



agency for science and higher education

**REPORT  
OF THE EXPERT PANEL  
ON THE  
RE-ACCREDITATION OF  
THE FACULTY OF MARITIME STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT**

**Date of site visit:  
15– 17 May 2018**

June, 2018

**MAMFORCE**



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## ***INTRODUCTION***

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

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

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent Expert Panel for the evaluation of the Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Split.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- Professor Kjell Ivar Øvergård, Department of Maritime Operations, Faculty of Technology, Natural Sciences and Maritime Sciences, University of South-Eastern Norway, Kingdom of Norway, Panel chair;
- Dr. Eduardo Blanco-Davis, Department of Maritime and Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- Associate Professor Vlado Frančić, Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Rijeka, Republic of Croatia;
- Associate Professor Smiljko Rudan, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Naval Architecture, University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia;
- Kristijan Nikolozo, Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Rijeka, Republic of Croatia, student.

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

- Management;
- Self-evaluation Report committee;
- Students;
- Alumni;
- Representatives of the business sector, potential employers;
- Heads of study programmes;
- Vice dean for education;
- Vice dean for research;

- Full-time teaching staff;
- Assistants and junior researchers;
- Leaders of research projects.

The Expert Panel members had a tour of the laboratories, library, IT classrooms, student administration office and classrooms, and attended sample lectures.

In accordance with the site visit protocol, the Expert Panel examined the available additional documents and study programme descriptions (learning outcomes).

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of the Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Split, on the basis of the Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Split, self-evaluation report, other relevant documents and site visit.

The Report contains the following elements:

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

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit to the Faculty of Maritime Studies University of Split and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Mr. sc. Sandra Bezjak, coordinator, ASHE;
- Maja Šegvić, assistant coordinator, ASHE;
- Irena Škarica, interpreter at the site visit and translator of the report.

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.

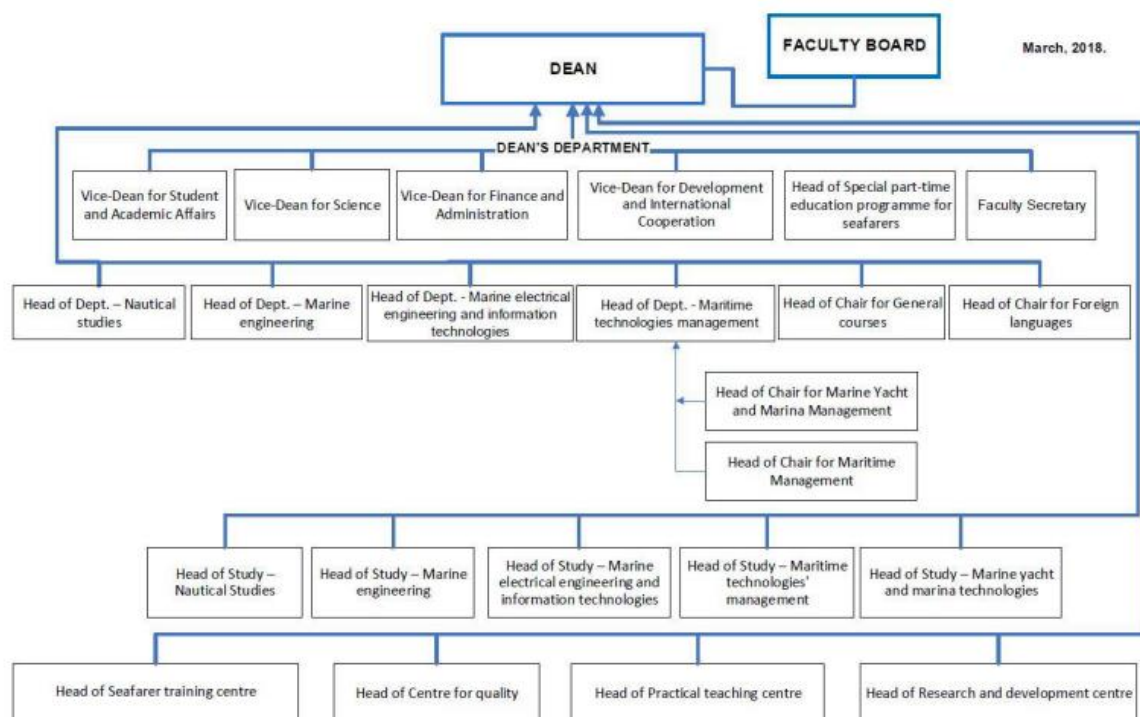
## SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Split

ADDRESS: Ruđera Boškovića 37

DEAN: Prof. dr. sc. Nikola Račić

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:



STUDY PROGRAMMES:

- Undergraduate study programme *Nautical studies*,
- Undergraduate study programme *Marine engineering*,
- Undergraduate study programme *Marine electrical engineering and information technologies*,
- Undergraduate study programme *Marine yacht and marina management technologies*,
- Undergraduate study programme *Maritime management*,
- Graduate study programme *Nautical studies*,

- Graduate study programme *Marine engineering*,
- Graduate study programme *Marine electrical engineering and information technologies*,
- Graduate study programme *Maritime management*.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: 870 full-time students and 634 part-time students

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: 34 full time teachers appointed into scientific-teaching grades and 18 full time teachers appointed into teaching grades

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

The Faculty was founded in 2004 as the legal successor of Maritime University College in Split, which had been founded in 1959. In 1985, the Maritime College in Split was restructured as the Faculty of Maritime Studies in Dubrovnik - Study in Split; in 1997, as the Faculty of Maritime Studies in Split; in 1998. as Maritime University College in Split and finally in 2004 as the Faculty of the Maritime Studies University in Split.

The Faculty has an established system of quality management ISO 9001 since June 2000, certified by Bureau Veritas and Croatian Register of Shipping. The Faculty was positively evaluated in the first reaccreditation cycle in July 2012 which was performed by Agency for Science and Higher Education and was granted the certificate of meeting the requirements for performance of activity (renewal of licence). Education and training comply with the International STCW Convention and other ordinances of the International Maritime Organisation - IMO.

In March, 2015, the Faculty was certified by the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism within the System of Recognition for Maritime Education and Training Institutions, which enabled the Faculty degrees to be recognized on board ships and in the companies supervised by the Japanese Maritime Administration.

In the academic year 2015/2016 the Teaching at the Faculty started on the new premises. In 2017 the Agreement on structuring of special study Naval Shipping was mutually signed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the University of Split, in whose structuring and performance the Faculty has the leading role. The programme is planned to start in the academic year 2018/2019. The result of the Faculty's long-term efforts is also the recognition by the Ministry of Sea, Traffic and Infrastructure for the contribution to maritime science and education in 2017.

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

### ***ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION***

1. Motivated management staff dedicated to the development of the institution,
2. Very optimistic, loyal and enthusiastic young researchers,
3. Visible movement towards improvement of scientific activities that especially encourages young researchers,
4. Provided very good support related to professional development and scientific research activities,
5. Excellent working conditions for teaching staff,
6. New premises equipped with state-of-the-art simulators and infrastructure that supports scientific research activities and staff participation in the scientific and development project,
7. Positive attitude of the Alumni who are proud and eager to support their Faculty,
8. Positive and affirmative students' overall opinion about the Faculty,
9. Very positive 3F project in progress that will significantly increase the capacity of the institution for research and teaching.

### ***DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION***

1. The majority of teachers have very high workloads, well outside the national norm,
2. Insufficient mobility of students and Faculty members, as well as international cooperation in teaching and science with a particular focus on scientific and research projects, accompanying the low level of the English language use,
3. Scientific outputs are well below the level that could be considered appropriate for the reputation of the institution that is proved with a low number of A grade class scientific articles,
4. Access to eminent databases is limited,
5. Existence of non-formal and comparatively weak stakeholders' contribution to the development of study programmes or to participation in joint scientific and research activities.



## ***LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES***

### ***EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE***

1. Lifelong learning programmes offered are up-to-date and in line with competences required by STCW,
2. Constant investments in capacities for research,
3. Open access to the laboratories,
4. Management staff is available to students at any moment,
5. Continuous implementation of activities for improvement following recommendations received from previous evaluations,
6. Awareness of the need for improvement of scientific achievements and reduction of the teaching workload.

## **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***

The Faculty's internal quality assurance is good, and of particular mention is the Faculty's follow-up on previous accreditations. The Faculty must do more to prevent and detect plagiarism in student works. Web pages in Croatian are good but there is a need to have web pages in English also and to increase the number of lectures given in English - both to support foreign students but also to attract foreign lecturers and researchers.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- Ensuring active cooperation with other institutions having similar study programmes should be a part of the strategy,
- To formalise procedures for checking for the presence of plagiarism and to create a protocol for handling of possible plagiarism in all student theses and exams where there is a possibility for plagiarism,
- To support staff to participate more actively in research activities with the companies aiming to develop transfer of technology and knowledge.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

## ***II - Study programmes***

Overall, the study programmes are of good quality and the study programmes comply with the requirements of the International STCW Convention, as well as relevant acts and ordinances of the Republic of Croatia underlining qualifications and certificates of competency for seafarers. The Faculty is commended for the lifelong learning programmes by the expert panel.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To include industry representatives (as a working group) and/or professional bodies in order to justify and/or update all available programmes, or during the development of new study programmes,
- To include alumni and external stakeholders within planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing existing programmes under a formal framework,
- To evaluate internally assessment elements (e.g. assignments, tests, examinations, et cetera) to ensure a fair process, but additionally to externally evaluate them by nominated field experts with relevant expertise.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

The Faculty provides support for its domestic students, but there is a need to increase the support for foreign students with a particular focus on the English language in lectures and course descriptions as well as literature and exams. Grading of exams can also be improved by utilizing multiple examiners that rate exams independently and then discuss the findings to agree on a proper grade. The Faculty also need to consider the causes of the high drop-out rates seen in some study programmes, and measures need to be taken to reduce the drop-out rates. Finally, the Faculty ought to consider the employability of their students when deciding on enrolment quotas.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To implement objective methods to quality-assure marking by teachers at regular intervals (*e.g.* by having multiple independent assessments by two or more people at regular intervals such as each 3<sup>rd</sup> year, and to assess the interrater reliability of these marks),
- To analyse more deeply the reasons for drop-out and to implement tangible and appropriate measures to reduce drop-out rate and to provide evidence for their application and effectiveness,
- To ensure group classes taught in English for all foreign students, including English samples of the examination process,
- To align and adjust quotas for study programmes based on employability data and potential employment opportunities.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

#### *IV - Teaching and institutional capacities*

The Faculty has greatly improved the adequacy of teaching capacities since the last re-accreditation. However, Faculty members are still teaching much more than the national norm hours. Procedures for teacher recruitment are of high quality but there is a need for procedures for comparing competing candidates. The Faculty's infrastructure is excellent, but additional focus should be given to ensure access to research databases for maritime and technical research.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To reduce teaching workload so that it is lower than, or equal to the national norm-hours,
- To reduce the number of students per teacher to the level in accordance with minimum legal requirements,
- To take into consideration teaching workload for any teacher while planning or introducing additional and new teaching activities such as teaching at other HEIs, introducing a doctoral study programme, maintaining summer schools as well as by introducing a new study programme,
- To ensure access to adequate number of curriculum books and scientific databases.

#### **Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality

### *V - Scientific/artistic activity*

The Faculty has improved its scientific output, with the help of incentive programmes for researchers who publish in high-ranking journals and with internal research projects. However, the majority of publications are still made in regional journals and the Faculty members only very seldom publish in large international journals. There is also a need to establish more international collaboration on research and to get foreign researchers and lecturers to the Faculty. Also, the Faculty need to work to increase the number of externally funded domestic or international research projects.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To implement additional efforts to get research done by the Faculty members to be accepted in international high-ranking journals rather than in the regional journals,
- To increase the administrative support for research applications and research projects,
- To increase the number of externally funded research projects in which the Faculty is involved,
- To increase international outlook and scientific collaboration with reputable maritime universities outside of former Yugoslavia,
- To increase the number of available staff by utilizing Erasmus+ exchanges to include foreign researchers,
- To involve more international researchers and students in their research projects.

#### **Quality grade**

Minimum 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.**

Internal quality assurance (QA) system at the Faculty exists. It is regulated by the Ordinance on Quality Assurance System that was adopted in January 2014 by which study programmes, overall teaching process, support to students and to students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, learning resources and professional activity are included and evaluated. The Board for Quality Improvement deals with the overall process of internal QA.

It seems that scientific and research activities are not covered appropriately by that ordinance, while the manual on internal QA was adopted in 2012 and is not aligned with the ESG. Although other stakeholders such as industry representatives and alumni are involved in some processes of QA and there are formal requirements to some extent (in the internal QA manual), their involvement is not systematic nor on a regular basis.

The strategy, including the mission, vision and strategic goals, is appropriate and in place for the period from 2017 to 2022, as well as the action/operational plan. In addition, the strategy of the Faculty's science development 2017 – 2022 is in place. Defined strategic goals are very ambitious. Panel members believe that all goals can be difficult to achieve in the foreseen period. Some specific goals (e.g. introducing doctoral study, development of new study programmes) are going much beyond the existing activities that correspond to availability and workload of the teaching staff, which are currently below minimum requirements.

There is no clear evidence of the formal involvement of students and stakeholders in the preparation of strategic documents. Contact between alumni and the Faculty was said to be informal, since several alumni and stakeholders present at the meetings with the Expert Panel also said they had been employed at the Faculty.

The Faculty systematically analysed the achievement of the strategic goals and tasks and corresponding report on accomplished goals and tasks was adopted by the Faculty Council. The Faculty collects and analyses data on its processes, resources and results

(student satisfaction surveys, feedback from employers), but the use of analysed data to manage and improve its activities as well as for further development could be more effective and formally documented.

It is evident that the Faculty put additional efforts to improve the overall process of the internal QA. Implementation of human resource management policies partly follow professional principles and standards and is heavily influenced by external factors such as Governmental and University rules.

There are no procedures for quality control of examination through using two examiners on exams. This is done 'when irregularities are observed', but there is no plan for validating the grades given by using two examiners. For the lifelong learning programmes, the institution engages two examiners, but this does not happen for the formal nine study programmes.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To align the Manual on internal QA with the ordinance on internal QA and ESG standards,
- To actively include the stakeholders and students in the internal QA process, and to formalize their participation in the processes,
- To be more focused on the achievement and monitoring of the goals and tasks defined in the strategic documents,
- To include peer review in the process of collecting and analysing data for the QA process,
- Support and additional help to students should be part of strategy,
- To ensure active cooperation with other institutions having similar study programmes should be a part of the strategy.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality



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

The Faculty introduced an action plan that follows the accreditation recommendations from the first cycle of ASHE evaluation in 2012, when the Faculty received several important recommendations. In addition, several action plans and reports in the consequent years (2012-2015, 2015/2016, 2016/2017, 2017/2018) have been adopted through which recommendations have been analysed, relevant activities undertaken and improvements made. The panel members found that the majority of the recommendations have been taken into consideration and weaknesses improved.

The major improvements include revision and amendment of study programmes, introduction of learning outcomes and internships, the tendency to improve student-teacher ratio by decreasing enrolment quota and by employing the new teaching staff members, significantly improved infrastructural and educational resources by moving to the new premises, and to enable student and teacher mobility. The Faculty also introduced a decision on measures to prevent nepotism, which prohibits employment of staff that is in family relation with the existing employees.

Throughout the quality management system ISO 9001:2015 that is implemented at the Faculty, action plans are prepared. Realisation of the activities is monitored by the quality board.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To make full improvements based on the accreditation report in 2012 (e.g. Student mentoring system),
- To continue with efforts focused on the improvement of internal quality management system.

### **Quality grade**

High level of quality

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

The Faculty follows the University Code of Ethics and has in addition introduced several internal acts for preventing all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination. Ethics Committee is established at the Faculty level. In addition, the adopted Ordinance on the disciplinary responsibility of students determines disciplinary activities.

Panel members found evidence of a few cases in which the Faculty dealt with unethical behaviour and the Faculty management managed conflicts and irregularities, although there are no data on reported and resolved cases as well as data on the number of cases forwarded to a higher level decision-making body.

Student ombudsperson was appointed recently (May 2018).

The Faculty used software Ithenticate (Crossref Similarity Check), in order to check for plagiarism attempts; however, there is no available clear procedure or requirements. Detection of plagiarism is basically related to scientific journal TOMS and periodically students' thesis, but there is no procedure for handling of possible cases of plagiarism related to student theses or exams. Clear procedures for detecting academic cheating and forging of results do not exist.

There are no mandatory requirements in which student thesis are made public. As a ground rule, student theses are not made public unless the Faculty have gotten explicit written permission from the students.

The work of the Faculty staff, students and external stakeholders are based on ethical standards that are applicable for a higher education institution. According to the recommendations received in the accreditation report from 2012, the Faculty made significant improvement and Panel members observed that the staff are committed to following the ethical standards.

The mechanism for preventing future employment of teaching and administrative staff in family relationship is in place within the Faculty.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To create procedures that require all student theses to be publicly available on the internet, unless the student thesis contains sensitive information (e.g.

information relating to organisation competitive strategy, national security or personal privacy issues) or present patent,

- To formalise procedures for checking for the presence of plagiarism in all student theses and exams where there is a possibility for plagiarism,
- To create a protocol for handling possible plagiarism cases and to ensure that all assessors understand the contents of this protocol,
- To create criteria preventing nepotism giving fair opportunities to any person seeking for an employment opportunity at the Faculty.

### **Quality grade**

Minimum 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).**

The Faculty uses a wide range of communication channels. One of the main communication channels is the website, and information is available in the Croatian and English language. Croatian website contains information about the Faculty including legal acts, strategies, action plans, detailed information on education, study programmes, lifelong learning programmes, as well as professional training, employees contact information, and information for alumni. In addition, the website contains links to different services for students and teaching staff.

The English website is missing information specific to legal acts and the description of courses. Information to students that is available on the website relates mainly to study programmes, and there is a lack of information on students' obligations, rights and supporting options. Some brochures or flyers with relevant information to students exist but not with all the information.

The Faculty has appointed an information commissioner/officer. In addition, the procedure on access to the information is available, by which stakeholders can request access to specific information (there is a specific form).

Stakeholders are informed about the admission criteria, enrolment quotas, study programmes, learning outcomes and qualifications, and also forms of support are available to students.

Basic information about scientific projects can be found on the website, however there is no clear evidence on how the Faculty informs stakeholders on scientific and professional topics and project deliverables. Transfer of knowledge and technology is partially available through companies that act as teaching bases, but with limited visibility to stakeholders.

Information about indicators such as pass rate analyses, graduate employment, drop-out rates or outcomes of previous evaluations are not systematically presented to stakeholders.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To make information equally available on the web page in Croatian and English,
- To make scientific and research work visible, especially project deliverables,
- To ensure students to be informed about their obligations, rights and supporting options (not only through the web page),

- To create and update the Faculty web pages in the English language,
- To ensure written (brochures, flyers) guidelines for students,
- To introduce procedures to ensure that the stakeholders are informed in a formal way and on a regular basis about indicators important for teaching and scientific activities.

**Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

The strategic goals of the Faculty are to work in close cooperation with the industry and the local community. Current contribution to the development of the maritime industry's economy and the local community seems to be more proactive. Contribution to the development of the national, local, and industrial economy occurs periodically. Mutual research activities in cooperation with maritime industry and local community are almost non-existent. The Faculty organises career days, while many companies act as teaching and professional bases enabling students' internship and other types of activities related to the achievement of competences.

The Faculty cooperates with the Alumni organisation, and together they organise round tables and different events. In addition, summer schools are regularly taking place.

Activities related to social engagement of the existing intellectual, human and physical resources of the Faculty are lacking.

The Faculty support projects that contribute to the development of the local community, by supporting homeless people in Split. Students and employees also participate in voluntary blood donation.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To organise additional events for the local community and/or industry (e.g. Open days, popularisation of science, free-of-charge counselling, etc.),
- To support staff for participating more actively in research activities with the companies aiming to develop transfer of technology and knowledge,
- To establish a plan of activities related to the development of the economy and/or local community,
- To provide a systematic support to environmentally-friendly activities (e.g. assuring that recycling of garbage is possible at the Faculty, that information on recycling is clear and available, etc.).

#### **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.**

The Faculty emphasises the education of students and training of seafarers in the study programmes which comply with the requirements of the International STCW Convention, as well as relevant acts and ordinances of the Republic of Croatia, underlining qualifications and certificates of competency for seafarers.

However, no clear evidence was presented as to whether any market research is undertaken to justify available programmes, nor for the process of updating existing programmes or developing new ones. Additionally, although industry sector relationship was loosely mentioned, and there appears to be a working relationship with some shipping companies (e.g. NYK and Jadrolinija), there are no formal collaborations or processes linking the industry or professional bodies' representatives to the creation and/or revision of the study programmes.

Management representatives expressed that modules following the STCW Convention are lined up and up to date with the newest amendments. The adherence to STCW is specifically regulated by the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure on a national basis. This underlines that the learning outcomes of these modules are linked to the internationally upheld STCWs. Nevertheless, no direct link has yet been established to other professional or accreditation bodies such as IMarEST (Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology) or classification societies such as the Croatian Register of Shipping (Hrvatski Registar Brodova).

The STCW regulations are applicable to Nautical Studies, Marine Engineering, and Marine Electrical Engineering and Information; nevertheless, study programmes such as Marine Yacht and Marina Management Technologies, and Maritime Management, fall outside the scope of the STCW-regulated courses. The latter can benefit from the inclusion and guidance of specific professional or accreditation bodies, strongly related to those fields (e.g. Project Management Institute).

During the Expert Panel's meeting with various alumni and external stakeholders (these included representatives of professional organisations, leading business, industry and professional experts, non-governmental organisations and external lecturers), a general verbal consensus towards the significance of the Faculty in developing competitive professionals was made clear. Several accounts highlighted a

positive impact made by the Faculty not only on the national market, but additionally overseas.

Nevertheless, some accounts within members of the alumni and stakeholders offered contrasting information as to the current employability of recent graduates. More specifically, one alumnus highlighted the fact that a recent graduate had to wait three years to find work at sea (as a deck officer), while an industry representative underlined the recent offer of 43 cadetship opportunities on a Greek shipping company, and that these were all filled by students of the Faculty, with positive feedback on their behaviour and performance.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To include industry representatives (as a working group) and/or professional bodies in the process of justification and/or updating of all available study programmes, or during the development of new study programmes,
- Analyse specific problems or issues with study programmes (such as the issue with the mathematics course) on the level of similar institutions, so that experience and solutions to the problems can be shared.

### **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.**

The Faculty has clearly defined learning outcomes of the study programmes, which are also aligned with the mission and goals of the HEI. Evidence of the latter is listed within the study programme syllabus and curriculum, but additionally found on the Diploma Supplement. Nevertheless, only the study programmes pertaining to Nautical Studies and Marine Engineering are completely translated into English. If students would like to take courses from other study programmes, the Faculty offers translations on request.

Verbal accounts from the heads of study programmes testify to an existing mechanism for assessing and ensuring that learning outcomes at the level of courses are aligned with the learning outcomes at the programme level. Additionally, the quality control department oversees the procedure. It would however, be beneficial to implement a formal period for continuous revision of the above, with proper documentation and changes control.

Verbal and written evidence was presented with regards to Nautical Studies and Marine Engineering programmes following industry accepted STCW standards. As mentioned previously, the latter is regulated by the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure on a national basis; therefore, these two programmes are closely aligned not only to STCW standards but to CroQF and EQF, including level descriptors. The other remaining programmes, however, may benefit from the definition of qualification standards, occupational standards, and CroQF registration. The Faculty seems to be working towards these goals.

As mentioned before, STCW-regulated modules are lined up and up to date to the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping, and that this is specifically regulated by the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure on a national basis. This underlines that the learning outcomes of these modules are in line with internationally recognized professional bodies. Nevertheless, no direct link has yet been established to other professional or accreditation bodies such as IMarEST (Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology) or classification societies such as the Croatian Register of Shipping (Hrvatski Registar Brodova).

Marine Yacht and Marina Management Technologies, and Maritime Management, fall outside the scope of the STCW-regulated courses, and will benefit from the guidance of professional or accreditation bodies related to those fields. There is however, evidence that the Faculty has benefited from the participation in the ESF project "Maritime

Management for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, in which the Faculty defined qualification standards, occupational standards, and applied for CQF registration of the Maritime Management programme for both, undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Lastly, the Faculty has staff who collaborate with IMO and with the Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, in order to keep Learning Outcomes linked to the STCW regulations. The Faculty also has a procedure within their quality assurance system underlined by the STCWs, in order to keep Learning Outcomes up-to-date. The Ministry of Sea also check staff accreditation, programmes and lab equipment (once every five years); teaching staff involved in STCW teaching must have CoCs. Alumni and external stakeholders have expressed a relationship with the Faculty, in which they are informally approached to ensure STCW-focused and other available programmes are in line with industry needs.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To provide in English within the programme syllabus and curriculum, the summary, learning outcomes, topics included, and bibliography of all study programmes that are offered for international students,
- To implement a formal procedure for continuous revision and assessment of learning outcomes at the level of courses and that these are aligned with the learning outcomes at the programme level,
- To implement proper documentation and changes control of the revision and assessment of learning outcomes at any level,
- To update learning outcomes to completely match the European Qualification Framework,
- To consider taking advice from professional or accreditation bodies or classification societies to ensure that available programmes are up to date,
- Non-STCW modules could benefit from the guidance of professional or accreditation bodies related to their specific fields,
- To improve inclusion of alumni and external stakeholders in the development and revision of study programmes, under a formal framework, which allows for the recording of feedback and/or changes suggested.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

### **2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.**

Various alumni and external stakeholders (these included representatives of professional organisations, leading business, industry and professional experts, non-governmental organisations and external lecturers), expressed a consensus towards the significance of the Faculty in developing competitive professionals, and highlighted a positive impact made by the Faculty on the national market and also overseas. This last partially evidences that the Faculty achieves the learning outcomes of the study programmes delivered.

Nevertheless, a formal moderation system of all study programmes and their courses is non-existent. STCW-focused programmes have a monitoring internal group for keeping the courses up to date with STCW regulation changes. They do not have a prescribed period for re-validation of programmes. The last revision of Learning Outcomes took place in 2013. Documentation, however, is recorded by their quality assurance department, highlighting changes and keeping track of them; these protocols are University-regulated.

In order to validate courses that are not STCW-focused, a consultation is done to alumni and external stakeholders. The Faculty nominates an external stakeholders' working group to participate in the programme validation/re-validation. This consultation and feedback is recorded following quality assurance procedures. There is no formal process for internal or external moderation for assignments and examinations, or for the outcome results ensuring fair grading, and that Learning Outcomes achieved in the study programme are aligned with the CroQF and EQF level descriptors.

Lastly, the Faculty informally reviews international courses, with the aim of having study programmes in line with available international academic offerings.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To develop a formal moderation procedure for improving the achievement of intended Learning Outcomes (e.g. assignments and examinations),
- To collect and analyse systematic evidence on the statistics of examination success, failure rates, and student feedback,
- To introduce continuous revision and enhancement of the teaching process based on achievement evidencing the intended Learning Outcomes,
- To include the revision of the study programme syllabus and curriculum internally, within the department and teaching teams, using methodology that

can include an external revision with the external stakeholders' working group periodically,

- To moderate internally assessment elements to ensure a fair process, but additionally externally moderate by nominated field experts with relevant expertise,
- The results and/or grades obtained by students should follow a similar procedure, with the inclusion of internal as well as external moderation, by using a sample set of the results (e.g. 10 exams, or 10% of exams of the cohort, whichever is greater).

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

#### **2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.**

Students have confirmed that they are provided with surveys about course satisfaction each semester. They additionally get surveys at the end of the programmes. It is worth mentioning that there was a general consensus within students, highlighting the fact that they could personally approach the Dean or the Faculty management team if required. They, however, were not informed about an existing anonymous complaint process.

Students have also confirmed that the Faculty had previously made changes to assessment methods (changing the degree of difficulty on passing an exam on some courses). They saw improvements based on the survey focusing on professors and courses.

Market analysis as such is not implemented, with regards to programme/course development or revision. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, the Faculty relies on feedback from alumni and industry/professional stakeholders.

The Faculty/University has protocols of changes to the study programmes. A review of the protocol showed that changes in content and ECTS for each course was described, and that these changes had been evaluated and accepted at both Faculty and University levels. The protocol is of high quality.

As mentioned previously, it would be beneficial to implement a formal period for continuous revision of the programmes and courses, with proper documentation and revisions control, whilst also including a working group of alumni and external stakeholders.

Other professional or accreditation bodies could also act as consultants or external moderators for approving, revising, or closing existing programmes. Programmes that fall outside the scope of the STCW-regulated courses (Marine Yacht and Marina Management Technologies, and Maritime Management), could benefit from the guidance of professional or accreditation bodies related to those fields.

**Recommendations for improvement**

- To include professional or accreditation bodies that could assist in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing existing programmes,
- To include alumni and external stakeholders within planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing existing programmes under a formal framework.

**Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

ECTS ratio to student workload is apparently not formally defined, but according to accounts from academics the ratio is about 1 ECTS to a 30-hour student workload. The ECTS ratio is evaluated through a board meeting involving heads of departments and teaching staff. Also, expert consultation was carried out in 2013. Alumni and stakeholders are not involved in ECTS revision.

Students have also confirmed that the workload in the first year of study is higher than the following years. Additionally, some students commented that the number of courses included within the first year are too numerous. They also have commented that they were not aware of the relationship within ECTS and hours of workload, nor were they informed of procedures for alignment or revision of ECTS credits allocation.

ECTS consultation for students has been removed from the student survey, with the arguments that students do not quite understand the ECTS ratio to student workload.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To put in place a systematic procedure for allocation and revision of ECTS credits that will be carried out cyclically (e.g. every five years),
- To provide explanation to students what the ECTS ratio is,
- To take into consideration feedback from the students for the revision of the ECTS ratio.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Improvement with regards to the student practice is noticeable with regard to the previous re-accreditation report, and it is clear that the continuous improvement of the student internship system is one of the strategic aims of the Faculty and the University. Evidence was made available that a network of participants in the maritime sector has been recently formed, in order to increase internship offerings for students.

Additionally, a clear improvement from the last re-accreditation report is that a formal “Internship” course has been added to the curriculum as an elective, with the assignment of at least 5 ECTS.

Nevertheless, while Nautical Studies and Marine Engineering commonly get up to 5 days experience in a training vessel, it is not clear how students from the undergraduate programmes of Marine Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies, Marine Yacht and Marina Management, Maritime Management, and from graduate programmes of Marine Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies and Maritime Management have enough offerings for placement opportunities.

Certain accounts underlined opportunities for 11 students in the field of maritime management to go to shipping agencies and logistic companies (for 17 days), but also that the Marine Engineering and Nautical Studies students did not have an internship for this past year due to issues with the private collaborators.

The above underlines that while the Faculty has made progress with regard to a more formal internship offering, it is still lacking a systematic process to ensure that a majority of students have placement options made available to them, under all study programmes offered by the Faculty.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that the recently formed alumni association has started assisting the Faculty with placements and opportunities for graduates.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To assist and try to secure the placement with their existing monitoring framework, if students themselves are able to contact an enterprise on their own for placement (aside from the existing internship procedure where the Faculty secures a relationship with private enterprises),
- To try to ensure a more systematically and tangible internship opportunity for students from all study programmes.



**Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

## **2.7. 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.**

There is evidence of ordinance at national level that regulate the basic points related to the training of seafarers as part of lifelong learning programmes specific to titles of Chief Officer on ships of 3,000 GT or more, and Second Engineer/Chief Engineering on ships with engine power of 3,000 kW or more, offered at the Faculty. It is clear that these programmes are successful, with evidence of significant student admission and feedback, and in line with the mission and strategy of the Faculty.

The courses offered are in line with competences required by STCW, and evidence has been shown that they are kept up to date, with quality assurance documentation that records changes accordingly, the last underlines that the modules and learning outcomes are in line with the labour market and admitted candidates' needs, and that a systemic development and revision process is in place.

Additionally, on completion of the programme, attendees receive a certificate of completion of the programme and most significantly the acquired number of ECTS credits. There is evidence that some of these part-time candidates use this ECTS credits to get into the full-time programmes.

Lastly, worth of mention is that the Faculty has been participating in the summer school of the University since June 2016 with six modules, aiming at improving the vision of internationalisation of both the University and the Faculty.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To consider the teaching workload within regular study programmes when executing lifelong learning programmes,
- To develop a system for monitoring interest and collection of satisfaction feedback, specifically for participants of the lifelong learning programme.

### **Quality grade**

High 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.**

Clear admission criteria for both undergraduate and graduate study programmes is published on the web page of the Faculty that is easily accessible. Also, same information is available on the portal "Postani student" (the official state portal for admission to the higher education institutions). Enrolment procedure for both undergraduate and graduate studies is regulated by the Ordinance of studying at the Faculty of Maritime Studies in Split. The criteria are predefined, consistent and well-known. The admission criteria for enrolment to graduate study programmes is students' success at the undergraduate studies.

Two graduate study programmes (Maritime Management and Marine Yacht and Marina Technologies) has been merged into a single graduate study of Maritime Management in the academic year 2016/2017. While admission criteria for new graduate study need to apply equally to any candidate, learning outcomes are mainly in line with learning outcomes and competences of the same undergraduate study i.e. Maritime Management. Thus, students that have completed undergraduate programme study Marine Yacht and Marina Technologies have difficulties to adapt and follow to new study programme which is confirmed during the meeting with students.

Currently, the recognition of previous education achievement is based on teacher assessment for each particular case. Nevertheless, students are satisfied with that kind of procedure and they have no complaints about that.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To support students graduated from the study programme Marine Yacht and Marina Technologies to have as much as possible same opportunities for continuation of the graduate study programme Maritime Management,
- To ensure support to students that graduate from undergraduate study programme Marine Yacht and Marina Technologies in their continuation of study at graduate study,
- The Faculty may consider to check how admission criteria are used and how admission is handled at other HEI's study programmes.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory 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.**

Data on student drop-out rate reach 50%, which is considered extremely high. The Faculty analyses data on drop-out rate throughout departments and is evident that specific subjects like Mathematics could be considered as one of the reasons for lower students' performance. Drop-out rate of part-time students is also high where the main reasons is due to their availability since part-time students often work while studying.

The Faculty delivers students lectures in duration of 15 days before the starting of the study year in order to increase the Mathematics competencies. There is plan to implement a summer school to improve student performance.

The Faculty is monitoring student progress, analysing it and creating statistical data. Part of the data is collected and analysed by the University of Split. The procedure is regulated by the Quality Assurance Manual of the University of Split.

The Faculty itself is implementing the analysis of the exam success for all the classes on all of the study programmes. It is done according to the Quality Assurance Manual of the Faculty.

Data regarding student performance and pass rates is regularly analysed and is available. Although the pass rate is appropriate, drop-out rates are still high. The Faculty hasn't systematically analysed high drop-out rate and no clear measures to cope with the issue are implemented. It is noted that one of the reasons for a higher drop-out rate is that students simply wish to study or not to study, which was confirmed by students during the meeting.

Student awareness on their success, drop-out rates and procedures that are used for monitoring those processes is improving and students' involvement is increasing.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To continue systematically collecting and analysing data on student performance and drop-out rates,
- To more deeply analyse the drop-out rate and to implement tangible and appropriate measures to reduce the drop-out rate and to provide evidence for their application and effectiveness,
- To formally encourage and ensure students to participate in the monitoring of students' performance and drop-out rate and to provide evidence for their application and effectiveness,

- To systematically collect feedback information about the reasons for drop-out, whenever possible.

**Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality

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

The Faculty accepts the students from Erasmus exchange programme. Erasmus students are satisfied with the availability of the information in the English language, although course description is available only on demand. Croatian students explained that support delivering lectures in Croatian, but also that lectures in English should be introduced, at least in some subjects.

The Ordinance on Studying at the Faculty of Maritime studies is available on the web page of the Faculty and it is the base for other students' related regulations. It also fully complies with the Ordinance on Studying at the University of Split.

Various kinds of teaching methods are used, such as group projects, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, field work, student practise or simulator training. Students also use e-learning portals, such as Merlin system (on which students can find online lectures). There are also available CBTs such as Videotel and Seagull. State-of-the art simulators (for nautical and engineering studies) are available. Autonomy of students' work is encouraged by requiring preparing seminars, case-studies and by requiring individual project work.

It is clear that the Faculty premises are well adjusted for vulnerable groups of students and students with special needs.

In order to ensure students' feedback on modes of programme delivery, teaching methods and general satisfaction on teachers and lectures, voluntary anonymous survey is conducted at the end of each semester.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To include peer review in the teaching process,
- To consider introducing mandatory students' evaluation (i.e. using electronic means),
- To introduce methods for developing creative and critical thinking in students, as well as other forms of personal development such as joint work with teachers, student projects, student company incubators, etc.,
- To introduce regular and mandatory use of English in teaching process.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

The Faculty provides guidance on studying and career opportunities basically following informal procedures. Discussions with Faculty members and students uncovered that there is no formally available teacher tutor system, but there exists a student tutor system which is supported by the Faculty. Career guidance office is not established yet. The Faculty have organised career days offering students information on potential employments.

Office for student psychological and legal counselling is established at the University level, however students are not informed well enough about its existence and what support it provides to them.

Students receive student-related information for students at the beginning of studying without a written guide. Library working hours are well adjusted for students and there is a copy service available.

There is a good support for a diverse student population (under-represented). General support for incoming and outgoing mobility is appropriate, but some information for Erasmus students is not available in English.

At the Faculty several students' groups/organisations are established. The Faculty provides financial support by sponsoring various sports activities and students' projects. In addition, old Faculty premises are given to student organisations.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To implement studying and career guidance system with a student career office,
- To introduce teacher tutor system,
- To provide all students with thorough written bilingual information at the beginning of the study, including general information and information on students' support services at the University and Faculty level (i.e. individual guide book),
- To introduce student feedback procedures for evaluation of professional support provided by the Faculty.

#### **Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality

(NOTE: Dissent in the Expert Panel, one member voted for Satisfactory level of quality.)

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

The Faculty does not formally monitor needs of students from vulnerable and under-represented groups but is absolutely ready to support them in any of potential issues that can arise.

The Faculty organises educational process and other activities equal for any groups of students. There is no special encouragement of interest in vulnerable and under-represented groups of students and the teaching process is not specifically adjusted for those groups of students.

The Faculty encourages conferences and other activities supporting women in the maritime industry.

Infrastructure on the Faculty is well adjusted for students with disabilities.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To ensure keeping data in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Act on vulnerable and under-represented groups of students enabling better support,
- To consider to provide one (or more) scholarships at the level of the Faculty for a student from a vulnerable and under-represented group.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality



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

Students are informed about the opportunities for studying abroad and there is a good support for applying to students exchange programmes. The most common exchange programme is related to Erasmus inside EU countries. The number of students participating in the mobility programmes is continuously increasing by years. ECTS credits gained at another higher education institution are recognised based on similarity of the learning outcomes. Students are satisfied with that procedure.

The Faculty does not formally collect information about student satisfaction with the support regarding to student mobility.

The Faculty is working on increasing the number of contracts and agreements with other foreign HEIs following students' opinion.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To introduce a system of advertising mobility programmes by support of students that have already gained international experience participating in the exchange programme,
- To collect and analyse information about student satisfaction on mobility programmes,
- To ensure clear criteria on the recognition of ECTS credits earned at another HEI.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

The Faculty does provide support to foreign students in enrolment and study. There is a lack of information to foreign students in English while course description is translated on demand. Courses are delivered in English as consultative classes but there are no organised classes delivered in English. Croatian-language courses are delivered for foreign students at the University level.

The formal feedback on satisfaction and needs of foreign students is not collected and analysed. Measures for improvement are not systematically ensured.

The number of students involved in incoming mobility programmes is increasing by years as well as the number of contracts and agreements with the institutions.

ECTS coordinator is appointed at the Faculty level that gives support to foreign students. Generally, foreign students are appreciated with the overall conditions and supports offered.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To make available and public overall description of study programmes as well as description of courses delivered in English for all foreign students, including the availability of literature,
- To establish clear and detail information for foreign students in English,
- To ensure group classes taught in English for all foreign students, including English samples of the examination process,
- To formally collect and analyse the feedback on satisfaction and needs of foreign students,
- To ensure that a list of courses that are available to foreign students are made available online. The list should have a clear description of the particularities and curriculum,
- To add specific information of interest for foreign students (including social and general information) to the existing web pages.

#### **Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality

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

Since the last accreditation carried out in 2012, the Faculty has changed the study programmes. The criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are clear and published for each particular course and they are aligned with the teaching methods used.

The support given to the assessors in the development of skills related to the assessment methods are lacking. The Faculty has functioning student appeal procedure (examples were seen).

The Faculty does not have procedures for the evaluation of grading. There is no double marking, tests are not anonymous and there is no use of the external examiners for any of the study programmes. However, students do not find the procedure of grading inconsistent or lacking in objectivity. In addition, the Faculty has implemented various methods/tools and procedure that supports evaluation consistency, such as: clearly written indication and awarding points for each examination task, students have a rights to see their written exams and discuss them with teachers, to claim dissatisfaction with the evaluation grade using a standard form, to ask for the exclusion of a certain professor from further examination, to take an exam three times plus one time in front of a committee within a period of one academic year; oral exams are public and anyone can attend, examination of the bachelor and master thesis is performed in front of three members of the committee.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To ensure greater support in the development of skills related to the evaluation and assessment methods,
- To implement objective methods to quality-assure the grading done by teachers (e.g. by having multiple independent assessments by two or more people, and to assess the interrater-reliability of grading),
- To define a standard minimum level of achievements for each course (e.g. list of basic questions in the course description),
- To introduce methods for anonymous examination ensuring that student names are not visible in the evaluation of exams,
- To introduce a system of using external examiners/committee members for bachelor and master thesis.

#### **Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality

(**NOTE:** Dissent in Expert Panel about the decision, 4 out of 5 panel members gave the grade “Minimum level of quality”, one panel member insisted on “Satisfactory level of quality”)

The dissenting member of the Expert Panel means that the following list of activities done by the Faculty is sufficient for the grade “Satisfactory level of quality”. Comments by the dissenting Panel member marked below:

<comment from the dissenting Panel member starts>

Objective and consistent evaluation of students’ achievements is secured by the following:

1. Exams are clearly written and awarding points for each task are indicated.
2. After evaluation, students have the right to see their written exams and discuss them with the teacher.
3. If a student is not satisfied with the evaluation (s)he may claim his lack of satisfaction using a Faculty standard form.
4. Students have the right to ask for exclusion of a certain professor from further examination.
5. Students have the right to ask for examination in the front of a committee.
6. Students have the right to take an exam three times plus one time in front of a committee within one academic year. This may be done twice, resulting in a total of eight exams plus two in front of committee.
7. Oral exams are open to public and anyone can attend.
8. Examination of the bachelor thesis is performed in front of a three-member committee.
9. Examination of the master thesis is performed in front of a three-member committee.

In addition:

10. Students claimed to have nearly unrestricted access to Faculty management, where they may discuss any kind of their eventual problems (unofficial claim).
11. Since in Croatia it is common to publish the grades of the written exam in public, all students are able to notice any kind of non-objective and inconsistent evaluation.
12. Students provide feedback on teachers through a questionnaire each academic year and for each course.

While this may still not be considered as a bullet-proof system it is my opinion that it provides a large number of effective tools and methods for securing objective and consistent evaluation and it is therefore of Satisfactory level of quality. “

Recommendations from the dissenting Panel member:

- Standard minimum of achievements for each course might be defined, where appropriate.
- Procedure for resolving repeating non-objectivity and other complaints at the level of teachers may be established.

<End of comment from the dissenting Panel member>

### **3.9. The higher education institution guarantees the issuance of Diploma Supplements and adequate qualification information.**

Both Diploma and Diploma Supplement is issued to students upon completion of their studies. Both documents are aligned with relevant national regulations describing qualification, achieved learning outcomes and the level, content and status of the study.

Students and alumni have positive experience on the form and contents of the Diploma, however additional information provided in the Diploma Supplement has been recognised by the employers.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

No recommendations for improvement.

#### **Quality grade**

High level of quality

### **3.10. The higher education institution is responsible for the employability of graduates.**

According to official data, employability of students is generally low. At some study programmes (especially on Maritime Management and Marine Yacht and Marina Technologies Study) students' opportunities for employment are considered to be extremely low. Following that, quotas are not aligned with social and labour market requirements and available resources.

Although the institution recognises the importance of students' employability, there is no formal and systematic approach for the analyses of the employability of graduates. In previous years the institution established contacts with only a few companies (i.e. Pasat, NYK) that support graduate employment. Students confirm a lack of employment opportunities and push the institution to undertake additional efforts in connecting students with potential employers.

The institution organises career days but there is no formal system (e.g. career office) of providing students with support in career planning.

The Alumni association has been recently established (two years ago) aiming to deal with graduate employability. Employers' and employability database are in the process of development. Feedback from alumni and employers exists, but it is not formal and it is not systematically analysed.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To systematically analyse the employability of graduates,
- To establish a career office that will be responsible for the employability of graduates,
- To align and adjust quotas based on employability data and potential employment opportunities,
- To reconsider the delivery of study programmes that has extremely low employability rate (according to official data),
- To establish a procedure for collecting and analysing feedbacks from alumni and employers/industry stakeholders.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

## *IV - Teaching and institutional capacities*

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

Upon the analysis of all the data available, an impressive effort of the Faculty management to ensure adequate teaching capacities is recognized. Significant and adequate improvements were achieved in that sense from the time of previous accreditation.

However, the Faculty does not satisfy or marginally satisfy three core criteria:

1. A number of students per teacher should be 30 or lower. Currently, that number is 34.88 when we only count scientific-teaching grades. When we count both scientific-teaching and teaching grades the number is 22.5.
2. Of the total norm hours, 50% or more should be performed by full-time scientist-teachers. Currently, that number is 49.9% (range is 28-65%) when we count only scientific teaching grades. When we count both scientific-teaching grades and teaching grades the range is 46-85%.
3. Significant number of employees has a workload much higher than the national norm.

Teaching capacities are well documented and MOZVAG database data are available in the Self-Evaluation Analytical Supplement. The Faculty has 50 full-time employed teachers in all titles. The ratio between scientific-teachers and teachers is 34:16. The Faculty organizes workload in a systematic and well documented manner.

The number of students per teacher in scientific-teaching titles is 34.88 and has been constantly and significantly reduced in the past four academic years. The management is well aware of the unfavourable ratio and is making strong efforts in improving that ratio. One of the measures is financing three scientific-teachers by its own funds.

Total norm hours counted in MOZVAG table is 28791. Of that, 14367.5 hours is performed by scientist-teachers, while 14423.5 is performed by teachers and assistants, with the requirement that former number should be bigger than the latter. It should be mentioned that the workload performed on other institutions is not taken into account.

The percentage of courses delivered by teachers employed at the Faculty tends to be very high. The Self-Evaluation Report shows that 88% of teaching-title positions (15 out of 17) and 81% (27 out of 33) of scientific-title positions have teaching loads over the national norm + 20%. Teaching workload is above the relevant legislation and as such, it does not ensure appropriate balance between teaching, scientific and professional



work. Discussions with teachers also support the understanding that the workload is above the national norm +20%. Additionally, some teachers that are overloaded deliver lessons at other institutions.

The institution intends to develop a doctoral study programme and it will start a new programme for the Croatian Navy from the next academic year. In addition, the Faculty delivers several summer school programmes. These activities will additionally increase teaching workload of the teaching staff.

The effects of this extra high workload are both reduced scientific output and a need for teachers to work outside normal working hours. Promotion to higher positions is less affected by the high workload, but it can be expected that a high workload cannot be beneficial to reaching scientific and other than teaching criteria needed for promotion in scientific-teaching or teaching positions. Additional work is awarded with 20% salary. While this may be considered appropriate, no equivalent award is provided for scientific excellence.

According to the Management, the lack of teacher positions was due to the lack of positions given by the authorities.

Assistants said that they all, except for two, have workloads lower than the norm of 150 hours. The two that have more workload say that they have courses that require less preparation per lecture and that the work is therefore easier - despite the larger number of hours with student contact.

Excessive teaching workload limits opportunities for scientific and research work that is required for professional promotion. At the same time, excessive workload in general provides assurance for the career advancement of the existing assistants, since they will have to accept additional norm hours as their career advances. This will have a beneficial overall effect in balancing the norm hours of the overall teaching staff.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To reduce the teaching workload so that it is below the national norm-hours,
- To adjust the number of teachers with the number of students (by hiring additional teachers or by reducing the number of students),
- To make assessments of how new study programmes affect the teaching workload of the Faculty members,
- To take into consideration the teaching workload for any teacher while planning or introducing additional and new teaching activities such as teaching at other

HEIs, introducing doctoral school, maintaining summer schools as well as by introducing a new study programme.

**Quality grade**

Unsatisfactory level of quality

#### **4.2. The higher education institution has an objective, transparent and excellence-based procedure of teacher recruitment.**

Teacher recruitments are based on objective and transparent procedures described in the relevant ordinance. The procedure is based on law regulations and the professional opinion of the assigned committee. The recruitments are in line with strategic goals. All relevant achievement of the candidate is taken into account.

The Faculty has no procedures for comparative analysis of the competing candidates.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To consider the establishment of a procedure for the analytic comparison of competing candidates to the same position.

#### **Quality grade**

High level of quality

#### **4.3. Teacher advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures.**

Teacher advancement and re-appointment are based on objective and transparent procedures described in the relevant ordinance. The procedure is based on law regulations and the professional opinion of the assigned committee. There exists no procedure for quantitative comparison of competing candidates. There exist no permanent Teaching Staff Committee that might address that issue.

Promotion procedures are based on thorough examination of teaching, scientific and professional achievements of the candidate. However, results of the examination are not quantified by some standards.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To establish procedures for the systematic comparison of competing candidates,
- Consider including quantitative weighing criteria in the procedure for comparison of competing candidates.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

The Faculty requires a plan of professional development of the teachers to be made as well as documented by following the prescribed procedure. All types of professional development are enlisted in the document, such as participation in scientific and professional conferences, Erasmus mobility, workshops, etc.

The feedback from teachers on their experience is not documented in a single document, but is given in the Erasmus report on performed mobility, travel warrant document and elsewhere.

International mobility is strongly supported. The management provides allowance for three or more conferences per teacher yearly. In addition to that, a personal allowance is provided to each teacher supporting their teaching competences.

A particular ordinance is in force regulating rewarding of the scientific achievements such as financial reward for a published article at various levels of journal ranks. Translation and proofreading of the articles is paid by the Faculty as well. A 20% addition to the salary is awarded to teachers with work overload.

The management pays the doctoral study fee for every teacher enrolling in the PhD study programme. Hardware and software support is excellent and teachers appraised that with the highest mark during the site-visit.

A proper support in publishing the books is lacking. Teachers have to make an effort in dealing with graphic design, proofing the text and other editorial task. They also lack support in preparing the e-lectures and there is no systematic approach to e-learning support for teachers. The number of new published books is minimal.

Teachers do not have formal pedagogic education and are not obliged to attend one. There was no evidence of usage of sabbatical leave.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To ensure a systematic support for the participation in international research and innovation projects and to validate the efficiency of this support,
- To provide sufficient administrative support and incentives to publish books,
- To revise ordinance regulating the publishing policy so that it considers state-of-the-art publishing norms: regulations related to e-publishing, definition of the quality assured e-learning material, etc.,

- To document the teachers' participation in scientific and professional development.

**Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

**4.5. 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.**

The Faculty recently moved into a new building inside a campus. Therefore, rooms are modern, equipped with internet and other infrastructure, air conditioning and are energy efficient. Self-evaluation provided detailed data about the available space and a list of laboratories. The Faculty is equipped with different laboratories, including several rooms with simulators, and provides a sound foundation for the delivery of study programmes. No facilities specifically intended for scientific research were noticed during the site visit.

IT support is excellent. IT office provides complete software and hardware support to professors and administration. This includes license installation, maintenance of approximately 230 computers in teaching rooms, plus some 100 more owned by professors, wireless network, e-mail server, data centre, etc. Any malfunction and printer toner request is handled quickly by request via dedicated e-mail addresses. Web pages are maintained by an external company and a need for their technical modernisation is noticed. The Faculty provides a new computer or a laptop for professors every five years. The Faculty also pays for the software licenses.

Web pages are well organized and provide plenty of information in a clear and easy to access manner. Web pages in English are less developed. Web pages are accessed on three levels: public, students and teachers and group access, such as various committees.

The administration staff is not using English on a level that would allow flawless communication with e.g. Erasmus students and there is no dedicated office for English speaking students.

The feedback from students concerning their satisfaction with the administration is done and it is well documented. The feedback from students concerning spatial resources is received during the interview: no significant complaints were mentioned.

The dedicated administration office for projects writing, applying and implementation support does not exist but it is mentioned in the programme of the newly elected Dean.

The Faculty has four centres and the reports on their goals and achievements are available.

**Recommendations for improvement**

- To increase the support for writing of projects and application for external research grants,
- To ensure dedicated facilities/equipment for scientific work.

**Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality



**4.6. 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.**

Maritime Faculty library underwent significant reorganisation after the transfer of Faculty to the new building. It is now a modern, functional library with more than 50 work stations and eight computers running the library search and reservation software and having access to the internet. It is open from 08:00 until 20:00 and it has a free access section of a selection of books. Students can also use new and state-of-the-art University library that is easily accessible as it is located close to the Faculty building. The University library has numerous work stations as well dedicated rooms for working in groups.

Books required by professors are obtained through an internal procedure. At the beginning of the academic year a note is sent to all departments that then discuss and express the need for the academic literature. The management checks the list and approves the purchase of books. All the books from the list are then obtained and paid by the Faculty management. Books checked in the library were obsolete and did not represent the state-of-the-art knowledge. The newer books in the collection at the special maritime library was found to be from between 2003-2010.

Bibliographic database access is limited due to insufficient investment into international database access on the national level. National Hrčak database is normally accessible and several journal subscriptions are paid by the management upon request.

Open-access collection of graduate, PhD and other theses has been systematically stored since 2016 and stored in the Dabar database. Older theses (available in electronic form) are under systematisation and will be stored internally in the library. Students' theses are not usually openly available online, only theses where the author explicitly says that it can be publicly available are made automatically available and downloadable from within Dabar database.

The teaching materials are available on the protected website to students and teachers upon logging in via academic account. Available teaching material ranges from books to colloquium examples, of different levels of quality and perfection. Additional teaching materials are available via Merlin.

An adequate number of copies, relative to the number of enrolled students, is not available. However, efforts in achieving the goal are being done, such as recent

purchase of more than 20 titles specifically for that purpose. The library is also participating in developing a modern solution to the problem of new print books unnecessarily standing in stock, based on a “print on demand” principle.

The library users provide feedback regarding the performance of the library every or every second year in a concise and informative way.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To ensure access to adequate number of curriculum books and to scientific databases,
- To ensure access to research databases for maritime and technical research.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

The institution manages financial resources in a systematic and well-organized manner. Financial reports are automatically generated and provide adequate amount of information.

Additional sources of income from cooperation with the industry and on the open market are shared between the author, taxes, Faculty, University. There exists no systematic distribution of that income to the departments, teaching or other ways of institutional development and improvement.

The Faculty pays three science-teaching staff from its own funds in an attempt to increase the number of the scientific staff.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To ensure that the fixed percentage of the commercial based income be used for institutional development and improvement.

#### **Quality grade**

High 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.

The Faculty has a record of publications that lists publications on A, B and C level. There are some challenges with the database on the government level - partially related to the teachers' ability to correctly enter their publications. However, the list gives an overview of the scientific production in recent years. According to the figures from MOZVAG the Faculty publishes on average about 1,12 publications at 'the highest level' per person per year. However, these figures do not tell us what publication sources the number represents (whether it is A, B, C level or all three levels together). The latter information supplied by the vice-dean of science and research (Pero Vidan) give results which indicate an average of 0.476 A-level, 0.708 B-level and 0.568 C-level publications per employee per year over a 5-year period (assuming 50 employees). The differences between these data of these reports indicate that the databases used for searches contain errors or that they misrepresent the total number of publications. For this reason, the Expert Panel finds that the Faculty does not have a quality assured overview of the totality of scientific publications from the Faculty members.

According to the supplied documentation the Faculty has a total of 92 publications on A and B-level, and 102 publications on C-level (Conference proceedings) in the last five years. Of the 92 publications in A-level journals Panel members found that 76 (82%) are published in Croatian journals and only 16 (18%) are published in international journals. The focus on regional journals is common for many Croatian HEIs, however, that is not sufficient for an organisation that does research and teach students for a globalised market.

A positive aspect is that PhD-students (assistants) say that they are encouraged by the Faculty and their mentors to publish in the best journals. They are not only asked to publish according to the minimum requirements for the PhD programme. They also state that their scientific achievements are not hindered by the teaching workload. This testimony is in accordance with - and supports - the data on teaching workload presented in the Self-Evaluation Report.

The Faculty especially encourages publications in the *International Maritime Science Conference* (IMSC) and in the Faculty's journal *Transactions on Maritime Science - ToMS*. Since 2012 the Faculty has been giving financial stimulation for authors (an addition of 5000 kn for A-level publications) who publish in journals indexed in CC, SCI, SCI-E, EECI databases and in journals with impact factors (IF) higher than 2 as well as papers

published as IMSC and in the Faculty's journal ToMS. Since the Expert Panel has only received documentation of research production from 2013 it is not possible to calculate the effect of the financial stimulation.

On the other side, teachers claim that teaching workload reduces their scientific output. The workload is created partially by a lack of open positions for teachers, but also by the number of study programmes and courses at the Faculty. Reducing workload is one other possible way to encourage scientific research production.

The Faculty supports participation in conferences for teachers. The allocation of conferences is done according to what each teacher needs for their promotion to scientific grades.

The assistants' research work is relevant for the research activities at the Faculty and the assistants' research output is in line with the other research activities done at the Faculty.

The Faculty members have a good presence on regional conferences and they are also members of editorial boards and scientific programme committees in regional conferences.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To ensure a high-quality statistical overview of the number and type of publications by researchers affiliated by the Faculty,
- To reduce teacher workload so it is lower than or equal to the national norm-hours to ensure that the high teaching workload does not hamper scientific production,
- To consider other options for stimulating research production (i.e. adapting work hours to give researchers more time to do research),
- To put additional efforts to get Faculty researches to be accepted in international high-ranking journals rather than in the regional journals,
- To increase use of English in both teaching and in official documents as this can lead to a higher focus towards internationalisation and publication in high-impact international journals in the long term,
- To encourage and support cooperation between young researchers and research groups at the level of multiple HEIs.

### **Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality

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

Teachers say they have made changes to the Maritime Management study programme after a check on other maritime master programmes in Europe. There is no formal way to get feedback from alumni and stakeholders on study programmes. The Faculty members say that they consider that job opportunities are good for the Master study programme in Maritime Management on the European market, but they also state that there is some challenges on the regional market. The study programmes have good contact with a few regional enterprises but much less contacts with foreign businesses.

The Faculty members and the research assistants mention that there is need for further administrative support for research activities such as rules for applications, budgeting and accounting, and project management. Currently the Faculty has one person available for support on research projects. The leaders of the Faculty also informed the Expert Panel that the supporting administrative staff at the university level was overloaded and could not support them. The Faculty does not have an efficient support system for research and the Expert Panel has not found evidence for support for the transfer of knowledge or technology. Stakeholders (with one exception) said that they did not use the research produced by the Faculty. The Faculty has involved several stakeholders to act as educational entities/bases offering internship opportunities for students. Formal contracts have been signed with these companies.

The Faculty has a good number of publications in professional journals and they organise a good number of workshops with industry and professional organisations. The research strategy has two aims that are related to the social relevance of the university. The Faculty has intention agreements with industry. Faculty members participate in professional maritime organisations.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To make contacts with businesses outside of Croatia and the region focusing on the Mediterranean area and/or Northern Europe,
- To increase the administrative support for research applications and research projects,
- To increase the marketing of their study programmes and their research output.

### **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.**

Stakeholders do not use the research produced at the Faculty. One representative of the port of Split said that research on ballast water was used, however it was not clear how this knowledge was used by the port authority.

The Faculty got an award for professional achievements in 2017 from the Croatian Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure. Five Faculty members are members in the Croatian Academy of Sciences. The Faculty's scientific journal was recently entered into Web of Science.

A total of 3 Faculty members have received awards for their research work since 2013. The Faculty received a recent prize for contribution to maritime education and science. The number of awards is acceptable for a maritime university of this size.

The Faculty participated in only three scientific projects with external funding in the last 5 years - one of which is started in 2007 and ended in 2014. One of the projects is also minor with regards to monetary amount (30.477 HRK). The Faculty had no commercial or innovation projects in the last five years. The Faculty has funded four scientific projects by money they received from the government. Four internally funded projects have a very positive effect as they allow researchers training in planning and writing projects. A total of three external projects and four self-funded projects over the last five years for a group of 30 researchers is a small achievement compared to other European universities in the same domain. The number of projects is in need of improvement.

The Faculty has presented a list of invited lectures held by the Faculty members. The number of presentations is low comparing the size and importance of the Faculty in the local community.

Faculty staff are members of the scientific programme committees of a well sized number of conferences and are in the editorial boards of journals. However, the majority of journals and conferences are national or regional.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To increase international outlook and scientific collaboration with reputable maritime universities outside of former Yugoslavia,

- To increase collaboration and presence of international researchers and scholars at the Faculty in Split,
- To additionally support researchers applying for external research grants,
- To establish measures for increasing the numbers of scientific research projects that the Faculty members participate in.

**Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality



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

The research strategy is detailed and there is a clear commitment in the strategy. This shows a developmental attitude towards improvement. Research development strategy is aligned with the vision. Research projects seems to be in accordance with the strategy and the vision.

The infrastructure and access to equipment is good, but the teaching workload is too high and limits scientific production.

The Faculty finances four internal research projects. The use of internal projects is a good way of improving scientific production at the Faculty and to give Faculty members experience in writing research grants and managing research projects.

Discussions with the Faculty members also indicated that the teaching workload is not reduced sufficiently when they obtain research grants. This means that any researcher that obtains a research grant gets increase in the workload. This can be seen as a disincentive which could stop some researchers from applying for research projects.

The use of financial stimulation for publication motivates assistants and teachers, however, the effect of financial stimulation is not exactly clear when it comes to the number and quality of publications.

The teaching workload hampers scientific production.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To reduce teaching workload to give the Faculty members more time to plan and perform research projects,
- To increase the number of available staff by utilizing Erasmus+ exchange to include foreign researchers,
- To ensure that researchers who get funding for research projects get lower workload,
- To ensure that there is adequate equipment dedicated to scientific and research work.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Professional activities and Faculty members' professional background is clearly involved in teaching and it is used to improve the teaching.

The Faculty is equipped with adequate and modern equipment for performing teaching activities. The existing equipment is used in teaching at all study levels. However, only a limited amount of equipment is specifically dedicated to research. It is to expect that the opportunities will significantly improve by the implementation of 3F project in 2018 and 2019, according to the 3F project plan.

The Faculty funds four research projects selected in a procedure that promotes competitiveness. Each of these projects involves the work of students and students are sometimes mentioned as the project idea promoters. The work performed by the students within the project is correlated with their obligations during study. Some student theses are developed inside research projects. All research projects involve students. There were indications that researchers co-author publications at conferences and journals with students.

Although the Faculty didn't participate in many research projects in the past, several theses were developed as a result of ongoing research. In addition, Faculty presented a good list of the published papers involving the students as co-authors. At the moment, two postgraduate students are involved in the Faculty-funded projects as project leaders.

A transfer of scientific achievements to the teaching process is directly related to the amount of research activities. The Faculty is constantly increasing the capacities for research but only when the research activities reach high level, a transfer of the gained knowledge into teaching process could be significantly increased.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

- To include more students in research projects,
- To involve more international researchers and students in research projects,
- To be more proactive in the applications for new research projects at the international level (regional projects, Horizon 2020), so researchers are not only relying on internal research projects.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

## APPENDICES

### 1. Quality grade by assessment criteria

<i>Quality grade by assessment area</i>				
<i>Assessment area</i>	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
<i>I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution</i>			X	
<i>II. Study programmes</i>			X	
<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>			X	
<i>IV. Teaching and institutional capacities</i>		X		
<i>V. Scientific/artistic activity</i>		X		

## *Quality grade by standard*

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

## *Quality grade by standard*

<i>II. Study programmes</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>Minimum level of quality</i>	<i>Satisfactory level of quality</i>	<i>High level of quality</i>
2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the needs of the society.			<b>X</b>	
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.			<b>X</b>	
2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.			<b>X</b>	
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.			<b>X</b>	
2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.			<b>X</b>	
2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).			<b>X</b>	
2.7. 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.				<b>X</b>

### *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.			<b>X</b>	
3.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.		<b>X</b>		
3.3. The higher education institution ensures student-centred learning.			<b>X</b>	
3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.		<b>X</b>		
3.5. The higher education institution ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.			<b>X</b>	
3.6. The higher education institution allows students to gain international experience.			<b>X</b>	
3.7. The higher education institution ensures adequate study conditions for foreign students.		<b>X</b>		
3.8. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements.		<b>X</b>		
3.9. The higher education institution guarantees the issuance of Diploma Supplements and adequate qualification information.				<b>X</b>
3.10. The higher education institution is responsible for the employability of graduates.			<b>X</b>	

## *Quality grade by standard*

<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.	<b>X</b>			
4.2. The higher education institution has an objective, transparent and excellence-based procedure of teacher recruitment.				<b>X</b>
4.3. Teacher advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures.			<b>X</b>	
4.4. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.			<b>X</b>	
4.5. 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.			<b>X</b>	
4.6. 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.			<b>X</b>	
4.7. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.				<b>X</b>

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



## 2. Site visit protocol

### Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**9:00 – 10:00** Meeting with the dean, vice deans and secretary (*no presentations*)

**10:00 – 10:15** *Internal meeting of the panel members*

**10:15 – 11:00** Meeting with the working group\* that compiled the Self-Evaluation and Head of Centre for quality

**11:00 – 12:00** *Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)*

**12:00 – 13:00** Meeting with the students (open meeting)

**13:00 – 14:30** *Working lunch*

**14:30 – 15:15** Meeting with the *Alumni*

**15:15 – 16:00** Meeting with external stakeholders -representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, professional experts, non-governmental organisations, external lecturers

**16:00 - 17:00** Organisation of additional meeting on potential open questions if it is needed

*\*without dean attendance*

**17:30 – 20:00** Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit

### Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018

**9:00 – 9:45** Meeting with the vice dean for student and academic affairs

**9:45 – 11:45** *Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)*

**11:45 – 12:30** Meeting with the heads of study programmes

**12:30 – 13:15** Meeting with full-time employed teachers (open meeting)

**13:15 – 14:45** *Working lunch*

**14:45–16:15** Tour of the Faculty (library, student services, international office, IT services, classrooms) and participation in teaching classes

**16:15 – 17:00** Organisation of additional meeting on potential open questions if it is needed

**17:30 – 20:00** Joint meeting of the expert panel members – reflection on the day and preparation for the second day of the site visit

### **Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

**9:00 – 9:45** Meeting with the vice dean for research and head for research and development centre

**9:45 – 10:45** *Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)*

**10:45 – 11:30** Meeting with the heads of research projects

**11:30 – 11:45** *Internal meeting of the panel members*

**11:45 – 12:30** Meeting with teaching assistants

**12:30 – 14:00** *Working lunch*

**14:00–14:45** Organisation of additional meeting on potential open questions if it is needed

**14:45 – 15:30** *Internal meeting of the panel members*

**15:30 – 15:45** Exit meeting with the dean, vice deans and secretary

**16:30 – 20:00** Sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva - Izrada nacrtu završnog izvješća i rad na dokumentu Standardi za vrednovanje kvalitete/Joint meeting of the expert panel members - Drafting the final report and working on the document Standards for the evaluation of quality

**20:00** Večera/Dinner

### **Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

**9:30 – 13:00** Joint meeting of the expert panel members - Drafting the final report and working on the document Standards for the evaluation of quality

## ***SUMMARY***

### **General Comments**

The Expert Panel consisting of Prof. Kjell Ivar Øvergård (Panel chair), Senior Lecturer Dr Eduardo Blanco-Davis (member), Assoc. Prof. Vlado Frančić (member), Assoc. Prof. Smiljko Rudan (member) and Kristijan Nikolozo (student representative) visited the Faculty of Maritime Studies at the University of Split on 15-17 May 2018. The expert Panel evaluated evidence given in the Self-Evaluation Report, other written material supplied during the visit, and through discussions with the leaders of the Faculty, Faculty members, heads of study programmes, students, assistants, alumni and stakeholders. The Expert Panel's evaluation of results gave the following assessments of the five thematic areas.

<b>Thematic Area</b>	<b>Expert Panel's evaluation</b>
1. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution:	<b>Satisfactory level of quality</b>
2. Study programmes	<b>Satisfactory level of quality</b>
3. Teaching process and student support	<b>Satisfactory level of quality</b>
4. Teaching and institutional capacities	<b>Minimum level of quality</b>
5. Scientific/artistic activity	<b>Minimum level of quality</b>

### **Key observations and recommendations**

The Panel Experts have provided an analysis and recommendations for each thematic area. The Faculty should study the recommendations and take them into account both during the development and implementation of their strategy goals for the next period. Key observations and recommendations are as follows.

- The Expert Panel is pleased to confirm that the institution has established a quality assurance policy that completely fulfils standards applicable at universities.
- The Expert Panel was impressed by the commitment of the management to the development of the institution and by the evidence that recommendations from the previous accreditation were taken into account and resolved seriously.
- The motivation of the management, as well as the enthusiasm of young researchers and overall satisfaction of the students with institution, is easily recognized and is a valuable asset of the Faculty.
- Teachers' workload and student per teacher ratio is a problem that the management is well aware of. While current achievements in resolving these problems are immediately obvious, the minimum requirements are still not fulfilled.
- Scientific output is improving, but the quality of the output must be significantly increased, in particular in light of the consideration of establishing a doctoral programme.