



agency for science and higher education

**REPORT  
OF THE EXPERT PANEL  
ON THE  
RE-ACCREDITATION OF  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS, JOSIP JURAJ STROSSMAYER  
UNIVERSITY OF OSIJEK**

Date of site visit:  
27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018

March, 2019

**MAMFORCE**



The project is co-financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Agency for Science and Higher Education.

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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 Economics, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- Associate professor Ivana Bilić, Faculty of Economics, University of Split, Republic of Croatia, Panel chair,
- Professor Nataša Erjavec, Faculty of Economics, University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia,
- Professor Rainer Niemann, Institute of Accounting and Taxation, University of Graz, Republic of Austria,
- Dr. Jan Thomas Martini, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Bielefeld University, Federal Republic of Germany,
- Antonela Štefanić, student, Faculty of Economics, University of Rijeka, Republic of Croatia.

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

- Management,
- Self-evaluation Report Committee,
- Students,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- Teaching assistants,
- Leaders of research projects,
- Representatives of the business sector, potential employers.

The Expert Panel members had a tour of the work facilities, library, IT classrooms, student administration office and classrooms, and attended sample lectures, where they held a brief Q&A session with students.

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

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of Faculty of Economics, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, based on the Faculty's Self-Evaluation Report, other relevant documents and site visit.

The Report contains the following elements:

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

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit to the Faculty of Economics, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Maja Šegvić, coordinator, ASHE,
- Iva Žabarović, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Lida Lamza, interpreter at the site visit, ASHE,
- Ivana Rončević and Anna Maria Perović, translators of the Report, ASHE.

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

1. issuance of a confirmation on compliance with the requirements for performing the activities, or parts of the activities,
2. denial of license for performing the activities, or parts of the activities,

3. issuance of a letter of expectation with the deadline for resolving deficiencies of up to three years. A letter of expectation can include the suspension of student enrolment within a set period.

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

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

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Faculty of Economics, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

ADDRESS: Trg Ljudevita Gaja 7, Osijek

DEAN: associate professor Boris Crnković

### **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:**

Management Board of the Faculty consists of the Dean and four Vice Deans: Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, Vice Dean for Scientific Affairs, Vice Dean for Cooperation with the Environment, International Cooperation and Projects and Vice Dean for Financial Affairs and Business Organisation.

Organisational units of the Faculty are the Chairs, the Secretary's Office and the Library.

Faculty comprises of the following six chairs:

- National and International Economics Chair,
- Management, Organisation and Entrepreneurship Chair,
- Marketing Chair,
- Finance and Accounting Chair,
- Quantitative Methods and Informatics Chair,
- Interdisciplinary Courses Chair.

UNESCO Chair in Entrepreneurship Education was established at the Faculty as a special organisational unit based on the agreement concluded between The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek in 2008.

### **STUDY PROGRAMMES:**

Two study programmes at the undergraduate professional level:

- Accounting,
- Trade.

Seven study programmes at the university undergraduate level:

- Economic Policy and Regional Development,
- Financial Management,
- Marketing,

- Management,
- Entrepreneurship,
- Business Informatics,
- Trade and Logistics.

Five study programmes at the university graduate level:

- Economic Policy and Regional Development,
- Financial Management,
- Marketing,
- Entrepreneurial Management and Entrepreneurship,
- Business Economics with the following courses of study: Management, Business Informatics and Trade and Logistics.

Six study programmes on the postgraduate specialist level:

- Finance and Banking,
- Marketing of Special Areas,
- Organisation and Management,
- Entrepreneurship,
- Accounting, Audit and Analysis,
- Development Management.

Two study programmes at the university postgraduate level:

- Postgraduate Doctoral Study Management,
- International Inter-university Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Doctoral Study Entrepreneurship and Innovativeness.

### **NUMBER OF STUDENTS:**

Based on the Analytic supplement to self-evaluation report, Table 3.1. number of students per study programme for the current academic year<sup>1</sup>:

Study programme	Full-time students	Part-time students
Financial Management	149	165
Marketing	151	161
Management	144	147
Business Informatics	92	79

<sup>1</sup> Some programmes have identical names. In the SER, they are distinguished by their identification numbers.

Economic Policy and Regional Development	37	16
Financial Management	87	120
Trade and Logistics	42	44
Marketing	79	156
Management	96	61
Business Informatics	66	57
Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurial Management	23	8
Entrepreneurship	131	82
Organization and Management	0	18
Management	0	72
Business Economics; specialisations in: Accounting and Trade	30	30
Marketing in Specific Areas	0	35
Business Economics; specialisation in: Accounting	29	34
Entrepreneurship and Innovativeness	0	22
Accounting, Audit and Analysis	0	24
Total	1.156	1.331

#### NUMBER OF TEACHERS:

The structure of full-time employed teachers based on the Analytic supplement to self-evaluation report, Table 4.1.a:

- 16 full professors with tenure,
- 5 full professors,
- 14 associate professors,
- 15 assistant professors,
- 3 professors in teaching grades,
- 14 assistants,
- 1 associate professor with cumulative employment.



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

The Faculty of Economics in Osijek is one of the oldest faculties and HEIs in Osijek and Slavonia and Baranja. It was also at the core of the foundation of Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek. It was founded in 1961 with the purpose of continuing the activities of the Centre for Economic Studies of the University of Zagreb, with strong support from the chamber of economy and institutions of local and regional authorities. Up until 2017 9,566 students of the Faculty graduated from undergraduate study programmes, 2,465 students graduated from graduate study programmes, 691 students acquired a master's degree and 258 students acquired PhD degrees.

Since 2005 classes at the Faculty have been delivered in accordance with the new curriculum drawn up on the principles of the Bologna Process.

Total number of employees at the Faculty amounts to 105, of which 67 are teachers and associates, 26 employees belong to the administrative staff, 9 employees belong to the technical staff and 3 employees work at the Faculty's Library.

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

### **ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. The only HEI in Economics and Business in Eastern Croatia;
2. Long tradition and significant impact in entrepreneurship education and research;
3. Good connections to and strong support from students, former students (alumni) and external stakeholders, especially regional business community;
4. Participating in the development and empowerment of a broader local community;
5. Significant number of young teachers;
6. Faculty staff is highly motivated, possibly affected by new and motivating Management team;
7. Teachers/students and publishing ratio has been improved after the first evaluation.

### **DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. Revision of the teaching programmes in line with appropriate teaching outcomes is necessary;
2. Number and quality of publications should be improved along with the Scientific-Research Strategy;
3. Empowerment of young teachers through involvement in scientific activities and PhD activities;
4. Sustainability of financial development of the HEI is unclear;
5. More internationalization efforts supported by the development of English study programmes based on market needs, implementation of mobility and project cooperations required;
6. Additional requirements for appointments and promotions should be introduced;
7. More efforts to attract external teachers and introduce clearer criteria for appointments and promotions.

## **LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES**

### **EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE**

1. Involving students in HEI activities (Bookmark, volunteering);
2. Involving a large number of professors in the Self-evaluation process;
3. Collaboration with a broad local community and businesses;
4. It seems there is a good collaboration between the HEI management and other HEI employees;
5. This HEI obviously considered recommendations from previous reaccreditation and works on their implementation.

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

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

#### **Analysis**

This HEI showed a progress in terms of quality assurance and its social role. It is evident they developed all required documents, and at the same time used the University documents whenever it was possible. The most important documents are the HEI overall strategy and the Scientific-Research Strategy.

The overall strategy is developed, but it does not contain approximate deadlines or assigned leaders for the main goals. The Scientific-Research Strategy is developed, and most of concerns should be addressed in the direction of research topics, which are just listed, but it is not precisely defined who will work on it, how, when, and which resources will be used.

It is obvious the HEI established an important relationship with their external stakeholders, developed LLL programmes and all relevant documents regarding academic integrity and freedom and preventing all types of unethical or discriminating behaviour. In addition, the HEI ensures the availability of the information about its activities via modern media, aiming to be available for all interested parties.

The most important advantage of the HEI is its social role, where employees served as volunteers in the local community, in charity work or as experts in the field. Finally, it is evident that the HEI takes care about recommendations from the previous reaccreditation and employed efforts to resolve it, which needs to be continued in the future.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

Most of the standards and elements of the standards from this area are at an appropriate level, but there is still a lot of room for improvement. First, although the Strategy of the HEI is developed, it would be helpful to define deadlines for the proposed goals, and leaders for implementation of the Strategy. Moreover, the Scientific-Research Strategy, although it is developed, does not contain all the elements defined in the Ordinance. PhD study programmes required a more serious approach with the aim of resolving a lack of mentors issue.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

## II. Study programmes

### Analysis

Following the recommendation of the re-accreditation in 2011, the HEI defined the learning outcomes for all programmes and courses. However, they are not always developed appropriately for a corresponding level of study. Most of the curriculum incorporates different study methods, although it is unclear how it is possible when in most cases 75% of the classes are solely lectures.

An improvement to the study programmes, according to recommendations from the previous evaluation (in 2011) is a temporal discontinuation of professional studies. The general goals of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the HEI. In order to increase the employability of its students, the HEI is planning to redefine study programmes and to initiate the procedure for modifying its undergraduate university studies starting from the next year (2019).

ECTS credits for most courses are not properly allocated. The criterion for ECTS credits allocation is not clearly defined. It is not apparent if ECTS credits are allocated according to the feedback from stakeholders, actual student workload or teaching hours. Student practice is offered as an extracurricular activity, on a voluntary basis without ECTS assigned. It is well organized and has a great potential.

### Recommendations for improvement

To revise the study programmes according to feedback from graduates' employers, stakeholders and real market. The new and significantly modified study programmes, that the HEI intends to initiate, should take into consideration the feedback from employers, external stakeholders, ALUMNI, civil society and market needs.

The learning outcomes at the course levels should be aligned with the programme learning outcomes, defined at the appropriate level and aligned with recommendations of professional associations. The learning outcomes have to reflect the competencies required for continuing education or other individual needs.

ECTS credits should be allocated in accordance with the actual student workload and/or teaching hours and based on the analyses of feedback from students, teachers and stakeholders. Student practice should be defined as a regular course at all university undergraduate programmes, with appropriately allocated ECTS credits.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

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

#### **Analysis**

The HEI publishes and applies all the admission criteria and criteria for the continuation of studies which are aligned with study programme requirements. The information is publicly available and up to date. The HEI gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study. Data on drop-out and pass rates is available.

According to the curricula, professors used different methods to deliver programmes, such as case studies, projects, guest lectures, teamwork, fieldwork, and lectures held in a foreign language. However, the predominant teaching methods are lectures, which account for 75% of curricula and the use of other teaching methods should be increased. Seminars are the most frequently used teaching method beside lectures (Evidence: Interviews).

The HEI ensures student support through different offices: Career Advising Service and Service for Psychological Counselling, Student Assistance System (all on the level of University), two Erasmus Coordinators, Student Office, and Commission for Cooperation with the Economy. The HEI ensures support to students from vulnerable and under-represented groups. There are different admission criteria for students with disability. Student Office has additional opening hours for part-time students. The HEI, as well as the University, offer financial help to students in need of social assistance and to students with disability.

The HEI allows students to gain international experience by informing them about the possibility, helping them with application and selection of adequate courses. The HEI ensures study conditions for foreign students. It offers several courses in English, and even if the number of interested students is low, professors offer consultative teaching. The HEI ensures an objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements. The criteria and evaluation methods are known in advance and clear. The system of student appeals is functional.

The HEI issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations. The HEI is committed to the employability of graduates. The HEI has special connections with alumni and employers through which it gives students great opportunity for employment.

### Recommendations for improvements

It is stated that the students that have passed undergraduate professional study programme can apply for graduate studies even without passing supplemental exams, just by multiplying their average grade with the coefficient of 0.75 (Evidence: SER, 3.1.). Although it is said that this is not being done for a longer period, this practice must be abolished.

The HEI should introduce teaching methods in order to foster research-based learning, problem solving, creativity, and critical thinking. The HEI's entire web page should be available in English, specifically the description and learning outcomes of courses held in English. There should be a larger choice of courses held in English in order to attract more incoming students.

The HEI has different offices that provide guidance for their students, but it would be recommended to combine it into an official Career Center. Most of the professors are not qualified for making decisions on how to work with students with disability, so additional education or a more detailed Reference Book should be welcome.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

## IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

### Analysis

The HEI benefits from a committed and student-oriented staff who are aware of the difficulties in the region. Students, alumni, and external stakeholders praise them for their work and motivation. Unfortunately, teachers are still overstretched in total and severely overstretched in individual cases, in particular in Business informatics. One of the specialist study programmes needs more own staff to comply with the condition from the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions. In qualitative terms, academic staff should further develop their scientific calibre.

Two praiseworthy instruments already in place to stimulate scientific activities are the publication reward and the personal budgets for professional and research activities of the HEI's staff. A neglected opportunity to promote professional and scientific development of academic staff is the involvement of more young professors in Ph.D.

mentoring. Recruitment mostly results in in-house appointments so there is a lack of competitiveness and diversity although recruitment procedures meet formal standards.

The HEI's infrastructure is well maintained and offers an adequate number of classrooms, but study rooms and offices seem to be scarce. An obvious bottleneck is the small library. It cannot provide a broad access to international journals and textbooks and favours Croatian titles. Databases of financial and business information of firms such as Amadeus do not exist at the HEI. The nearby city and university library is not a remedy to the small library as it is not specialized in business administration and accesses the same basic offer of electronic journals. By contrast, the small cafeteria is complemented by a nearby university canteen.

As a state-funded institution, the HEI strongly depends on cost absorption by the university and the state. This dependency limits the HEI' financial scope, but also means financial security. At the same time, tuition fees are vital for the HEI since the direct cost absorption of salaries only amounts to 69 percent. Nevertheless, the HEI has managed to accrue a surplus covering more than two times the deficit of the year 2017. Financial planning and analysis seem to be a potential for the development of the HEI.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The HEI must further improve their student-to-teacher ratio and reduce total and individual teaching workload, not only to comply with regulations, but also to be able to develop teachers' scientific calibre. Reducing quotas and overhauling study programmes seem to be feasible, cost-effective, and sustainable instruments to achieve this. One of the specialist study programmes needs more own staff to comply with regulations.

The hiring processes should be made more competitive, especially at the level of assistant professor. The HEI must involve young professors in Ph.D. mentoring, improve the offer of study rooms and keep an eye on non-classroom space, do their best to improve the offer of the library, and improve financial planning and analysis, in particular with respect to the number of students and operating costs.

### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

### **Analysis**

The most important indicator of research activities in Business Research and Economics are articles in internationally renowned journals. Although the HEI puts significant effort in this process and motivates high-quality publications financially, publication output is still relatively low compared to other Croatian HEIs, especially considering articles in SSCI-listed journals. Moreover, many articles are published in regional and national journals or proceedings with a low level of visibility beyond Croatia.

According to its research strategy, the HEI wants to increase both quantity and quality of article output, thereby accounting for the international standards for achieving academic reputation. Correspondingly, the HEI provides adequate support for conference activities.

Similar to publication output, editorial activities demonstrate that the HEI members' research activities are valued mainly by the national scientific community. The HEI engages in research projects funded by the Croatian Science Foundation and by the University of Osijek; takes various initiatives to communicate with the business community of the region and the society in general; is very active in the transfer of knowledge into the society, shows substantial awareness for the societal and labor market impact of its activities, and established a variety of professional co-operations with private and public institutions. Interaction between research and teaching activities is guaranteed by several institutional measures.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The HEI should sharpen its strategy to focus on publications in internationally known high-quality journals and define the top 5-10 SSCI-listed journals as target journals in each of its core research areas and incentivize publications accordingly. Encouragement to produce high-level journal articles should start at the PhD level. Admission to PhD studies should be more restrictive. The variety of HEI's professional and societal activities should be monitored continuously and focused if found to be inconsistent with strategic goals.

The HEI should: provide more funding for long-term research visits of its members at foreign universities; critically analyse the strategic goals and measures for inconsistencies; implement more methodology-based classes in PhD education; assure a systematic and legal access to the most important journals in the HEI's fields of research, and the HEI's strategy should include a financial plan with quantitative estimates and projections of future income and expenditures for a time horizon of at least 3 years.

### **Quality grade**

Minimum level of quality



## DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH STANDARD<sup>2</sup>

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

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

##### Analysis

Internal quality assurance system was introduced at the HEI, in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 49/2009), Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area and requirements of the ISO 9001 standard. For that purpose, the HEI established the Office for Quality Assurance and Improvement and the Commission for Quality Assurance and Improvement (Evidence: SER 1.1.)

Internal quality assurance system is regulated by the following strategic documents, developed in line with the EGS standards: Quality Policy of the EFOS; Quality Development Strategy of EFOS; Reference Book for Quality Assurance and Improvement of the EFOS and Ordinance on the Organization and Function of the Higher Education Quality Assurance and Improvement System at EFOS (Evidence: SER 1.1.). Internal quality control monitoring is performed on a regular basis (each year), according to the EGS standards. So far, some improvements are possible in accordance with Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, considering standards and elements of the standards. Internal quality assurance boards include representatives of scientific-teaching staff, administrative staff, students and external stakeholders (Evidence: SER 1.1.).

The HEI has adopted a quality assurance policy, which is a part of its strategic management and is achieved through the implementation of the strategy, including the Scientific-Research Strategy for the upcoming period (Evidence: SEROnline), so far even developed Scientific-Research Strategy 2017 – 2020 is not completely in line with the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-

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<sup>2</sup> List of abbreviation: Self-evaluation report (SER); Analytical Supplement to the ASSER; Evidence mentioned in the SER and provided online (SEROnline); Interviews during site-visit (Interviews); Additional evidence provided on request (AE); HEI official website

Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (Official Gazette, 83/2010; Article 3).

Implementation of the strategy includes Status-Quo and SWOT analysis of the HEI, strategic goals and objective, with an operational plan, defined responsibilities for implementation, the HEI strategy for a period 2018-2023 is already developed, but it lacks proposed deadlines and leaders for each goal (Evidence: SER, SEROnline).

The HEI systematically collects and analyses data about the quality of their processes, resources and results through the internal audit system, and feedback on that is submitted by the Commission for Quality Assurance and Improvement (Evidence: SER 1.1.). The HEI uses collecting data about student satisfaction surveys (Evidence: SER 1.1.), and announced the best graded professor each year (Evidence: Interviews). Also, the HEI performs internal grading of administrative functions such as the Students Office, Library, etc.

Since the first re-accreditation some improvements regarding human resources management policies have become evident. However, some future steps should be done regarding scientific-teaching resources, and more detailed information about that will be provided later in the report.

### Recommendations for improvement

Key HEI strategic documents need further improvements. The Scientific-Research Strategy is not fully in line with the proposed form and content (Official Gazette, 83/2010; Article 3), and it should be rewritten and clearly communicated to all teaching staff, with the aim of connecting it with future scientific-research efforts. Furthermore, the HEI's Strategy is developed, but it should be more precisely written in terms of deadlines and leaders for implementation.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

### Analysis

The last external evaluation was carried out in 2011 (Evidence: Recommendation from the 2011 report), and since then the HEI has undertaken the following activities based on recommendations: the HEI adopted the new Strategy in October 2018 which was passed by the Faculty Council (Evidence: SEROnline); the new management is more participative (Evidence: SER developed by 20 employees, Interviews); the HEI established formal cooperation with institutions and companies, and introduced the involvement of external members in all committees (Evidence: SER, 1.1. Commission for

Quality Assurance and Improvement, Interviews); marketing efforts become very significant, along with the inclusion of guest speakers from the business community. Furthermore, HEI internship collaboration with HEIs alumni was established. The HEI organized a Career day in cooperation with the University Career office (Evidence: Interviews).

The HEI should continue working on: internationalization – low student mobility as part of ERASMUS+ programme (Evidence: ASSER, MOZVAG 3.6.), due to a lack of English courses or programmes except the PhD programme, along with the involvement of foreign teachers and short and long-term academic national and international mobility and cooperation. Also, ERASMUS+ coordinator should be an employee without teaching duties, due to a continuous teachers' workload, with huge variations from only 78 to 652,5 teaching hours per year or teachers, who are also ERASMUS + coordinators, should have a reduced teaching workload (Evidence: Interviews, ASSER: MOZVAG 4.2. and MOZVAG 5.3.b).

The HEI showed an important progress in publishing in leading international journals, and in the last 5 years they have published 144 papers (Evidence: ASSER, MOZVAG 5.1.) and the HEI developed a system of rewards and funding (Evidence: SER 4.3.; Interviews). Insufficient usage of a modern pedagogical technology (although they use the Moodle software, there is not any course that is fully available for distance learning). Now they use Loomens, but the rest is the same, low level of involvement, along with lectures as the dominant learning method. Learning outcomes should still be improved (Evidence: ASSER, Table 1.1. – 2.7.), along with relevant resources in the library.

Internal and external evaluations are performed regularly, and the HEI analyses improvements and makes plans for future development accordingly (Evidence: SER, 1.2.). Furthermore, the new Strategy for 2017-2020 is promising, but implementation is still not precisely defined. The teaching staff and the management showed great interest in new programmes development and a willingness to accept change. An emerging plan is the closing of many undergraduate programmes and development of two basic programmes. Also, the HEI showed great interest in getting external stakeholders involved (such as Osijek Software City) in that process.

Reaccreditation of PhD programmes showed a significant lack of supervisors at the HEI, so a faster involvement of younger professors should be implemented, and additional education may be organized.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

Most of the recommendations for improvements of this standard is in keep-up with the following of the guidelines from the first reaccreditation recommendations (2011),

along with continuing the work on the HEI strategy (2018) improvements and implementation. Also, as it was stated many times in the interviews, new study programmes should be developed in line with appropriate learning outcomes and collaboration with external stakeholders and market needs. In all activities of the HEI the national and international mobility of the teaching staff should be a priority accompanied with results such as highly-ranked academic papers and projects. In addition, students' mobility should be a priority, both ways.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

#### Analysis

The HEI supports academic integrity and freedom, developed ethical standards, preserves academic integrity, freedom and uses mechanisms for preventing and sanctioning of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination. The system for managing conflicts and resolving irregularities is applied and the HEI systematically addresses issues of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.). Likewise, the HEI has an active Student Union which participates in the Faculty Council and represents students' rights and needs in the higher education system.

For that purpose, the HEI developed some relevant documents or applied documents developed at the University level: University's Ordinance on Studies and Studying; University Code of Ethics; University Ordinance on Disciplinary Responsibility of Teachers and Associates, Ordinance on Prevention of Nepotism, Ordinance on Conflict of Interest and Obligations; Ordinance on Disciplinary Responsibility of Students (Evidence: Self-evaluation Report 1.3.).

The HEI carries out activities related to the sanctioning of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination. For that purpose, Ethical Commission, Students and Teachers Disciplinary Tribunals are established. The HEI systematically addresses issues of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.), starting with clearly developed instructions for writing students' papers. With the aim of detecting academic dishonesty, software packages are being used (the HEI currently uses Turnitin).

In the past few years, the HEI carried out several procedures under the jurisdiction of the mentioned bodies, 6 were Student Disciplinary Tribunal cases, 1 plagiarism at Master of Science, and 4 Teacher Disciplinary Tribunal cases.

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI developed or adopted relevant documents and showed application in practice. Some additional recommendations should be continuously applying those regulations across all teaching courses and programmes in future.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

## **1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, scientific/artistic and social).**

### Analysis

Information on the study programmes, Lifelong learning programmes, publicly open educations and HEI events are available online in Croatian. The English version of the website offered basic information, but the home page lacks information about HEI current activities, except the information about open positions (Evidence: HEI official website).

The HEI informs stakeholders on admission criteria, enrolment quotas, study programmes, learning outcomes, qualifications and forms of support available to students, Alumni activities on its website and also uses several social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, YouTube, etc. for sharing information about certain events and activities.

The HEI partly informs stakeholders on scientific and/or professional topics, projects and results. International conference record and HEI journals are announced at the website. The web page mostly contains all the necessary information, while on the other hand some projects do not even have the English summary available on the website.

Information on the social role is made available to stakeholders through the website, social media and articles published mostly in the local media. The HEI does not seem to inform stakeholders about other indicators (e.g. pass rate analyses, graduate employment, outcomes of previous evaluations, etc.).

### Recommendations for improvement

Lifelong learning (LLL) programmes brochure is available on the official website, but it is out of date. So far all LLL programmes are a very important source of revenue for the HEI, and they should always be updated. Also, for the purposes of internationalization of the HEI, improving student mobility, staff mobility and international cooperation, all

project information, other important news about the HEI activities, course description and learning outcomes should be available on the website in English.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

### Analysis

The HEI provides contribution to the development of economy and local community through many activities. Starting with its educational role and empowering of youth, voluntary internship was introduced in cooperation with the Croatian Employers Association, the Chamber of Economy, the Chamber of Crafts, etc., along with cooperation with other companies in the Region. Also, the HEI is a sort of publicly open institution which participated in the organization of hosted guest lectures. The culture of volunteering is highly developed among the HEI employees and students. As a proof of that, Volunteers Award was presented to the HEI. As an important HEI in the Region, they established cooperation with Osijek Software City, an association that served as a consortium of the most important employers in ICT industry in the Region.

As part of pro-bono activities, HEI teachers developed the Study of Feasibility of Granting Concession for Performing Municipal Services of Chimney Sweeping in the Area of the City of Osijek, and drew up a Part of the LAG Vuka-Danube Strategy, etc. (Evidence: SER; Interviews).

One of the important roles of this HEI in terms of civil society and higher community is a high devotion to the promotion, research and education in entrepreneurship. In its long history of entrepreneurship education, the HEI supported many important institutions such as BIOS – entrepreneurship incubator or Center for Entrepreneurship. Economic-Law Clinic served as an open consulting service for SMEs. In addition, the HEI participated in many events of popularization of science in society, and encouraging students' activities and associations.

For the HEI engagement in the field of popularization of science and volunteerism, this HEI was presented with one national, and one local award.

### Recommendations for improvement

It is more than obvious that the HEI understands its social role and took an important role in the development of its local community, in terms of helping those who need it (Refugees and other vulnerable groups), or volunteering by providing their expertise,

such as developing strategies, etc. The only recommendation for this element is keeping an eye open to assure adequate distribution of volunteering activities among all employees.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

## **1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.**

### Analysis

Lifelong learning programmes of the HEI are in line with the mission and strategic goals, developed in accordance with the procedure proposed by the HEI and the University.

Currently, the HEI performed several programmes, which are in line with the social needs and market requirements such as: Project Cycle Management, Seminar for Tourist Guides and Tourist Office Managers (programmes in Tourism lifelong education are currently in the process of revision at the national level, and subject of change about eligibility to be performed as lifelong learning in future), Programme for Members of Supervisory Boards, Public Procurement, Cost and Benefit Analysis of Investment Projects, EU Project Manager and Programme of Supplemental Obligations for Enrolment in Graduate Studies (Evidence: Self-evaluation 1.6., Interviews). However, the HEI website showed slightly different evidence, Programme for Members of Supervisory Boards is more directed to public administration, and elaboration of one programme is missing - EU Project Manager.

Lifelong learning office follows the procedure in launching lifelong learning programmes (Evidence: AE), so far there is no proof of revision of the LLL programmes in the past years. In addition, the HEI performed surveys about participants' satisfaction with delivered programmes.

### Recommendations for improvement

This HEI has a high number of lifelong learning programmes, but it is evident that only 400 people attend all of them, including the Programme of Supplemental Obligations for Enrolment in Graduate Studies. Although the Region is currently in a complex socio-economic situation, the number of attendants is too small if there are 7-10 participants in some programmes, especially from the perspective of financial sustainability of the programmes and the HEI. Therefore, the main suggestion is in attentive selection of

programmes, launching time and a pre-market survey. Also, due to the fact that some of the programmes can be online, targeting a broader population than the Osijek-Baranja County, in Croatia or nearby countries is more than welcome.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

## II. Study programmes

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

#### Analysis

The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the HEI (Evidence: SER 1.1). Today the HEI delivers 7 undergraduate, 5 graduate and 2 doctoral study programmes which are organised as combined 3+2+3 year programmes (3-year undergraduate study, 2-year graduate study and 3-year postgraduate (doctoral) study). The HEI is licenced for carrying out 6 postgraduate specialist study programmes (lasting for 2 or 3 semesters) but only 3 are active. Regarding professional studies, the HEI delivers two undergraduate professional study programmes, which will be temporarily discontinued from the academic year 2019/2020 (Evidence: Resolution of the Faculty Council accepted on 22 November 2018, the HEI's official website).

The HEI provides the justification for delivering study programmes with the analysis of resources of the HEI required for delivering them (Evidence: SER). The contents of the courses meet university level standards and contemporary business requirements. Literature for courses is appropriate, although for some courses it should be updated and refreshed. The HEI produces professionals for the national and international labour markets, however, there is sufficient space for improvement, especially in the field of IT sector and quantitative methods (Evidence: Interviews). Recommendations of the Croatian Employment Service and professional associations (e.g. Croatian Employers' Association) are implemented regarding adjustment of student quotas (Evidence: SER, 2.1).

As far as programmes innovation is concerned, the HEI accepts the recommendations of partners or external stakeholders such as the Croatian Employers' Association, and professional organisations that govern programme licencing but their implementation is not at a satisfactory level regarding the proportion and speed of adjustment to



market needs (Evidence: Interviews). So far, the innovations are mostly minor (up to 20%) and related to, for example, change of course titles, semester of the course delivery and/or of course status (elective or compulsory) (Evidence: AE, HEI official website).

### Recommendations for improvement

To speed up the implementation of innovations (quality and quantity) in all programmes based on the recommendations of professional organisations that govern programme licencing.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

## **2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.**

### Analysis

Following the recommendation of re-accreditation in 2011, the learning outcomes of all programmes are now defined. However, some of them are not appropriately aligned within study programmes, programme overlapping is also present. Learning outcomes should be redesigned, and must be in line with the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> levels of the CroQF, depending on the study programmes. Financial Management is an example of good practice at the moment.

The learning outcomes for most of the courses are not adequately designed and do not reflect the competencies required for continuing education or other individual needs. For example, for graduate studies in many cases learning outcomes are defined as understand, analyse, define, explain, describe, etc., and are not at appropriate 7<sup>th</sup> level of studies, (Evidence: Alignment Matrix: Tables 1.3., 2.1., 2.6., 2.7., etc.).

Since the learning outcomes and course syllabuses are not adequately connected, the impression is that some of the teachers do not understand how to define appropriate learning outcomes and connect them with adequate teaching methods and methods of their assessment. In addition, distribution of ECTS credits is not appropriate or is not well documented (Evidence: study programme syllabus and curriculum, the HEI official website). Regarding the needs of society and current working environment and the fact that 70% of contents and outcomes taught at different undergraduate university programmes overlaps, the major revisions of all programmes are needed (Evidence: SER, 4.6, Interviews). Study programmes curricula do not include enough quantitative

knowledge and should be improved in the redesign of new study programmes, with more hands-on activities (Evidence: HEI official website, Interviews, AE).

There is no evidence of re-allocation of ECTS credits per semester (academic year). For programmes at the graduate level, ECTS credits are evenly distributed for all courses regardless of the overall working hours. Regulations on studying and other relevant regulations, syllabuses and curricula are transparent and publicly available only in Croatian (evidence: HEI official website). The HEI regularly checks the courses' learning outcomes (Evidence; SER, HEI official website). The management is aware that the existing survey does not distinguish the quality appropriately, so the intention is to define a new, more appropriate questionnaire (from the next wave, i.e. academic year 2020/2021).

As most of the courses are defined as 60 hours of classes where 45 (75%) are lectures, there is little space to implement different teaching methods, (Evidence; HEI official website).

### Recommendations for improvement

The learning outcomes at the course levels should be aligned with the programme learning outcomes, defined at the appropriate level, considering overlapping across the programmes. Most of the learning outcomes at the level of course or programme should be redesigned. This should be performed all the more because the HEI plans to develop new study programmes. Special attention in the development of new study programmes should be addressed in the direction of learning outcomes of courses and study programmes at an appropriate 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> level.

The allocation of ECTS credits should be more appropriately distributed regarding students' workload and/or teaching hours. Improvement of study programmes can also be attained by incorporating more quantitative methods, which will also be reflected in the quality of final papers and theses. An additional improvement of study programmes can also be achieved by making students more active, i.e. shifting lecture hours to exercises, problem solving, case study and seminars.

For getting the real perspective regarding statistical data (e.g. average duration of study, average grade, etc.) the recommendation is to keep track of full-time and part-time students separately. Students' surveys questionnaires should be re-defined.

### Quality grade

Minimal level of quality

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

#### **Analysis**

Examples of seminar papers, final theses and exams reveal that intended learning outcomes can be achieved, although it should be taken into account that some of them are defined at lower level than it is required (Evidence, AE).

Although the HEI improves the teaching process according to students' feedback (Evidence: SER, 2.3.) mostly through the introduction of extracurricular activities, in some cases methods of assessment of higher level learning outcomes are inappropriate and still below the programme level. Furthermore, evidence showed that changes previously made at some curricula are not relevant, and lower than the allowed threshold of up to 20% of changes, which indicates that all changes previously introduced were minimal, without a significant impact on the study programmes (Evidence: AE, Interviews).

The courses' updates (objectives and contents, learning outcomes, students' obligations and methods of evaluating the attainment of learning outcomes) are regularly published on the HEI website. Students are able to file complaints about their dissatisfaction with the evaluation procedure or their obtained results. In such cases, the HEI has prescribed a procedure that is respected (Evidence: HEI official web, AE, Interviews).

Although the HEI invests in the promotion and quality of graduate programme delivered in English (Entrepreneurial Management and Entrepreneurship) there are no students enrolled in the programme. According to the HEI, the reason for the unpopularity of that part-time programme is financial (Evidence: Interviews). The solution to make the programme more attractive, as suggested by the HEI, is to offer the same programme as a full-time programme which will be financed by the HEI's own funds if needed (Evidence: Interviews). The benefit from introducing an English programme is that all teachers of the study programme (and other interested teachers) attended "Academic Teaching Excellence – English as the Medium of Instruction" seminar (organized in cooperation with the British Council) aimed to improve and upgrade teaching materials and teaching classes in English.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

As it is already noted by the HEI representatives, all study programmes will be revised, or new ones will be proposed starting from the beginning of 2019, which are planned to be delivered in the next academic year. Relevant stakeholders should be involved in

the process of study programme development: employers, for example: Business Informatics – representatives of Osijek Software City.

Learning outcomes for new and redesigned programmes must be developed in line with an appropriate level of study, and in an adequate way, to assure evidence of achievement of the learning outcomes through the examination process. In order to achieve adequate and intended learning outcomes, the quality of seminar papers, final theses and exams should be increased.

### 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.**

### Analysis

Development activities related to study programmes are carried out systematically. An example of adoption of the recommendations from the previous evaluation (2011) is a temporary discontinuation of professional studies (Evidence: Resolution of the Faculty Council accepted on 22 November 2018, HEI website). Feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni is of partially informal character (Evidence: Interviews, AE, SER). In addition, the HEI established contacts with employers and stakeholders, and they discuss society and market's demand regarding programme changes through different activities, such as the Scientific Forum, Encounter of Science and Economy, formal bodies of the Faculty and Alumni activities (Evidence: SER, Interviews, AE). The Panel got that impression because of the small community, where facilitates communication and informing of HEI employees. Alumni and professional organisation members are often guest lecturers, enabling them to participate in HEI study programmes, pointing the weaknesses and necessary changes of programmes or courses and its alignment with the strategic goals of the HEI (Evidence: Interviews, SER).

The HEI keeps records of all changes to study programmes which have so far not been substantial (up to 20%) and still has not significantly changed the concept of the programmes for about 12 years (Evidence: AE). Most of the HEI members are aware of the inadequacy of the offered programmes and of the fact that they do not meet the required standards which are important for the local community. Hence, the HEI intends to initiate the procedure for modifying its undergraduate university studies starting from next year. The new programmes will provide students with a wider range

of qualifications necessary for joining the dynamic labour market (Evidence: SER, 2.4, Interviews).

### Recommendations for improvement

The new study programmes, that the HEI intends to initiate, should take into consideration all feedback (employers, external stakeholders, alumni, civil society) and market needs. For example, since the ICT industry is the largest employer in the region, their recommendations certainly need to be considered and implemented (as learning outcomes) in the new programmes. More detailed and frequent analyses should be conducted in cooperation with stakeholders, which will enable adjustment of programmes (at the course level) according to market changes and needs.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

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

### Analysis

The numbers of ECTS credits have been published on the official website (Evidence: HEI official website). It is evident that, for example, there is a group of courses at graduate programmes which have the same number (5) of ECTS credits, although according to students teaching hours or expected workload are not appropriately defined (Evidence: HEI official website, Interviews).

For all programmes, there is no evidence that the allocation of ECTS credits is based on the analyses of feedback from stakeholders in the teaching process (at least it is not documented). Additionally, there is no evidence of changing allocations of ECTS credits or procedures used to assess the alignment of the actual student workload or that defined ECTS credits are based on the analyses of feedback from stakeholders in the teaching process. The performed innovations of courses (programmes) are only minor (still up to 20%) with no revised allocations of ECTS credits (evidence: AE).

According to the HEI, the ECTS credits have not been allocated because so far, students have not complained about courses involving inadequate workload in relation to the number of allocated ECTS credits. The results of surveys, carried out so far, have not revealed any significant differences in the workload of different courses (Evidence: SER, 2.5.). However, the impression is opposite. Students pointed out that ECTS credits are not allocated adequately (especially at the graduate level) and that their workload differs from course to course which should be taken into account, i.e. it shows that the

workload is not in conformity with the number of ECTS credits (Evidence: SER, HEI official website, Interviews).

The HEI conducts an internal survey on students' satisfaction with the teaching process and course contents, where ECTS allocation is included in the survey (Evidence: SER, 2.5., Interviews, AE). Teachers are provided with feedback on the results of the analysis and their ranking. On the other hand, students are annually informed only of the best teacher (ranking based on the survey data), but not on all results of the analysis of survey data (Evidence: Interviews).

### Recommendations for improvement

To allocate ECTS credits in accordance with the actual student workload. To avoid extreme mismatch. To take into consideration the analyses of feedback from students, teachers and stakeholders in the teaching process. To provide students with more detailed feedback on all results of performed surveys.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

### Analysis

At the university level, student practice is offered to students as an extracurricular activity, on a voluntary basis without ECTS assigned (Evidence: HEI official website, Interviews). The student practice is obligatory only for undergraduate professional study programmes (Evidence: SER, HEI official website).

Student practice is organised outside the HEI and in cooperation with stakeholders and the local community (Evidence: Contracts with employers, regulations on student practice, record of student practice, Interviews). It is based on the Agreement on Cooperation between the Croatian Employers' Association (CEA) and the HEI (Evidence: SER, HEI official website, AE).

The procedure for the assessment of the achievement of intended practice-related learning outcomes is clearly defined (Evidence: Basic Information on Student Practice with a List of Special Job Tasks (Draft) available at HEI website, AE).

The concept of student practice is well developed in cooperation with partners and publicly available, although it is not clearly specified which student competencies are developed during the student practice, (Evidence: HEI official website, AE). A

systematic collection and analysis of feedback from students and their supervisors on the quality of student practice is continuously recorded (Evidence: HEI official website, evaluation questionnaire for student practice, AE). In order to promote student practice possibilities and benefits, the HEI organises a Meeting of Science and Economics in cooperation with the Croatian Employers Association after each completed cycle of practice (Evidence: HEI official website, AE).

#### Recommendations for improvement

Student practice is well organized and has a great potential. The Panel recommends to define the student practice as a regular course (compulsory and elective) also at all university undergraduate programmes with appropriately allocated ECTS credits. Additionally, student practice plan should clearly show relations with the programme and/or course defined learning outcomes in order to point out which students' competences will be developing during the student practice.

#### 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.**

#### Analysis

The HEI publishes clear criteria and a call for the enrolment of students. The criteria for admission and continuation of studies are publicly announced (Evidence: SER 3.1., Interview).

Since the ranking is done by the Central Application Office and can be seen at the portal "Postani student" by each applicant, it was concluded that the criteria for admission are consistently applied (Evidence: SER 3.1.). Admission criteria are ensured through the State Graduation Exams. Continuation criteria and ensuring the candidates with appropriate knowledge are aligned with the requirements of the study programme, since students have to acquire 180 ECTS and if their grade average is lower than 3.5 they need a professor's recommendation (Evidence: Interviews and SER 3.1.).

Students that have completed an undergraduate professional study programme can apply for graduate studies if they complete a Programme of Supplemental Obligations

for the Enrolment in Graduate Studies. However, in SER (3.1.) there is a paragraph about weighting average grade with the coefficient of 0.75, with the aim of ensuring the continuation of the study, what is not in line with the adequate number of ECTS credits.

#### Recommendations for improvement

It is stated that the students that have completed an undergraduate professional study programme can apply for graduate studies even without passing supplemental exams, just by multiplying their average grade with the coefficient of 0.75. (Evidence: SER 3.1.) Although it is said that this has not been in practice for a longer period, this practice must be abolished (Evidence: Interviews).

#### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

#### Analysis

Procedures for monitoring student progress are clearly defined and available. The collected data refer to the number of enrolled students, number of achieved ECTS credits, average grade and number of drop-outs.

Student progress is monitored, regularly collected and analysed (Evidence: ASSER, Tables 3.4 and 3.5). There is data on pass rates and drop-out rates. One of the ways of study programme quality assurance is conducting the Internal Student Survey (Evidence: SER, 3.2). Based on the results of the Student Survey, there have been some minor changes in the way professors do their work or evaluate their students but nothing has significantly changed (Evidence: Interviews). As a last part, students are allowed to post their comments, and the professors appreciate those comments as a valuable feedback for future improvements.

Student performance is analysed based on their average grade, additional activities, seminar papers, professional papers and works of art, for which students can get a Rector's or Dean's Award. Some of the measures to increase student motivation are above mentioned awards and the possibility to participate in additional education programmes. Furthermore, there is also a possibility of submitting a request for an additional exam term or students can submit an appeal and take an exam in front of a commission.



### Recommendations for improvement

It is recommended to add in the Internal Student Survey more place for students' opinions in the form of open questions, questions about the alignment of ECTS credits with the workload, and this opinion should be taken into consideration.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

### Analysis

Although there are not any specific incentives, the HEI does allow and encourage professors to choose the best teaching methods depending on the audience and obtaining of learning outcomes.

There are different methods used by professors, especially the younger ones, to deliver the programme. There are many guest lectures (some of them held in English), case studies, and projects in which students participate. Guest lectures often consist of proposed actual problems in their firms that students are trying to solve (Evidence: Interviews). Teamwork, fieldwork and group presentations are also pretty common and in the future they should be even more present, by introducing additional creative and critical thinking based methods.

The HEI conducts student surveys through which students express their opinion. Afterwards, it is up to a teacher to choose whether they will analyse and later implement changes.

For students with disabilities, the way of participating is adjusted. For example, a student with dyslexia was allowed to record the lectures and seminars, for some other students the font of the exam was enlarged or they had a prolonged time of writing it (Evidence: Interviews).

The HEI has modernized and uses contemporary technologies such as smart boards, Loomen, Turnitin – antiplagiarism services and Studomat for printing different certificates and to apply for an exam (Evidence: Interviews). E-learning system exists, but it is not mentioned as a learning tool for now (Evidence: Interviews). The digital repository (Dabar) is used for all the bachelor, master and doctoral theses (Evidence: SEROnline, Interviews).

The professors are always available to their students and they answer their questions via e-mail within a day (Evidence: Interview). They try to involve their students in various extracurricular activities and events happening at the HEI. HEI professors also

served as mentors for students engaged in NGOs. Furthermore, they encourage and connect them with the real business situations (Evidence: Interview).

Students have emphasized that the Student Office is much more helpful than it used to be, but there is still room for improvement. By getting students involved in different projects, students gain autonomy, but also receive all the support needed from professors (Evidence: Interview).

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI should introduce teaching methods, which foster research-based learning, problem solving, creativity, and critical thinking. In addition, according to the proposed curricula it is evident that a great proportion of the classes are lectures, and roughly 25% other teaching methods, that should be changed in future. Students should not feel pressure when visiting the Student Office. On the contrary, it is recommended that the staff is more helpful and approachable.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

### Analysis

When enrolling, new students receive the Brochure of the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, and there is a video available about the Faculty on the HEI YouTube channel (Evidence: HEI Official website and Social media).

Not all students are aware of the existence of a System of Supervisors, and those who are aware have not contacted them. Professors - supervisors have also confirmed that students do not come to them. Various services are available for students of the HEI which operate at the level of the University of Osijek, such as the Career Advising Service, Service for Psychological Counselling, Student Assistance System, and two Erasmus Coordinators (one for outgoing and one for incoming students but also professors). Furthermore, there is the Student Office and a library (the Faculty and the University).

There is a sufficient number of qualified administrative and technical staff. Working hours of the Student Office have been adjusted to part-time students (Evidence: HEI Official website). There is a contact for Students with disabilities Vice Dean (Evidence: Interviews), which informs all the professors by e-mail about the situation with a specific student. Afterwards, professors together with this student, come up with the

best solution for helping that student (Evidence: Interviews). For foreign students there is an Erasmus Coordinator-professor but also the HEI's Brochure for foreign students which contains most of the information needed. The consultation hours are published on the HEI official website but professors also notify students if there is any change. Furthermore, professors are very responsive via e-mail (Evidence: Interviews).

During interviews it was said that several professors helped in establishing student associations. For example, "Financijski impuls" was established with the support of prof. Domagoj Karačić, PhD and associate professor Domagoj Sajter, PhD (Evidence: AE). "Financijski impuls" has organized a facultative visit to the Faculty of Economics in Sarajevo and the Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the help of the management and professors of the HEI (Evidence: HEI official website). Erasmus+ projects leader has emphasized cooperation with students, 14 students and three professors are currently on one Erasmus+ project in Berlin. Furthermore, whenever there are some events for young and unemployed people, the teaching staff tries to involve student associations in the organization but also to participate. Bookmark association has monthly meetings with professors and assistants from the marketing field through which students gain help and advice in conducting different projects (Evidence: Interviews). A notable initiative is the Law and Economics Clinic through which professors from both faculties give opportunities to their students to come into contact with employers and real world. It enables students to provide consulting services to different companies with the help and guidance of professors from both the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Law (Evidence: SER, 1.5., Interview). It is very common for professors and assistants to volunteer and they encourage their students to volunteer as well.

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI has different offices that provide guidance for their students, or addresses students to the University offices, but it would be recommended to combine it into The Career Center. Furthermore, although the University provides the HEI with support in ERASMUS+ mobility, it would be recommended to employ an additional person as an Erasmus coordinator, since the professors are already overloaded with teaching, and this just brings additional obligations and burden to them. The System of Supervisors has the potential to be utilized.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

#### **Analysis**

There are special admission criteria for students with disabilities. Those with the degree of disability of 60% or higher have direct enrolment while the others have an adapted State Graduation Exam (Evidence: AE).

Teaching methods are adjusted for students with disability. This includes recording of lectures, larger fonts in exams or they can have additional time for writing it, getting lecture notes from professors if they have difficulty writing or avoiding oral exams if they have a speech disorder (Evidence: Interviews). There is a Quality Control person, who informs all the professors by e-mail about the situation with a specific student. Afterwards, professors, together with the student come up with the best solution how to help him/her (Evidence: Interviews). Most of the HEI's rooms and offices are accessible to students with disability. There is a disability ramp and an elevator, and toilets are adapted to their needs.

The HEI announces the Call for Awarding One-off Grants to Full-time Students in Need of Social Assistance and allows students belonging to under-represented groups to enrol in undergraduate studies under special conditions, at the beginning of each year. While the University has some additional calls for incentives for under-represented groups (Evidence: HEI Official website). At a University level there are established Services for Psychological Counselling as well as the Office for Students with Disabilities.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

Even though most of the elements regarding this standard have already been developed, particularly in terms of finding adequate an approach for attaining learning outcomes by students with different abilities, some improvements may be considered. Most of the professors are not qualified for making decisions on how to work with students with disabilities, so additional education or a more detailed Reference Book should be welcome.

#### **Quality grade**

High level of quality

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

#### **Analysis**

Awareness about Erasmus programs is quite high. Students are informed about the opportunities for completing part of their study abroad through Erasmus+ Program. The information can be found on the HEI's website, there is an Erasmus coordinator at students' disposal, and the Faculty organizes presentations of those who participated in Erasmus+ programs during various events at the HEI. Furthermore, that presentation can also be found on the official web page. Compared to the information provided during the last re-accreditation, an increase in the number of outgoing students can be seen, as well as an increase in the number of incoming students (Evidence: ASSER, Table 3.6., AE). The University has agreements with a large number of other universities, out of which around 40 universities are in the field of economics (some of them offer more than one study programme). The list can be found on the official website (Evidence: HEI's website). Erasmus coordinator helps their students in the whole process of applying and choosing the right courses that will be recognized by the HEI. A student who was on two Erasmus programs (Spain and Germany) was really thrilled. She managed to gain all ECTS credits and all of the ECTS credits were recognized by the HEI, and students confirmed they know in advance if the chosen course abroad is eligible to be accepted at the HEI, along with the ECTS (Evidence: Interviews).

As students return, there is an oral discussion regarding the whole experience, from the process of applying until the very return and ECTS recognition. Considering the small number of outgoing students, this way of collecting data is satisfactory. Students gain competencies for the employment in the international environment through several channels: Erasmus + programs, lectures held by foreign teachers, or domestic teachers in a foreign language and guest lectures.

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

Unfortunately, the number of students participating in exchange is still rather low, and students should be encouraged to participate more. It is highly recommended to have an Official Erasmus Coordinator, who is not a teacher. Students are mostly familiar with teaching mobility, but some more promotion of Erasmus internship will be welcomed, and more in line with labour market needs.

#### **Quality grade**

High level of quality

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

#### **Analysis**

Information for the foreign students about the HEI can be found in the HEI's Brochure for Foreign Students that is written in English. Furthermore, the official website is insufficiently available in English. There is a list of courses held in English, but some of them do not have a course description in English so it is actually hard for students to compare it with the objectives of their home courses (Evidence: HEI Official website).

There is an Erasmus coordinator that helps foreign students with the enrolment. Foreign students' feedback is briefly collected by Erasmus Coordinator in the discussion face-to-face with each foreign student (due to the low number of incoming students) about the satisfaction with the study programme and stay in Osijek. There is a survey at the University level that covers students' impressions in detail (Evidence: Interviews).

Part of the study programme is delivered in English, but the teaching is mostly consultative due to the low number of foreign and other students interested in courses held in English. Foreign students cannot take many classes in their field but they still manage to achieve a minimum number of ECTS credits needed (Evidence: Interviews). At the level of the University, Croatian language courses are held for Erasmus students (Evidence: Self-evaluation report).

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

The HEI's entire website should be available in English, specifically the description and learning outcomes of courses held in English. There should be a larger choice of courses held in English in order to attract more incoming students. An official survey should be implemented, with the aim of collecting and sharing data. Also, a low overall mobility at the HEI may be connected to the low incoming mobility. Professors and students from the HEI, when they take part in Erasmus mobility, serve as ambassadors of the HEI, and along with teaching mobility at the host HEI, they are able to present and invite foreign students to come and study in Osijek.

#### **Quality grade**

Satisfactory level of quality

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

#### **Analysis**

The criteria and methods for evaluation and grading are clear and published before the beginning of the course on the HEI's webpage and Loomen. In the first week of the lectures, all of the requirements for passing the course are explained, and all of the dates are published. The schedule is published on the website, two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester (Evidence: Interview).

There are various methods for evaluation used by professors such as mid-term, presentation, seminar, case study reports, etc. Hence, different teaching methods meet different assessment methods. The HEI does not provide any specific support to the assessors related to their assessment methods.

The HEI ensures objectivity and reliability of grading, using double marking method. Most of the professors use double marking to some extent. Both the professor and the assistant check the exam, but only for the descriptive question that the other was not sure about how to evaluate or when there is a low grade that could result in a student's failure. Furthermore, in the oral exams, there are both professor and assistant present, as well as at least two students as witnesses (Evidence: Interviews). If there were some issues, a student makes a complaint. Based on the student's complaints, the dean makes the decision on conducting an examination in front of a commission consisting of three members that evaluate the student (Evidence: AE).

The evaluation procedures take into account special circumstances of certain groups of students (for example students with disabilities), while at the same time ensuring the achievement of intended learning outcomes, as it was explained in the element of standard 3.5.

The students receive feedback on the evaluation results, and if necessary, guidelines for the learning process based on these evaluations. Together with the results published on Loomen, the date for the insight into exam is also published. During the insight, a student gets all the explanation of grading and mistakes, and advice on how to study for the following exams (Evidence: Interview).

#### **Recommendations for improvement**

Regarding this element of standard, the HEI showed an appropriate approach. However, the HEI does not provide any specific support to the assessors related to their assessment methods, which should be improved in future.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

#### Analysis

Upon the completion of studies, students receive Diploma and Diploma Supplement (Evidence: ASSER).

The Diploma and Diploma Supplement have all the elements prescribed by the Ministry in the Regulation on Contents of Diploma and Diploma Supplement that can be found on the HEI's web page (Evidence: AE).

The Diploma Supplement is issued in Croatian and English, free of charge (Evidence: AE, HEI Official website).

#### Recommendations for improvement

None.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

#### Analysis

The HEI analyses employability of its graduates and aligns admission quotas in line with the HEI's ability to collect relevant data (ASSER, Table 3.7.), also this HEI developed strong bonds with the National Employers Association.

The HEI informs current and prospective students about the opportunities to continue education or find employment after graduation through their official web page, social networks, events such as Open Door Days, Career Day, and other events (Evidence: Interviews).

The HEI provides student support regarding future career planning through all of the above stated. Furthermore, there is the Commission for Cooperation with the Economy through which all of the practices are conducted. Their job is to connect the HEI with economy through different projects and organization of different events. The HEI has showed really good connection with employers.



There is a strong connection between the HEI and its Alumni. The fact that the HEI is not that big is seen as a big advantage that help them to get to know each other much better thus making stronger connections for future. Alumni try to connect firms in which they work with the HEI by means of internship. Furthermore, Alumni organize workshops for students of the final years, where they bring HR managers from top firms to connect them but also to tell them what is needed for the employment and what employers want. They help them with CVs, job applications and prepare them for job interviews. Employers support the HEI and its students, and see the HEI as a really important institution for their region. Many students start as interns and then continue to work in these companies (Evidence: Interviews).

### Recommendations for improvement

It is obvious this HEI puts in all possible efforts to help out their students in future employment. Strong bonds with business and other potential employers, are advantages of this HEI for sure. However, there is room for improvement of the Official Career Center, as it was mentioned before in this report.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

## IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

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

#### Analysis

The HEI's teacher-to-student ratio of 1:34 lies above the required level of 1:30 (Evidence: AE provided by ASHE). This ratio improved monotonically and dramatically from about 1:100 since the last re-accreditation which is mainly due to a cut of the number of students (Evidence: SER II.4.1; ASSER Table 4.2; Interviews). The HEI's recent decision to discontinue professional studies will have no effect on the ratio because the HEI plans to shift the quotas for professional studies to university studies (Evidence: HEI Official website, Interviews).

The average number of standard teaching hours amounts to 405 on average where assistants are excluded and reductions of the teaching obligations are not accounted for (Evidence: ASSER Table 4.3). This is significantly above the target value of 300 and above the maximum allowed value of 360 (Evidence: Collective agreement for science and higher education). Teaching workloads vary a lot across teachers and rise up to the

double of the maximum allowed level (Evidence: ASSER Table 4.3). The situation of the teaching assistants does not seem to be a problem (Evidence: ASSER Table 4.3, Interviews).

Combining these two observations, it can be concluded that too small classes are a bigger issue at the HEI than too few teachers. This hints at the need to overhaul study programmes.

The regulation also requires that, in each study programme, at least half of standard teaching hours must be conducted by the HEI's own staff (Evidence: Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions). This requirement is not met for the specialist study programme "Accounting, auditing, and analysis" (Evidence: AE provided by ASHE).

Teachers' qualifications certainly comply with formal requirements with respect to full-time employed teachers in the area of social sciences and the field of economics (Evidence: ASSER Table 4.3; Ordinance on conditions for issuing a license for scientific activity, conditions for re-accreditation of scientific organizations and content of license; CROSB database). Only five percent of the teaching staff falls into the field of information and communication sciences, whereas 12 percent of students (full-time equivalents) are enrolled in the study programmes "Business Informatics" (Evidence: ASSER Tables 3.1, 4.3). The average workload of the corresponding teachers is 20 percent above the HEI's average. This capacity shortage is at odds with the appreciation business informatics receives from external stakeholders (Evidence: Interviews).

HEI's teachers give the impression of being very committed and student-oriented, but there are concerns about their scientific excellence in view of the HEI's and the University's rank. In addition to and in line with the analysis under Standard 5, such concerns can be based, among others, on the excessive number of Ph.D. students, on the emphasis the HEI puts on business practice, and on the fact that the HEI issued a guideline for teachers on how to work scientifically (Evidence: Report of expert panel on the re-accreditation of the university postgraduate (doctoral) programme for Management and for Entrepreneurship and Innovativeness, 2017; Interviews; AE).

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The HEI must continue its efforts to comply with regulation requirements, in particular with respect to teachers' workloads and their distribution across teachers.

The capacity for business informatics seems overstretched. A first step to increase it are the three assistants doing their Ph.D. theses in this field. However, capacity should be increased further, the more so as the HEI might consider to focus more on business informatics in the future (Evidence: Interviews).

Shifting quotas from professional to undergraduate studies will have no favorable effect on the teacher-to-student ratio. The HEI should consider reducing total quotas instead. This also holds for the large number of Ph.D. students. An overhaul of study programmes is another feasible, cost-effective, and sustainable way to decrease workloads.

Less workload will give the academic staff the time needed to further develop their scientific calibre.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

## **4.2. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.**

### Analysis

Two appointment procedures have been scrutinized, for two positions, one for assistant professor and one for associate professor (Evidence: AE). From a legal perspective, there are no objections to raise; both procedures follow the required steps and comply with the respective regulations. Nevertheless, there are some interesting observations.

First, there is only one application over and above those appointed. Second, both appointed candidates are internal applicants since they both studied and worked mainly at the HEI. Third, the candidates' scientific contributions are not at an internationally competitive level. This observation is in line with the analysis under Standard 5 regarding the HEI's research output. Fourth, the composition of one candidate appointment committee is noteworthy because candidate's Ph.D. mentor was on the committee for the appointment, while in the appointment of another candidate this was not the case. Fifth, from interviews, we conclude that there is only a weak link between the HEI's strategy and appointment decisions. This may be because of the vague formulation of the strategy (Evidence: SER I.4-I.5; SEROnline 1.1.22, 1.1.24). In addition, the HEI's internal procedures and criteria for appointing and advancing staff are informal and favor in-house applications (Evidence: Interviews).

Overall, appointment and advancement procedures at the HEI seem to live up to de-facto national standards. There are no additional systematic or formal internal criteria at the

HEI for the academic promotion of teachers (Evidence: Interviews). Unfortunately, appointment and advancement procedures lack competitiveness, objectiveness, and strategic focus.

### Recommendations for improvement

Currently, 12 out of HEI's 68 teachers (including assistants) did not graduate at the HEI and six out of 51 teachers holding a Ph.D. title did not earn it from the HEI, and none of the assistants plans for an assistant professorship outside the HEI (Evidence: AE, Interviews). Hence, the first step is to reduce the number of in-house appointments in order to foster diversity within and excellence of the HEI. In view of current regulations, the most promising approach to do so is the appointment of assistant professors because this is the point where teachers join the HEI for the long term. In order to attract external scholars, the HEI should sharpen its strategy and go for one or two fields in which it excels among Croatian HEI of comparable size. The most obvious fields are entrepreneurship and business IT.

The next step is to seek funds to attract at least a small number of professors of international rank. This would also complement the HEI's ambition to broaden the offer of courses in English. Both steps require introducing more competitive and more objective appointment procedures. Additional, performance-based criteria for appointment and advancement should be considered, designed, communicated, and applied.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

### Analysis

The HEI's teachers have been active in their professional development, in particular in the preceding academic year. The activities mainly aim at teaching and language competencies, but also include scientific conferences, guest lectures, and short guest lectureships. Most of the activities took place in Croatia, but there are also scientific activities in foreign European countries such as the Netherlands, Poland, Hungary, Finland, and Luxembourg. The most active departments were "Management, Organization & Entrepreneurship" and "National and International Economics"; this also holds true for scientific conferences (Evidence: AE).'

These activities are supported by a yearly budget of 10,000 HRK per capita (Evidence: AE). It has been paid to teachers for the last four years and to assistants since the last year (Evidence: Interviews). The HEI seems to be flexible with budgets because budgets can be transferred between teachers (Evidence: Interviews). The HEI's share of the corresponding actual costs roughly doubled in 2016 from about 3,000 HRK per year and per teacher; in total, to about 7,000 HRK per year and per teacher have been spent in 2017 (Evidence: SER II.4.3). Teachers can also use University support and extend that amount up to 10.000 HRK per year. This is a decent amount of money.

In addition, the HEI awards several prizes. The most eminent is the publication reward endowed with 5,000 HRK plus 5,000 HRK times an impact factor of the journal (Evidence: AE). Again, this is a fair amount, and it easily covers submission fees. Teachers and assistants appreciate this reward (Evidence: Interviews). We elaborate on the publication reward under Standard 5. Other formal, albeit not endowed incentives are the awards for teaching, for scientific work, and for administrative services (Evidence: SER II.3.2).

The feedback from student surveys regarding teaching is directed to the individual teachers and discussed among the members of the chair (Evidence: Interviews). While this is a sensible approach, the HEI might consider to go one step further and introduce an internal workshop where teachers with high grades from surveys report on their approach to teaching.

Finally, there is a potential for improvement with respect to the professional development of younger researchers. They have to do with the supervision and mentoring of Ph.D. studies. A first observation relates to Ph.D. supervision. In the entrepreneurship track, there is no assistant or associate professor among the five supervisors (Evidence: Self-evaluation report for the re-accreditation of the university postgraduate (doctoral) programme for Entrepreneurship and Innovativeness, 2017, Table 2). In the management track, there are three associate professors among the 18 supervisors (average age of 39), but no assistant professor (Evidence: Self-evaluation report for the re-accreditation of the university postgraduate (doctoral) programme for Management, 2017, Table 15). This low involvement of younger researchers hinders the professional development of assistant and young associate professors. Another observation is that there does not seem to exist a doctoral colloquium in which Ph.D. candidates present and discuss their research to other Ph.D. candidates and to other professors than their supervisors (Evidence: Interviews, aforementioned SER on doctoral programmes).

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI should go on with its financial support of professional and scientific activities. In order to incentivize more international and more scientific activities, they might consider to put restrictions on the budget in terms of the region and type (professional vs. scientific) of activities. The HEI should also go on with its publication reward.

Assistant and associate professors should be involved in Ph.D. mentoring. Faculty-wide doctoral colloquia to present and discuss topics and recent progresses should be used more intensely.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

**4.4. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity.**

### Analysis

Premises, classrooms, and offices are clean, well maintained, and well equipped. There is air conditioning, and most parts of the buildings are accessible for people with mobility challenges. Naturally, the standard of the older building falls behind that of the other one. There is a small cafeteria also offering some main dishes. For larger meals a nearby university canteen (a ten-minute walk) turns out to be the preferred option (Evidence: Interviews).

The HEI's coefficient of 1.292 square meters per student barely complies with the officially required level of 1.25 square meters per student (Evidence: SER II.4.4; Ordinance on the content of license and conditions for issuing license for performing higher education activity carrying out a study program and re-accreditation of higher education institutions). The space for guest lecturers and student associations is said to be scarce and there is a lack of study rooms for students (Evidence: AE, Interviews). In fact, the additional room in the library seems to be mainly used for studying and working rather than for bibliographic searches and reading. In total, this gives a mixed picture of the HEI's spatial conditions.

The following rough analysis aims at the number of classrooms and lecture halls and the seats they offer; the required level of 1.25 square meters per student is based on total space including offices and other non-classroom space. For the available capacity, assume that teaching rooms are used from eight a.m. to six p.m. for five days a week.

This gives 50 hours per room and per week. For three contact hours per course and per week this yields 16.7 course slots per room and per week. There are ten lecture halls and four computer classrooms (Evidence: SER II.4.4). For 14 teaching rooms, there are 233.3 course slots available per week. For four contact hours per course and per week, the number of available slots decreases to 175.

For the required capacity, assume that each full-time (part-time) student attends six (three) courses per week. The number of students amounts to 1,821.5 full-time equivalents (Evidence: ASSER Table 3.1). This gives 10,929 student course slots required per week. The average number of occupied seats per room is 59.6 under the following assumptions (Evidence: SER II.4.4): (1) class attendance is 100 percent, (2) the two big lecture halls have 600 seats in total, (3) each course in one of the two big lecture halls utilizes 50 percent of the capacity, and (4) the utilization of the other class rooms is 75 percent. This rather unfavorable scenario yields 183.5 course slots required per week. This is clearly less than the available 233.3 slots for three contact hours and only slightly more than the available 175 slots for four contact hours.

This calculation indicates that there are enough classrooms at the HEI. In combination with the poor space-per-student ratio, it can be concluded that non-classroom space is more of an issue at the HEI.

IT equipment seems to be in good condition disregarding the problem that the HEI's web page was not available for a couple of hours during one day of the site visit. However, teachers want IT services and IT staff to improve in order to advance digitalization (Evidence: AE). This is in line with the HEI's research strategy invoking the impression that considerable investments into IT infrastructure are necessary in the short and medium term (Evidence: SEROnline 1.1.22). From the site visit and from the fact that expenses on IT equipment raised by about one million HRK or equivalently by more than 470 percent in 2017 (Evidence: ASSER Table 4.12), it can be assumed that parts of these investments are already made.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The HEI should keep an eye on the number of offices and study rooms. The HEI might consider opening the two big lecture halls and IT classrooms to students whenever they are not occupied otherwise.

In view of the fact that Business informatics is a key study programme at the HEI, IT equipment should be maintained on a regular basis. The necessary financial resources should be planned carefully and explicitly. Due to the fact this HEI possesses eLearning

equipment, current capacity shortages should be overbridged by alternative learning approaches.

#### Quality grade

High level of quality

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

##### Analysis

The library at the HEI consists of two small rooms, the actual library and another room, called reading room, equipped with about 30 computers with access to the Internet. The library is open from eight a.m. to eight p.m. on workdays and to three p.m. on Fridays, but it is closed on the weekends. The library hosts some 40,000 titles in form of hardcopies and electronic files, but there is neither access to electronic textbooks nor to databases of financial and business information of firms such as Amadeus. Financial funds for the latter databases are said to be insufficient. Furthermore, 30 percent of the inventory is in English, the rest is in Croatian, and all final theses are collected in electronic form since 2015. The library's electronic access to highly ranked international journals is very limited. From a sample of four top journals in entrepreneurship (Research Policy, Journal of Business Venturing, Entrepreneurship - Theory and Practice, Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal) and three top journals in finance (Journal of Finance, Journal of Financial Economics, Review of Financial Studies), no paid articles could be retrieved. Occasionally, the HEI benefits from trial access to international journals; the corresponding access to information is shared among the HEI. There is no integrated search engine for all available literature, but remote access is possible. HEI participates in the interlibrary loan between all state-run academic libraries in Croatia. The library staff also performs bibliographic services for students and teachers. (Evidence: Interviews; AE)

The library is small and the access to international literature, in particular journals, is problematic. Titles from economics and related fields are overrepresented in the library in relation to the focus of the study programmes and current research at the HEI. In particular, business administration, entrepreneurship and business IT are underrepresented. Students and teachers wished that the access to the literature, in particular to international literature, was better (Evidence: AE, Interviews). It is surprising that, on average, only five books per month are received by the HEI through interlibrary loan (Evidence: Interviews). However, the HEI increased its yearly expenditures for the acquisition of books from about 34,000 HRK to about 100,000 HRK over the last five years. Beginning in 2015, donations amounting to about 50,000 HRK



per year complement the inflow of new titles (Evidence: AE). The list of newly acquired books indicates that the inflow of new titles is skewed in a similar way as the existing inventory, i.e., many titles in Croatian and from economics and related fields rather than from business administration and business IT (Evidence: AE). For the time being, the nearby city and university library is not a remedy to this problem as it is not specialized in business administration and business IT and accesses the same basic offer of electronic journals (Evidence: Interviews).

Students are very satisfied with the provision of course materials through the online tool Loomen (Evidence: Interviews). The other tools used for e-learning are ICES, Coursera, and AC online (Evidence: AE, Interviews). No action seems to be needed at this point. In fact, students said that the library becomes largely unnecessary for most courses due to the material provided online by teachers (Evidence: Interviews). Nevertheless, they would appreciate longer opening hours of the library (Evidence: AE). This may be traced back to the facts that students use the reading room for studying and that there are no further computer workplaces for this purpose at the HEI. Students also wish less paperwork when registering for a library card (Evidence: AE).

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI should steer library acquisitions towards international literature and allocate more funds to the access of electronic textbooks. This requires coordination with teachers and might bring about changes to course syllabi.

The HEI should define its most relevant journals and strive for electronic access to them. This implies to get involved in decisions on the university or even on the national level. The HEI might consider to try to contribute to these decisions through the dean or a vice dean. At least, they should consider to which extent the cooperation with the city and university library can be intensified.

Opening hours of the library should be extended. It seems restrictive that the library is closed on Friday afternoons and on the weekends. The HEI should examine whether it is possible to merge the student ID card and the library card.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

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

### Analysis

The HEI is mostly state-funded as 83 percent of its income comes from the state or the university, respectively. The rest of the income stems essentially from tuition fees for postgraduate studies. It is noteworthy that tuition fees per student are not at the discretion of the HEI as they are set on the level of the university and the state. Income from professional and scientific projects is negligible in comparison to the HEI's total income. The HEI's income is mainly spent on salaries (70 percent of expenses), but cost absorption of salaries by the state only amounts to 69 percent. Hence, tuition fees are vital to the HEI. (Evidence: ASSER Tables 4.11, 4.12)

The HEI has managed to accrue approximately a 20 percent surplus on a yearly budget until 2017. The surplus was even larger in 2016, but was reduced by a deficit of about 2.7 million HRK in 2017 due to higher expenses on salaries and IT equipment. The current surplus covers more than two further deficits of that size (Evidence: ASSER Tables 4.11, 4.12).

The most important financial threat to the HEI is a decline of the number of students, in particular given the difficult economic situation in the region of Slavonia. Since the HEI works at the capacity limit and tuition fees per student are regulated, the HEI has to pay close attention to tuition fees and operating costs. It seems that the HEI is just doing this (Evidence: Interviews).

There is a potential for improvement with respect to financial planning. Currently, the HEI's focus with respect to financial planning seems to be in compliance with the university's and the state's reporting standards. Accordingly, there is the required financial forecast for the next three years, but there are no systematic projections, elaborate models, or scenario analyses from the perspective of the HEI's management (Evidence: Interviews). The HEI provided rather clear tables of income and expenses for 2016 and 2017, but not for previous or coming periods (Evidence: ASSER Tables 4.11, 4.12; Interviews). Furthermore, the HEI did not present any calculations concerning the upcoming modernization of the IT infrastructure as announced in their strategy for scientific research (Evidence: SEROnline 1.1.22).

Having said all this, even if the HEI ran into a deficit position, it has to be considered that the HEI is state-funded, so that deficits would and should be financed by the university or the state, the more so as tuition fees are regulated by these bodies. This advantage comes at the price that the HEI cannot, at least currently, significantly extend its activities.

### **Recommendations for improvement**

The HEI's financial planning is driven by the regulatory environment; it should be extended and restructured to get meaningful measures for the drivers of the HEI's

financial performance. The HEI should keep close track of future income and expenses and perform cost-volume-profit analysis with respect to the number of different types of students in order to maintain and even increase the accrued surplus.

Given that the HEI is a state-funded institution of significant size and quality among the university's constituents and that Croatia is a state in transition, it should actively monitor regulatory changes and contribute to them on the level of the university through its dean.

The HEI should intensify its efforts for the acquisition of projects, in particular projects that are jointly funded by the EU and the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

## V. Scientific/artistic activity

### **5.1. Teachers and associates employed at the higher education institution are committed to the achievement of high quality and quantity of scientific research.**

#### Analysis

The HEI's teachers and associates published a total of 139 scientific papers that are ranked in the top category. 325 additional papers (0.94 papers per teacher annually) were published. Teachers and associates of the HEI also published 287 peer-reviewed papers from scientific and professional conferences in Croatia and abroad (0.83 papers per teacher annually). Approximately 20% of the papers were published in cooperation with other institutions. Furthermore, the number of papers indexed in the WoSCC, SSCI and SCI increased substantially over the observed time period, although from a very low basis (3 papers each in 2013 and in 2014) (Evidence: SER 5.1 ASSER Table 5.1, and SEROnline 5.1.1, 5.1.2, and 5.1.3).

Whereas the total number of publications by teachers of the HEI is acceptable, the total number of top publications is rather low with the number of SSCI-listed publications being very low (9 publications in 2017), also in comparison with other Croatian economics faculties (evidence provided by the HEI in printed form only).

To incentivize top-level publications, the HEI provides bonuses for SSCI/SCI-listed papers with the amount increasing in the journal's impact factor. Also, 24 journal articles for which a bonus was paid to the authors (Evidence: AE 1.8) are either at the

borderline or outside of economic or business research (e.g., *Ars Combinatoria*, *Technical Gazette*, *British Food Journal*, *Journal of Mathematical Chemistry*) or not well-known in the business researcher community, as indicated by their low impact factors. A large number of papers were published in the faculty journal “*Ekonomski vjesnik*”, which has limited visibility.

Moreover, there seem to be some small inconsistencies between the SER and the AEs (for example, the top-category papers are reported to be 139 and 144, respectively, and the average annual number of papers per teacher is 0.54 and 0.40), so that it is difficult to assess the actual publication performance.

SER 5.1 mentions the citation numbers of teachers and associates of the HEI in the WoSCC, in Scopus and in Google Scholar. This shows that the HEI actively measures the impact of its research papers. Teachers and associates are obliged to open a Google Scholar account and to update their entries.

The number of defended PhD theses is 83 (Evidence: SER 5.1), i.e. on average 16.6 per year, which is very high, given the limited number of supervisors. According to the interviews, the admission procedure is not very restrictive, and the quality of PhD dissertations is not necessarily at a scientifically high level. It is not observable from the data whether parts of the dissertations were published as papers in academic journals, which would be desirable to increase the visibility of the HEI and to improve the academic job perspectives of the PhDs. From AE 1.8 (CVs of the HEI's teachers) it becomes obvious that many teachers of the HEI needed (much) more than six years for the completion of their PhD (difference between PhD year and graduation year), which is far above international standards.

In the period 2013-2017, teachers and associates of the HEI participated in 169 (36 (co)organized by HEI) scientific and professional conferences in Croatia and abroad (SER 5.1), and presented 311 papers. Although 42% of these conferences were held abroad, it is questionable whether these events attracted international attention, because many of these conferences were held in neighboring countries (Evidence: AE). Major European or American conferences of the subdisciplines of business research were not among the visited conferences. Considering the research goals of the HEI, there is a potential issue. On the one hand, publications focusing on Croatian topics are encouraged by national promotion regulations; on the other hand, a greater international visibility requires more generalizable topics that would be of interest for the major European or American journals. This potential conflict explains why the majority of papers is published in journals with a regional focus.

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI's strategy to focus on high-quality journals should be intensified. Specialization to core areas of research could help to increase international visibility. The HEI should define the top 5-10 SSCI-listed journals as target journals in each of its research areas. This could improve both scientific output and awareness regarding these articles. The bonus system for publications in high-quality journals should be aligned with this definition of top-level journals rather than a formula only referring to the IF of a journal. The reliance on publications in *Ekonomski vjesnik* should be reduced.

All HEI members should report their affiliation in a standardized form in all publications in order to maximize citation count. Additional incentives to publish more internationally could be (as far as allowed by legislation) financial support, reduced teaching loads, support by research assistants, funds for acquiring databases, etc. PhD students should be encouraged to publish (parts of) their dissertation in English. Admission to PhD studies should be more restrictive.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

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

### Analysis

The HEI is very active in the transfer of knowledge into the society and shows substantial awareness for the societal needs and the labor market impact of its activities. It has established a variety of scientific and professional co-operations with private and public institutions such as the Croatian Employers Association, the Croatian Chamber of Economy and the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts of Osijek-Baranja County (Evidence: SER 5.2). Moreover, the HEI established the "Commission for Cooperation with the Economy" as a formal system of voluntary professional practice programmes to ensure student integration in the labour market already during their studies (Evidence: SER 5.2).

The HEI reports 218 cooperation agreements with the business community, 84 agreements with public institutions, 80 agreements related to cooperation and support of scientific projects/cooperation and 64 donation agreements since 2011 (Evidence: SER 5.2). Other platforms for a dialogue between the business community are the "Scientific Forum", the "Centre for Entrepreneurship" and the "Law and Economic Clinic" that was founded in cooperation with the Faculty of Law.

Members of the Faculty participate in 47 public or private professional bodies and committees and have 138 memberships in local associations. The SER lists 117 appearances of Faculty members in the public or in the media. However, the media coverage of the Faculty members is quite heterogenous (Evidence: SER 5.2, SEROnline 5.2.5). To stay in contact with the graduates, the HEI founded the Alumni EFOS Association in 2015. During the site visit, the interviews with external stakeholders and alumni showed that the HEI has a very active network in business and society, especially in the region of Slavonia, which proved to be helpful for HEI graduates.

Given this wide variety of different societal activities, it is not obvious whether and how these are monitored and whether all of them are to be continued. It should be noted that most of the websites of the above-mentioned programmes and activities are available only in Croatian.

The HEI also provides financial support to the community by donations to different associations promoting culture or professional activities. The total amount in the years 2013-2017 is approximately HRK 250,000 (Evidence: SER 5.2, SEROnline 5.2.6), which is substantial given the difficult economic situation of the region.

Members of the HEI published 35 professional papers (SEROnline 5.2.5), which shows potential for improvement. The HEI's impact on society and regulatory plans could be increased by additional publications for the wide audience of business practitioners.

During the period 2013-2017 the Faculty reported 21 commercial projects (typically business advisory studies) with commercial values between HRK 6.100 und HRK 580.000 (total: cca. HRK 1 million, Evidence: SER 5.2; SEROnline 5.2.1).

### Recommendations for improvement

The variety of different activities should be monitored continuously. It should be clarified which activities are "official" HEI activities and which services are simply provided by individuals who happen to be Faculty members.

The introduction of an Advisory Board with internal and external members from academia and the regional business community would be helpful to monitor and develop HEI's societal and labour market impact. The region of Slavonia could benefit if all of these valuable societal activities would be known to a wider audience. English websites could support the desirable information distribution.

The number of practitioner-oriented publications should be further increased.

### Quality grade

High level of quality

### **5.3. Scientific/artistic and professional achievements of the higher education institution are recognized in the regional, national and international context.**

#### **Analysis**

Scientific outcome as well as the transfer activities are valued by the regional and, partly, the national community (Evidence: SER: 5.3.). Faculty members have been awarded 11 national awards from institutions like the Croatian Parliament, the University of Rijeka, the Faculty of Economics in Osijek, the College of Slavonski Brod, and the Croatian Marketing Association.

The HEI initiated 21 scientific and 16 (partially contradicting evidence: SER 5.3, ASSER Tables 5.3.a. and 5.3.b) professional projects during the period 2013-2017. Only 4 out of the 21 scientific projects exceed a grant amount of HRK 100,000. 5 projects provide a total amount allocated to the HEI of less than HRK 10,000. All scientific projects are national. The HEI's funding amounts of commercial projects are on average higher than for scientific projects, but never exceed EUR 250,000 allocated to the Faculty.

The HEI members actively engage in organizing conferences in various fields of business research (Evidence: ASSER, Table 5.4.). This is an indicator for the research reputation of an organization, because unexperienced researchers will not be invited to a conference committee or asked to host a conference. The number of organizers of the 16 (Evidence: SER 5.3.) conferences varied between 3 and 14, the number of participants between 27 and 249. It is likely that a significant fraction of conferences is organized in Osijek or nearby. Although most of the organized conferences are called "international", it is unlikely that they attract participants from a large number of countries (this can be inferred from the international conferences visited by HEI teachers, see subsection 5.1).

ASSER Table 5.5 reports that HEI members hold 16 (Evidence: SER 5.3: 27) positions as editors or editorial board members. Of these 16 positions, there are 3 positions as a chief editor and 13 positions as a member of the editorial board. Similar to the scientific projects and conferences, this is an indicator of scientific reputation. ASSER Table 5.5 demonstrates that two of the chief editor positions are held at Croatian journals and one at an international journal. Approximately one half of the editorial board memberships is located at Croatian journals, the other half at little-known international journals. Overall, this indicates a regionally-restricted recognition of HEI's activities.

The regional focus of the HEI is also reflected by the small number of 14 foreign and 39 national guest lectures to which the HEI members were invited.

### Recommendations for improvement

For increasing the HEI's international reputation, focusing on regional outcomes might result in limited success only. Thus, further integrating into a broader and more international research community, striving for scientific EU or other prestigious funding, and aiming for editorial positions in Europe-wide or even globally-read journals promises a stronger increase in international visibility.

More funding for (especially long-term) research visits at foreign universities would help to strengthen the reputation of the HEI members.

### Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Two main documents with the HEI's strategic research objectives in 2013-2020 (Strategy of the University of Osijek, Scientific Research Strategy of the Faculty, both available in Croatian only) are developed (Evidence: SER, 5.4.). The HEI is aware of its current deficiencies in research output that were revealed by an earlier analysis (Scientific Research Strategy of the Faculty). The four core objectives are: 1) Improve scientific productivity and make scientific research recognizable in Croatia and abroad; 2) Ensure high-quality delivery of postgraduate PhD studies; 3) Improve cooperation with the economy and local community regarding the projects of common interest; and 4) Systematically improve scientific research infrastructure, as well as operating and financial resources.

This research development strategy is aligned with the vision of development of the HEI. Core objectives #1 and #2 are perfectly consistent. Core objective #3 is in line with HEI's mission. However, it is possible that this objective is partially inconsistent with objectives #1 and #2. This is especially true given the HEI's vision to become more integrated into the international research community. Core objective #4 is consistent with the HEI's strategy, but is subject to financial constraints. If core objective #2 is taken seriously, the number of enrolled PhD students must decrease, whereas the associated costs will increase, both of which reduces the HEI's financial resources. Consequently, there is a possible goal conflict between core objectives #2 and #4.

It is not observable whether the HEI's financial situation and hence its scientific activity is sustainable, because the two strategy documents do not include quantitative forecasts of budget figures for the following years. These problems are confirmed by SER 5.4 that



reports that “... Financial plans, which are drawn up based on the prescribed forms, does not offer a detailed insight into financing of scientific activities. ...”

In general, the use of available funds for the research purposes as listed in SER 5.4 seems reasonable. Examples are financial support for conference participation and organization, purchase of books, journals, databases and computers. However, there is no analysis of the research impact of (co-) financing the journals “Ekonomski vjesnik”, “Croatian Operational Research Review” and “Ekonomski pregled”, for which more than HRK 1 million were paid over the observation period (Evidence: SER 5.4, Table 5.4.1).

### Recommendations for improvement

The HEI should analyse the strategic goals and measures for possible inconsistencies. Particularly, serving for the development needs of regional importance can be in conflict with international visibility and excellence in research, taking the limited financial resources into account.

The strategy of the HEI should include a financial plan with quantitative estimates and projections of future income and expenditures.

To increase the qualification of PhDs and the quality of their publications, the HEI should implement more methodology-based classes and setting up a consortium for structural PhD education, ideally in cooperation with other (small) economics faculties. Additional funds should be allocated to improvements of the research infrastructure, such as databases and literature in order to make scientific activity more sustainable.

The HEI should critically check whether the expenses of the HEI journals serve the long-term objective of increasing the quality of publications. In case of a negative evaluation, financial support should be discontinued.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

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

### Analysis

Classroom equipment such as computers, projectors and software is adequate and corresponds to the equipment that is used by teachers for their research (Evidence: SER, 5.5.). This result is confirmed by evidence collected during the on-site visit. However, the library resources are partly insufficient. This implies that researchers as well as students have to take complicated and time-consuming detours to get individual access to the

necessary relevant journal articles. The HEI's management should be aware that these actions possibly involve copyright infringement.

Students were involved in 16 of the 31 projects of the period 2013-2017 (Evidence: SER, 5.5.). PhD students were the largest group with 15 of the participating 32 students. However, the 15 final theses resulting from the projects were supervised by only 5 different professors, indicating that integration of students in project work is not evenly distributed across faculty members. 5 dissertations resulted from projects within the last five years.

Joint publications of teachers and students are common at the HEI, which can be observed from 113 scientific and professional papers that were published with students as co-authors (Evidence: SER 5.5). These publications involve students at all levels. PhD students represent the majority of co-authors with 64 of 113 publications (Evidence: SEROnline 5.5.3). The number of papers increased substantially over the observation period (Evidence: SER 5.5, Figure 5.5.1).

Although the HEI provided a list of all 83 PhD students' dissertations between 2013 and 2017 (Evidence: SEROnline 5.1.4), information on the published papers that were derived from dissertations is not provided.

Interviews with teaching assistants during the site visit showed that PhD students typically teach between 2 and 8 hours per week and hereby significantly contribute to the HEI's teaching programmes. Typical formats of PhD students' teaching are seminars and exercises. Most of the interviewed assistants employed by the HEI expect to finish their PhD theses within their contract term of typically six years.

### Recommendations for improvement

Systematic and legal access to the most important journals in the HEI's fields of research should be secured. Integration of students of all levels into projects should be distributed more evenly across the HEI's project leaders.

PhD students' freedom to work on their own research agenda potentially needs to be secured. In line with the objective of increasing publication quality, PhD students should be encouraged to approach high-quality journals, even when the total number of papers could decrease.

The HEI should ensure that the teaching load of assistants is consistent with timely completion of their dissertations. The HEI should keep records that provide evidence on links between PhD dissertations and paper publications.

### Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

## **APPENDICES**

1. Quality assessment summary - tables
2. Site visit protocol

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

## Quality grade by standard

I. Internal quality assurance and the social role of the higher education institution	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
1.1. The higher education institution has established a functional internal quality assurance system.			X	
1.2. The higher education institution implements recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.			X	
1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, prevents all types of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination.				X
1.4. The higher education institution ensures the availability of information on important aspects of its activities (teaching, scientific/artistic and social).				X
1.5. The higher education institution understands and encourages the development of its social role.				X
1.6. Lifelong learning programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the strategic goals and the mission of the higher education institution, and social needs.				X

## Quality grade by standard

II. Study programmes	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
2.1. The general objectives of all study programmes are in line with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution and the needs of the society.			X	
2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of study programmes delivered by the higher education institution are aligned with the level and profile of qualifications gained.		X		
2.3. The higher education institution provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes it delivers.			X	
2.4. The HEI uses feedback from students, employers, professional organisations and alumni in the procedures of planning, proposing and approving new programmes, and revising or closing the existing programmes.		X		
2.5. The higher education institution ensures that ECTS allocation is adequate.			X	
2.6. Student practice is an integral part of study programmes (where applicable).				X

## Quality grade by standard

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



Quality grade by standard				
IV. Teaching and institutional capacities	Unsatisfactory level of quality	Minimum level of quality	Satisfactory level of quality	High level of quality
4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.		X		
4.2. Teacher recruitment, advancement and re-appointment is based on objective and transparent procedures which include the evaluation of excellence.			X	
4.3. The higher education institution provides support to teachers in their professional development.			X	
4.4. The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of study programmes, ensuring the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the implementation of scientific/artistic activity.				X
4.5. The library and library equipment, including the access to additional resources, ensure the availability of literature and other resources necessary for a high-quality study, research and teaching.		X		
4.6. The higher education institution rationally manages its financial resources.			X	

## Quality grade by standard

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

## PROTOKOL POSJETE / VISIT PROTOCOL

	Utorak, 27. studenog 2018.	Tuesday, 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
<b>09:00 - 10:00</b>	Sastanak s dekanom i prodekanima	Meeting with the dean and vice deans
<b>10:00 - 10:15</b>	<i>Interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members</i>
<b>10:15 - 11:00</b>	Sastanak s radnom grupom koja je priredila Samoanalizu	Meeting with the working group that compiled the Self-Evaluation
<b>11:00 - 12:00</b>	Sastanak sa studentima (otvoren sastanak za sve studente preddiplomskog i diplomskog studija)	Meeting with the students (open meeting for the students of the undergraduate and graduate Study Programs)
<b>12:00 - 13:30</b>	<i>Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (analiza dokumenata)</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)</i>
<b>13:30 - 15:00</b>	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch</i>
<b>15:00 - 15:45</b>	Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima – predstavnici strukovnih i profesionalnih udruženja, poslovna zajednica, poslodavci, stručnjaci iz prakse, organizacije civilnog društva i vanjski predavači	Meeting with external stakeholders - representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, professional experts, non-governmental organisations, external lecturers
<b>15:45 - 16:30</b>	Sastanak s alumnima	Meeting with the alumni
<b>16:30 - 17:00</b>	Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o mogućim otvorenim pitanjima (prema potrebi)	Organisation of additional meeting on potential open questions if it is needed

	Srijeda, 28. studenog 2018.	Wednesday, 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
<b>09:00 - 10:30</b>	<i>Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (analiza dokumenata)</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)</i>
<b>10:30 - 11:30</b>	Sastanak s prodekanom za nastavu	Meeting with the vice dean for education
<b>11:30 - 13:00</b>	Obilazak Fakulteta (knjižnica, uredi studentskih službi, ured međunarodne suradnje, informatička služba i učionice) i prisustvovanje nastavi	Tour of the Faculty (library, student services, international office, IT services, classrooms) and participation in teaching classes
<b>13:00 - 14:30</b>	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch</i>
<b>14:30 - 15:30</b>	Sastanak s nastavnicima u stalnom radnom odnosu (osim onih na rukovodećim mjestima)	Meeting with full-time teaching staff (members of the management are excluded)
<b>15:30 - 16:15</b>	Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o otvorenim pitanjima (prema potrebi)	Organisation of additional meeting on open questions, if needed

	Četvrtak, 29. studenog 2018.	Thursday, 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
<b>09:00 - 10:00</b>	Sastanak s prodekanom za znanost, prodekanicom za suradnju s okruženjem, međunarodnu suradnju i projekte i predstavnikom Ureda za cjeloživotno obrazovanje, projekte i programe EU	Meeting with the vice dean for research activities, vice dean for Cooperation with the Environment, International Cooperation and Projects and representative of the Office for Lifelong Learning, EU Projects and Programmes
<b>10:00 - 11:00</b>	<i>Sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (analiza dokumenata)</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members (Document analysis)</i>
<b>11:00 - 11:45</b>	Sastanak s voditeljima znanstvenih projekata	Meeting with the heads of research projects
<b>11:45 - 12:30</b>	Sastanak s asistentima	Meeting with teaching assistants
<b>12:30 - 14:00</b>	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch</i>
<b>14:00 - 14:30</b>	<i>Interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Internal meeting of the panel members</i>
<b>14:30 - 15:00</b>	Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o otvorenim pitanjima (prema potrebi)	Organisation of additional meeting on open questions, if needed
<b>15:00 - 15:20</b>	Završni sastanak s dekanom i prodekanima	Exit meeting with Meeting with the dean and vice deans

## **SUMMARY**

The HEI is an essential institution for economic and business education in the eastern part of the country. It is evident that the HEI showed substantial progress since the previous re-accreditation cycle, especially regarding the teachers/students ratio. One of the most important strengths of the HEI is a significant number of young teaching staff. It is important to note that the HEI developed and maintained an excellent relationship with its students, institutions, alumni and the local business community. Also, it is evident that the HEI's management is actively looking for ways to support research and high-quality publications, while fostering employees' motivation to be engaged in all HEI activities. Furthermore, the HEI's role in entrepreneurship education and research should be highlighted, along with collaboration with other institutions in Osijek.

Having said that, there are some challenges for the HEI in upcoming years. First of all, high-quality research output, especially in internationally renowned journals, should be increased. At the same time, new teaching programmes should be developed, or existing ones should be seriously revised. In that process, feedback and suggestions from the most important employers in the region and Croatia need to be incorporated, along with new teaching methods and appropriate learning outcomes. Furthermore, empowerment of young teachers should be a priority, enabling them to be involved more in research and PhD activities such as mentorship. Benefits of that approach may be an increasing quantity and quality of publications, involving highly motivated young teachers in joint research with PhD students, with the aim to produce high-quality papers. Potential lack of mentorship experience may be bridged with appropriate education.

Financial sustainability relies on state funding, which can become an issue in future years, due to a smaller number of students. Some additional efforts should be put in the direction of development of LLL programmes and national and EU projects as a potential source of financing in the future. The progress of internationalization of the HEI should be accelerated, along with extensive usage of ERASMUS+ teaching mobility, both ways. International experience should be considered as an additional requirement for appointments and promotions.