centres have great potential and could be hugely valuable but currently must be viewed very much as only getting started.

The Project Office assists teachers in applying for projects, which can also be a source of funding for the institution. The Academy is already implementing some lifelong learning programmes. These are certainly a good way of generating some additional income and should be developed further. Other similar initiatives such as educational workshops, summer schools, exhibitions and student performances may be additional possible sources of funding. Of course, these initiatives would also increase the visibility of the Academy and would lead to an increase in the number of students who are applying for study programmes.

In its strategy, the Academy recognises the quality of its premises and the prestige of its location as one of its greatest advantages. However, the action plans lack some items that should be an absolute priority for APURI (an academic library being the most notable and obvious omission, for example).

Another aspect that is problematic in choosing priorities is the complete neglect of the needs of the Acting and Media study programme. This study programme was very highly rated in student surveys and the students praised it highly in their comments. However, they feel neglected by the dean, by other department heads and by management.

There are also problems in the maintenance of the Academy's fine building and in the system used to ensure the safety of students and equipment. Providing students with 24-hour access to the Academy is a commendable initiative but this system is not fully effective and students do not feel safe. Basics like cleaning staff seemed to be in short supply and basic cleaning supplies were amongst the most pilfered items.

The Academy should reach a better agreement with the University or ensure the budget for basics such as maintenance, cleaning and security on its own.

Additional funds are allocated by Academy regulations and by prescribed procedures and systems of responsibility. However, it is clear that this redistribution of funds is not optimal. Some departments are extremely well equipped, while some lack basic working conditions.

The Expert Panel does not believe that commercial renting of Academy space is an optimal solution (300 square metres in the attic). Space should be used to improve student comfort, to establish an academic library or to obtain extra income by means of APURI project activities.

The Academy has already achieved various forms of cooperation through projects and cooperation with the local community. It has recognised the potential of such initiatives and established a Project Office to help teachers develop and structure their project proposals. APURI educational initiatives (workshops, lifelong learning, summer schools, student exhibitions, student performances) are showing a lot of potential. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of these initiatives were impossible to implement, but the option of conducting some of them online was also noticed and should be encouraged, even if the pandemic comes to an end. Such programmes could greatly contribute to the broader national and international visibility and prestige of APURI.

Recommendations for improvement

- Establish a properly funded Academy library with library staff.
- Establish a sustainable and funded plan to support the centres and the Project Office in their potentially important work.
- Establish a proper action plan for the fair allocation of resources, teaching hours, space and necessary equipment to the Acting and Media study programmes.

- Review the use of space in the Academy building and review and improve basic functions like cleaning, maintenance and night security.

Quality grade:

Minimum 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

The SER notes that from 2017 to 2021, APURI staff authored over 50 internationally recognised publications, which is a very important shift from the previous period.

It seems that, in accordance with the recommendations of the previous accreditation report, art research and practice have been acknowledged as valid research methods, which is highly commendable. In collaboration with University experts, the criteria for applying for open calls have been changed in order to help artistic projects meet the requirements of scientific open calls; this is very good practice.

The Academy has already established various forms of cooperation through projects and cooperation with the local community. It has recognised the potential of such initiatives and established a Project Office to help teachers develop and structure their project proposals. There is a lot of potential in various educational initiatives (workshops, lifelong learning, summer schools, student exhibitions, student performances). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some of these initiatives were impossible to implement, but the option of conducting some of these online was also noticed and should be encouraged, even if the pandemic comes to an end. Such programmes could greatly contribute to the broader national and international visibility and prestige of APURI.

APURI has very recently implemented a system of rewarding the artistic and scientific achievements of its employees (the practice of commending is mentioned in the SER). A similar system of commending and awards for student work has already been implemented.

The different study programmes agree on sufficient administration support from the Academy in terms of research and/or artistic projects, yet some of them would appreciate greater support in terms of technical and space requirements.

APURI (co)organises meetings, symposiums, conferences and webinars, with both national and international impact. Examples, including conferences during the Glowing Globe projects: Science-Fiction-Art (2019), Sound of Silence (2020), Artificial Art Alienated (2021) and Ethics and Aesthetics in Postdigital Art (forthcoming in 2022), are

clearly interdisciplinary and international. On the other hand, scientific-teaching staff at APURI participate in numerous conferences outside of the Academy.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI should strongly consider the creation and promotion of a PhD programme.
- Some APURI staff members already participate in the activities of the doctoral school of UNIRI, including thesis mentoring. The project of an international and interdisciplinary PhD in art research, mentioned during the meetings, is to be absolutely supported and should become a best practice model for teachers across APURI.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

The Self-Evaluation Report mentions some examples of very good practice in this aspect: the Šibenik cathedral renovation project led by APURI staff and students, the involvement of APURI teachers and students in the activities of Rijeka - European Capital of Culture, collaboration with the civil sector (the Office for Persons with Disabilities), etc.

It is commendable that interdisciplinarity is encouraged, mainly through the Glowing Globe and other projects of the CIM, but also in the form of interdisciplinary collaborations with other faculties of the University or external stakeholders, mainly in the domain of new technologies. In this aspect, the recommendations of the previous accreditation report have been fulfilled.

The increasing number of collaborations with local external stakeholders and with other faculties of the University is a mark of good practice. Another commendable practice is the presentation of student works in public spaces.

Some study programmes (Visual Communication) are clearly oriented at integrating students in specific projects and connecting them with the labour market.

The different centres established at APURI in the recent period are potentially a hugely valuable initiative, although they are mostly only getting started (with the exception of the CIM - Centre for Innovative Media). The Project Office, which provides administrative support, is very much appreciated by the staff. The Career Centre is

meant to be mainly focused on students, but has only recently been established and is still only getting started on its activities.

Teachers and students are already participating in Coursera courses to acquire skills for a more successful inclusion in a competitive labour market. APURI Management pointed this out several times, reminding the Panel that the Coursera courses were freely available to APURI students and staff. However, there did not seem to be much of a plan as to how and why these courses would pedagogically supplement or enhance the current undergraduate study programme offerings, or how the courses would assist teachers in enhancing their professional competencies.

APURI is actively involved in the YUFE project, though it seems it has not yet been sufficiently implemented (teachers propose courses in English, but claim that there is little interest from students).

From this accreditation period, the artistic and research activities of all teachers and students are summarised and categorised in the Spreadsheets of Artistic and Scientific Activities, which is a commendable practice.

APURI teachers are members of various professional organisations listed in detail in the SER.

Recommendations for improvement

- The involvement and participation in the YUFE project should be actively promoted among both teachers and students.
- APURI should implement improved monitoring and mentoring of students' collaboration with external stakeholders.
- The work of the new centres (Project Office, Career Centre, etc.) should be developed further.

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

The SER notes an impressive number of various artistic, scientific and professional awards received by APURI employees since 2016. One very particular achievement that is noted is that of a professor who has received the lifetime achievement award of the Foundation of UNIRI.

From 2017 to 2021, over 130 projects have been run by APURI members at the national and international level. The Self-Evaluation Report also mentions prestigious

international projects based at the Academy, including Glowing Globe and Diversity Mixer.

APURI staff participate in national and international conferences, symposiums and other gatherings, which includes the International Symposium on Innovative Methods on Teaching in the Field of Arts, held in Osijek in 2020. Other participations are meant to be listed but the link does not work (p. 91).

The participation of teaching and scientific staff at regional, national and international conferences is encouraged. The Self-Evaluation Report notes several such participations. However, except for the above-mentioned international symposium on innovative teaching methods in art, too many of these activities are very local.

Though the Academy is involved in some international projects, its profile at an international level remains too low.

Recommendations for improvement

- APURI should actively encourage its members to seek out opportunities for more international publication and also encourage them to prepare more outgoing international communications (to raise the Academy's international profile).

Quality grade:

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

The Academy's artistic and research activities are determined by specific strategic programmes that are aligned with those of UNIRI. The developmental strategy of UNIRI includes (artistic) research, knowledge transfer with regional inclusion, and internationalisation as some of its main strategic goals. APURI encourages cooperation with galleries, theatres, museums and educational institutions at a regional, national and international level (e.g. YUFE).

The recommendation made in the previous accreditation report to develop an independent academy research strategy has not been realised.

The integration within the University brings support in terms of artistic projects (e.g. buying artworks of the professors in order to create a University art collection).

In 2019, the Commission for Artistic and Scientific Activity was established to govern the artistic activities of APURI, comprising representatives of all levels of the teaching staff, students and external stakeholders – this is a mark of good practice. A project

coordinator has been recruited within the Project Office, which is very much appreciated by the staff members.

APURI participates in the financing of publications and research (through the centres). The Centre for Commercial Services and Centre for the Development of Art Projects help to run the projects; the centres also raise their own funds which then contribute to the artistic and research budget of APURI. APURI is currently working on the implementation of the regulations on rewarding teachers and teaching assistants for their artistic and research achievements.

The Panel encourages the development of the newly announced policy of rewarding excellence. This should be expanded to include pedagogical development, research activity and internationalisation.

Recommendations for improvement

- The need to establish an APURI academic library (or concluding specific agreements with the UNIRI library) has already been explained above.
- A repository for artistic final theses also remains to be established (such an archive (analog, digital or both) could and should be part of any new academic library).
- APURI staff members also need an effective procedure for rewarding their research excellence and/or innovative academic activity.
- APURI should develop a five-year research strategy.

Quality grade:

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

Regarding well-equipped workshops and computer hardware and software acquired for the development of study programmes, some of this equipment has been purchased as part of various artistic or research projects and is used for teaching. This is only the case regarding some of the study programmes. Other study programmes and departments (specifically the Subdepartment of Acting) remain insufficiently equipped.

The Self-Evaluation Report notes that a large number of undergraduate and graduate students are involved in their teachers' artistic and research projects. Student

participation in extracurricular projects and activities is encouraged and supported by the Student Cultural Centre. However, meetings with students and staff did not really confirm the participation of a “large” number of students in such projects.

An example of good practice is the Theory and Practice project, connecting the teaching material of several study programmes (Art Education, Applied Arts and Graphic Design) with given elements from the theory and/or history of art. The results of this project should be used as the basis for forming new and stronger connections between theory and practice across all APURI study programmes and departments.

Some artistic or research projects are developing into (elective) courses.

Recommendations for improvement

- Purchasing various material or digital equipment with the funds raised by artistic/research projects is commendable practice, which should serve as a model across all study programmes and departments.
- The Theory and Practice project should be developed in other study programmes as well, in order to increase the students’ abilities to reflect on and to properly contextualise their own work. Even at a practical school, theory must be an integral part of the curriculum.
- A connection should be made between artistic and/or research projects of the teachers with core courses, not only elective ones.
- A solution for a functional librarian service accessible to students must be found and realised.

Quality grade:

Minimum 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>		+		
<i>II. Study programmes</i>		+		
<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>		+		
<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>		+		
<i>V. Scientific/artistic activity</i>			+	

Quality grade by standard

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

<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.			+	
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.		+		
2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.		+		
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.		+		
2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.		+		
2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).			+	

Quality grade by standard

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

<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.		+		
4.2. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.		+		
4.3. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.		+		
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.		+		
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.	+			
4.6. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.		+		

Quality grade by standard

<i>V. Scientific/artistic activity</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of scientific research.			+	
5.2. The higher education institution provides evidence for the social relevance of its scientific / artistic / professional research and transfer of knowledge.			+	
5.3. Scientific/artistic and professional achievements of the higher education institution are recognized in the regional, national and international context.		+		
5.4. The scientific / artistic activity of the higher education institution is both sustainable and developmental.			+	
5.5. Scientific/artistic and professional activities and achievements of the higher education institution improve the teaching process.		+		

2. Site visit protocol

Edukacija članova stručnog povjerenstva i priprema članova povjerenstva za sastanke s visokim učilištem u virtualnom okruženju /Training of panel members and preparation of the Expert Panel members for the meetings with the HEI in virtual form

	Utorak, 24. svibnja 2022.	Tuesday 24 th May 2022
14:50 - 15:00 CET	Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM	Joining ZOOM meeting
15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predstavljanje AZVO-a • Predstavljanje sustava visokog obrazovanja u RH • Postupak reakreditacije • Standardi za vrednovanje kvalitete • Kako napisati završno izvješće • Priprema povjerenstva za sastanke s visokim učilištem (rasprava o Samoanalizi i popratnim dokumentima) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of ASHE • Overview of the higher education system in Croatia • Re-accreditation procedure • Standards for the evaluation of quality • How to write the final report • Preparation of the Expert Panel members for the meetings with HEI (discussion on the Self-Evaluation Report and supporting documents)

Virtualni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva, diskusija o zapažanjima i impresijama s preliminarnog posjeta/Virtual meeting of Expert Panel members, discussion on observations and impressions from the document analysis

	Srijeda, 1. lipnja 2022.	Wednesday, 1st June 2022
9:00 -9:05	Spajanje na poveznicu (link) ZOOM recenzenata	Joining the ZOOM meeting
9:05 -	Interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel

Preliminarni posjet stručnog povjerenstva visokom učilištu u Rijeci/ Preliminary site-visit of Expert Panel members to the HEI in Rijeka

	Ponedjeljak, 6. lipnja 2022.	Monday, 6th June 2022
9:15 – 9:30	Spajanje dijela članova povjerenstva na poveznicu ZOOM	Some of the Expert Panel members join the ZOOM meeting
9:30 – 10:30	Sastanak s dekanom, prodekanima i tajnikom	Meeting with the Dean, Vice-Deans and Secretary
10:30 – 11:30	Sastanak s predstavnicima Povjerenstva za izradu samoanalize + predstavnici Povjerenstva za kvalitetu	Meeting with representatives of the Committee for the preparation of self-evaluation document + representatives of the Committee for Quality Assurance
11:30 – 12:30	Analiza dokumenata	Document analysis
12:30 – 13:30	<i>Ručak</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
13:30 – 16:30	Obilazak akademije (predavaonice, informatičke učionice, prostorije za studente, knjižnica, obilazak popratnih objekata) i prisustvovanje nastavi	Tour of the Academy (classrooms, computer classrooms, library, student services) and observing classes

Virtualni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva, diskusija o zapažanjima i impresijama s preliminarnog posjeta/Virtual meeting of Expert Panel members, discussion on observations and impressions from the preliminary site-visit

	Utorak, 7. lipnja 2022.	Tuesday, 7th June 2022
13:55 – 14:00	Spajanje na poveznicu (link) ZOOM	Joining ZOOM meeting
14:00 –	Interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel

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

	Srijeda, 8. lipnja 2022.	Wednesday, 8th June 2022
9:00 – 9:15	Spajanje na poveznicu (link) ZOOM	Joining ZOOM meeting via the link
9:15 – 10:15	Sastanak s prodekanom za nastavu, studijske programme i studente i prodekanom za umjetničko znanstvenu djelatnost	Meeting with Vice-Dean for Education, Study Programmes and Student Affairs and Vice-Dean For Artistic and Scientific Affairs

10:15 – 10:20	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
10:20 – 11:20	Sastanak s voditeljima studijskih programa i/ili voditeljima odsjeka	Meeting with study programme coordinators / heads of departments
11:20 – 11:30	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:30 – 12:30	Sastanak sa studentima	Meeting with students
12:30– 13:30	Sastanak s nastavnicima (u stalnom radnom odnosu, osim onih na rukovodećim mjestima)	Meeting with full-time employed teachers, except those in managerial positions
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Pauza za ručak</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:30 – 15:30	Sastanak s asistentima	Meeting with teaching assistants
15:30 –	Interni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members

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

	Četvrtak, 9. lipnja 2022.	Thursday, 9th June 2022
9:00 – 9:15	<i>Spajanje na poveznicu ZOOM</i>	<i>Joining ZOOM meeting</i>
9:15 – 10:15	Sastanak s prodekanima za umjetničko znanstvenu djelatnost, i međunarodnu suradnju i prodekanom za opće poslove	Meeting with Vice-Dean for Artistic and Scientific Affairs, Vice-Dean for International Cooperation and Vice-Dean for General Affairs
10:15– 10:20	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
10:20 - 11:20	Sastanak s voditeljima umjetničko znanstvenih i stručnih projekata	Meeting with the heads of artistic research and professional projects
11:20 – 11:30	<i>Pauza</i>	<i>Break</i>
11:30 – 12:30	Sastanak s prodekanom za opće poslove i predstavnicima centara na Akademiji	Meeting with the Vice-Dean for General Affairs and the centres (Design and Production, Innovative Media, Career Centre, Project Office, etc.)
12:35 – 14:35	<i>Pauza za ručak</i>	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:35– 15:05	Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima (nenastavnim) s kojima visoko učilište surađuje	Meeting with external stakeholders (non-teaching) with which the institution cooperates

15:05 – 15:35	Sastanak s alumnijima	Meeting with alumni
15:35 – 16:30	Sastanak s vanjskim nastavnicima (honorarci)	Meeting with external teachers
16:30 –	<i>Interni sastanak članova stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members</i>

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

	Petak, 10. lipnja 2022.	Friday, 10th June 2022
9:30 – 11:30	Interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva (izrada nacрта završnog izvješća)	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel (drafting the final report)
11:30 – 11:45	Završni sastanak s Upravom visokog učilišta	Exit meeting with the Management (dean and vice-deans)
11:45 – 13:30	Interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva (izrada nacрта završnog izvješća)	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel (drafting the final report)

SUMMARY

Many procedures at APURI either do not work at all or work too slowly, are ineffective or simply do not exist. When things go wrong, staff and students need simple and immediate procedures which tell them how to act, who to contact, and how problems will be solved.

Many students and staff are unfamiliar with the basic principles of mutual respect and do not understand basic rights, especially the rights of students. The Panel strongly recommends the development of a clear and concise mutual respect policy at APURI, which applies to students and to staff. This new policy should be easily understood and widely publicised.

Student surveys do not work at the Academy, with student feedback being gathered and the student voice heard, but with little action taken by the Management and staff. Student opinion is a key tool of quality assurance at any higher educational institution in Europe.

Learning outcomes have not been revised sufficiently in the period since the previous institutional review and a recent review had a distinctly 'top-down' character, rather than directly involving teachers in the process of change. Too many professors, teachers and APURI managers still do not understand the importance of learning outcomes in a modern pedagogical approach.

Too many of the senior academy professors still cling to outdated and discredited approaches in terms of pedagogy, programme development, assessment and feedback. Too many APURI teachers see themselves solely as 'artists', whilst being engaged and paid to be professional educators by the Academy and by the Croatian state. Many APURI teachers simply do not have the pedagogical skills and competencies to function properly as teachers in a truly student-centred educational system. Urgent, formal pedagogical retraining is required for most, if not all, APURI staff, the Management and teachers. Some male professors still espouse completely unacceptable views on gender. All APURI teachers and staff need retraining with regard to modern art teaching methods, learner-centred education, learning outcomes, assessment, feedback, gender issues, ECTS and quality assurance.

Little or no work has been done since the last accreditation process in 2015 with regard to the development of an Academy library. There seems to be a distinct lack of understanding of the importance of student and staff access to modern contemporary art, design and media literature, whether in analog or digital form. A dislocation between the importance of so-called theoretical learning and the practical aspects of any 2022 art, design and media curriculum persists at APURI.

The Academy is encouraged to continue the full integration and a more equitable resourcing of the Acting and Media programme in the culture, processes and life of the institution.

Too many very commendable and highly capable 'external' teachers need early contracts and improved support from senior professors, teachers, the Management and the institution.

The centres and the Academy Project Office are commendable strategic initiatives. The Academy must be encouraged to properly resource, sustain and support the future work of these important centres. The role of the centres must be given a little time to evolve and they must not be viewed as a solution to every problem at the Academy.

Academy must also be commended on the high quality of many elective courses. Some of the Academy classes and departments are technically very well equipped.

The quality assurance problems at APURI are not large and can easily be solved. The data already exist and staff and the Management are well aware of most or all of the problems. The Academy is well placed to solve its problems, to improve the learning experience for students and graduates, and to bring a vital contemporary flavour to all aspects of its art practice, study programmes, research activities and cross-sectoral links and networks.