REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE
RE-ACCREDITATION OF
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA

Date of preliminary site visit: 20 October 2020
Date of on-line re-accreditation: 21-23 October 2020

December 2020

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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 Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka.

Members of the Expert Panel:
- Dr. Oliver George Downing, Department of Philosophy, University of Liverpool, United Kingdom, Panel chair
- Dr. Jakub Beneš, lecturer, UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES), University College London, United Kingdom
- Prof. dr. Zrinka Jelaska, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, Croatia
- Prof. dr. Boris Mlačić, Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Croatia
- Prof. dr. Jasmina Vrkić Dimić, Department of Pedagogy University of Zadar, Croatia
- Prof. dr. Anita Pavić Pintarić, Department of German Studies, University of Zadar, Croatia.

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

- Management,
- Quality Assurance Committee,
- Students,
- Heads of departments and heads of divisions,
- Full-time teaching staff,
- Head of the Centre for Teacher Education
- Head of the Office for Projects and International Cooperation

- Heads of Faculty Centres for Lifelong Learning
- ECTS coordinators
- Alumni
- Heads of research projects
- Assistants and postdoctoral researchers,

Croatian Expert Panel members prof. dr. Zrinka Jelaska and prof. dr. Boris Mlačić went to the preliminary site-visit on 19 October 2020 during which they had a tour of the classrooms, library, IT classrooms, student administration office, and attended sample lectures. During the preliminary site visit, the Expert Panel examined the available additional documents.

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the re-accreditation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka (FFRI) on the basis of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka self-evaluation report, other relevant documents, preliminary site visit and on-line meetings.

The Report contains the following elements:

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

In the analysis of the documentation, preliminary site visit to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka, online meetings and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:
- Maja Šegvić, coordinator, ASHE
- Vladivoj Lisica, interpreter at the preliminary site visit and during the online meetings
- Lida Lamza, translator of the Report, ASHE.

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

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

The accreditation recommendation also includes a quality grade of a higher education institution, and recommendations for quality improvement.
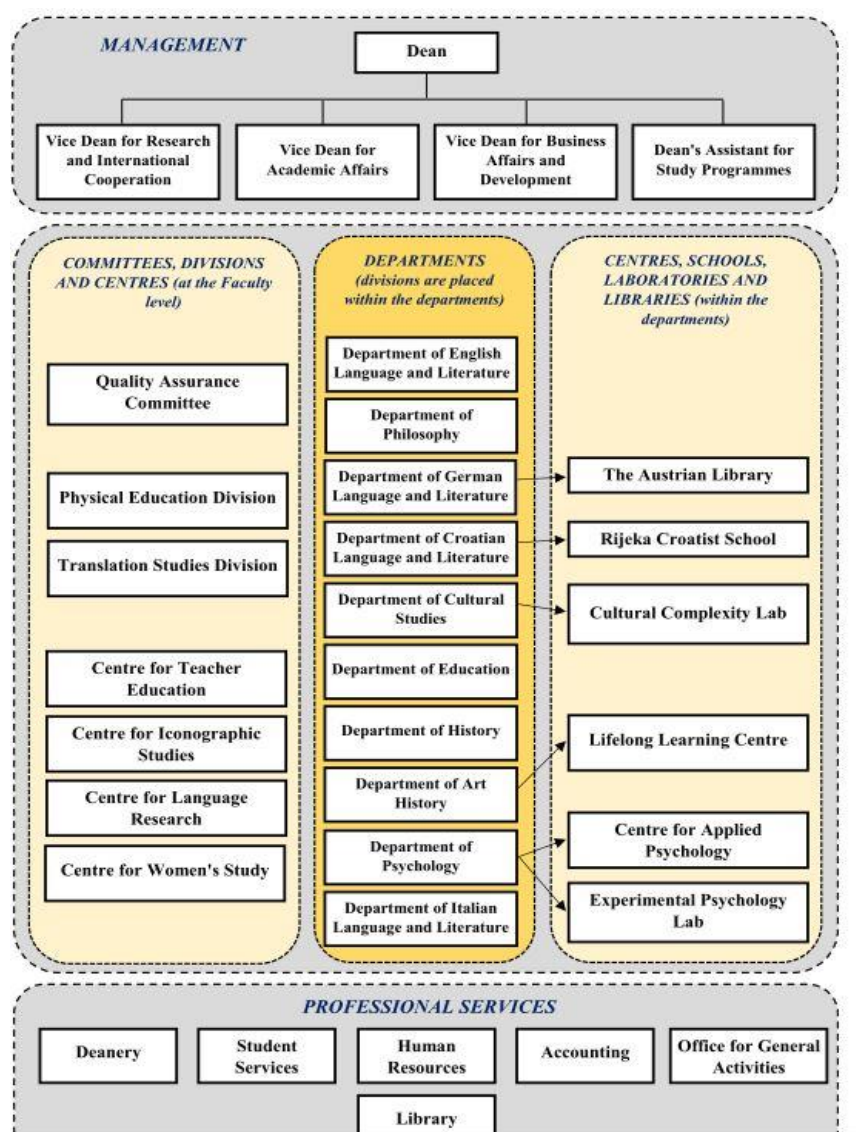
SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka

ADDRESS: Sveučilišna avenija 4, 51000 Rijeka

DEAN: Ph.D. Ines Srdoč-Konestra, associate professor

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:

STUDY PROGRAMMES:

Undergraduate university study programmes:
- Art History (double major)
- Croatian Language and Literature (double major)
- Croatian Language and Literature (single major)
- Cultural Studies
- English Language and Literature (double major)
- German Language and Literature (double major)
- History (double major)
- Italian Language and Literature (double major)
- Pedagogy (double major)
- Pedagogy (single major)
- Philosophy (double major)
- Psychology

Graduate university study programmes:
- Art History
- Croatian Language and Literature (double major); specialisations in: Teaching, Research
- Croatian Language and Literature (single major); specialisations in: Teaching, Research, Librarianship
- Culture Studies
- English Language and Literature (double major); specialisation in: Teaching
- German Language and Literature (double major); specialisations in: Teaching, Intercultural studies
- History (double major); specialisation in: Teaching
- History and heritage interpretation (double major)
- Italian Language and Literature (double major)
- Pedagogy (double major)
- Pedagogy (single major)
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Translation Studies

postgraduate specialist university study programmes:
- Translation
- Postgraduate specialist study for the principals of educational institutions

postgraduate(doctoral) university study programmes:
- Philosophy and Contemporaneity
- Croatian Language History and Dialectology
- Pedagogy
- Psychology

At the Faculty's request, the Mozvag analytics did not include two study programmes: graduate study German Language and Literature – specialisation in Research that was accredited last year and has not yet been implemented, and the postgraduate specialist study of Psychological Counselling, which held its last courses a few years ago and currently has only a few students who took all the classes and might have a couple of exams left before graduation.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS:
Full-time students: **1,325.50** (students of double-major studies are multiplied by 0.5)
Part-time students: **201**

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: 125.60
(According to the data from Mozvag database)

ENROLLMENT IN REGISTER OF SCIENTIFIC ORGANISATIONS:
Social sciences, Humanities

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka (FFRI) is the only constituent of University of Rijeka in the field of humanities (Croatian language and literature, English language and literature, German language and literature, Italian language and literature, Philosophy, History, Art history) with a share of two social sciences studies (Pedagogy and Psychology) and Cultural studies, thus continuing an over 60 years old tradition. FFRI has undergone several organizational changes through years and exists in its present form since 1998. All study programmes were reformed in the academic year 2004/2005 in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. In 2011 the Faculty moved from three different locations in the city of Rijeka to the University Campus, which created preconditions for better and more efficient organization of teaching and research.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. FFRI is clearly a well-structured, organised and managed institution (with particularly strong professional services, financial administration and human resources) which was very well-prepared for, and committed to, the evaluation process and engaged in an open, reflective and authentic manner.

2. FFRI has a very responsive faculty governance team which is clearly committed to continually and proactively improving the quality of its policies, procedures, and existing study programmes, etc. as well as developing new courses which respond to changing contexts and needs: all these aspects have clearly been influenced and improved by serious and systematic responses to previous ASHE evaluations, as well as many internal review processes.

3. FFRI has a strong and positive institutional identity which is shared by the staff, students, and alumni.

4. FFRI has an exemplary awareness of its relationship with the local community of Rijeka and is committed to making a positive impact upon it through a wide range of projects, as well as reoccurring events, such as the annual River of Psychology conference; and the positive impact of such projects is clearly evidenced by the fact that many of these projects are directly funded by the town of Rijeka.

5. FFRI has an active student community which is supported by FFRI's provision for frequent events and wide range of available activities (such as volunteering), and is clearly producing capable, confident, and committed students who are engaged in the life of the institution.

6. FFRI offers a wide range of programmes which are clearly informed by FFRI and the University of Rijeka's strategic priorities, and the characteristics of the locality: the excellent provision for language programmes and promotion of multilingualism is clearly informed by Rijeka's geographical location, as well as the needs of the local economy, etc.

7. FFRI has a commendable range of double-major programmes which enable great intra-faculty mobility and provide double-major students with a wider range of skills – when compared with single-major programmes – which strengthen graduates' employment prospects.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. Early-career researchers, teaching assistants and doctoral students at FFRI are burdened with a particularly high workload when compared with more senior FFRI colleagues – especially with regard to administrative and student-facing tasks which are concentrated in the pre-enrolment period in September, such as coordinating ECTS, facilitating Erasmus, etc.

2. The procedures for managing student complaints at a departmental level are not as effective as they could be, and many students are unaware of the complaint procedure on both a departmental and faculty level. Whilst FFRI has an active and engaged student community, student representation is also defined along departmental lines. Improving student representation on a faculty level and ensuring robust integration between student representation on a faculty and departmental level would both improve the cohesion of the student community on a faculty level, and provide a better mechanism for improving the complaints procedures and improving student awareness of them.

3. FFRI's Quality Assurance Committee does not have nominated representatives from each department who are responsible for reporting to the Committee and implementing changes recommended by the Committee on a departmental level, and, as such, FFRI's quality assurance mechanisms are not working as effectively or efficiently as they could be.

4. The quotas for each study programme are not necessarily aligned with the demand for those programmes: some departments offer too many places when compared with that labour market demand, whereas others offer fewer places when compared with the labour market demand.

5. There is a significant mismatch between students' and staff's expectations of teaching evaluations, with students seeing the evaluation process as an opportunity to air grievances, whereas staff rely on them for affirmation of good practice and for promotion. The system's outcomes are, therefore, susceptible to inconsistencies and inequalities.

6. FFRI's Croatian and English websites are not consistent in their quality and ease of access of information: the English website is primarily aimed towards international students and does not contain the same quality or extent of information as the Croatian website. This means that FFRI is not as visible as it could be to prospective international students, and, as the institution moves towards offering more programmes delivered in English, potentially limits the scope of access to necessary information for international students who are not fluent in Croatian. Both these consequences are significant limiting factors for FFRI's strategic priority of increasing its provision for international students.

7. FFRI does not have its own IT support personnel, and, as such, places significant responsibilities on the departments for disseminating information which may result in inconsistencies in the quality of the departmental websites across the faculty.

LIST OF INSTITUTIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. FFRI's proactive faculty governance team is highly effective at dynamically responding to changing contexts and needs, identifying areas for improvement, and developing well-thought-out action plans for implementing such improvements. This has been a significant advantage during the COVID-19 pandemic as FFRI was able to respond quickly, decisively, and effectively to optimise the delivery of its teaching during the pandemic and prioritise developing its students' digital skills.
2. Between 2015/2016 and 2019/2020 FFRI performed 16 accredited lifelong learning programmes, referring to improving teacher competences (learning and teaching, evaluation, quality assurance, modern teaching methods, critical thinking, training in professional English, training in Croatian for proof-readers and translators), journalism, youth in modern society, Croatian as a Second and Foreign Language, professional development for Italian language, literature and culture, Polish literature and culture.
3. Within the five-year period the FFRI organized on average 18 conferences per year, which is very impressive as it requires a lot of work in addition to other duties.
4. Some departments cooperate extensively with each other. The courses that were established to fulfil local and regional needs are a good achievement.
5. The goal of promoting the importance of humanities, psychology and pedagogy is thus recognizable nationwide.

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

FFRI has a strong internal quality assurance mechanism and institutional culture of continuous improvement, and a Code of Ethics which lays out institutional policies and mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity and freedom, and preventing any form of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination, including procedures for detecting and addressing instances of plagiarism. All internal quality assurance policies and procedures are appropriately aligned to the relevant University of Rijeka and FFRI strategy and development documents (see analysis of individual standard for further details), and are overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee. As is highlighted in the analyses of standards 1.1 and 1.2, FFRI is an exemplar of good practice in faculty governance, particularly in responding to the recommendations of ASHE evaluations: following the previous evaluation in 2014, FFRI developed its *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Action Plan* to implement the recommendations, conducted an internal review and reported on the implementation to ASHE in 2015, and conducted a subsequent internal review in 2019 ahead of the re-accreditation process. Information about the organization of the Faculty, study programmes, scientific activities, activities for popularization of science, international cooperation, and various events at FFRI is given through its website and Facebook page, as well as in the printed edition of *Vox Academiae* and on Open Door Days to students, staff, stakeholders, and general public. Teaching assessment results, and results of testing student satisfaction are given on FFRI's website. The Faculty has the procedure of collecting information on planned and completed events and activities.

FFRI understands its social role, and has a well-developed cooperation with the local community through collaborative projects, accredited lifelong learning programmes, and communis elective courses. Teachers and students are involved in volunteer activities, such as psychological counselling or teaching foreign languages, and projects and courses are developed through cooperation with schools and cultural institutions.

The procedure of revision and development of lifelong learning programmes is defined, and the satisfaction of LLPs' participants is continuously monitored through surveys and reports.

Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure that each department have a nominated representative on the Quality Assurance Committee whose responsibility is to feed into the Quality Assurance Committee from the department and ensure any changes in procedure are fully implemented on a departmental level.

- Adopt a formal definition of 'students from vulnerable or underrepresented groups' and develop a mechanism for monitoring, analysing and improving the specific help it provides for such students.

- Take steps to improve students' awareness of the complaints process, especially through ensuring that such information is incorporated into the induction process.

- Improve the structure and overview of information for students.

- Ensure that more information is available in English language.

- Encourage departments to have their own websites, with persons in charge of publishing information.

- Ensure that syllabi of all LLPs are published on the website.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

II. Study programmes

Analysis
FFRI has university study programmes in the categories of undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate study programmes. The general objectives of FFRI study programmes are aligned with FFRI's mission and strategic goals. FFRI has devoted substantial effort to improving the quality of the existing programmes, as well as developing new ones. FFRI regularly monitors demand for study programmes and also accepts recommendations from various professional organizations when developing a study programme. Learning outcomes for FFRI's study programmes are clearly defined and the institution made a substantial effort regarding aligning and refining learning outcomes following the previous reaccreditation. There is ample evidence that FFRI provides evidence of the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes and for each course there is constant monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes. FFRI regularly collects information from many relevant stakeholders, such as students, employers and professional organizations during the process of revising study programmes and the

institution has also devoted a lot of effort in adequate allocation of the ECTS. Moreover, a revision of ECTS credits allocation was made on the basis of student work monitoring in all study programmes. However, FFRI should be more active in collecting data from alumni and there are still individual cases when students express their dissatisfaction with ECTS allocation. Finally, practical ways of learning are an integral part of all study programmes with ECTS credits given for practical training courses. FFRI has made substantial efforts to raise the quantity and quality of students' practical work. A positive example is that FFRI applied and received funds from the European Social Fund for the three-year project to improve practical training of students in History, Art History, Italian and German language. However, study programmes that still stand out in terms of students' practical work are Psychology and Pedagogy.

Recommendations for improvement

- FFRI should use a variety of sources (not just the local employment office) to set the enrolment quotas.

- Learning outcomes should be more aligned with competencies that are in demand from employers, and a larger pool of potential employers and alumni should be consulted as important stakeholders in this context.

- In some courses, seminars' obligations should be decreased and better aligned with learning outcomes. More harmonization should be done regarding learning outcomes across various departments.

- FFRI should be more active in collecting data from alumni regarding their view on study programmes and their employability.

- Communis elective courses should be better defined, especially in their relation to ECTS allocation and to the other elective courses in which students can enrol.

- All programmes should introduce mandatory courses in practical training, and the amount of practical training should be increased.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

III. Teaching process and student support

Analysis
FFRI has transparent and clearly-defined criteria and procedures for enrolment/continuation in various study programs which are consistently applied at all

faculty levels. Nevertheless, the question arises as to the alignment of enrolment quotas in individual study programs with the current needs of the labour market.

At the institutional level, data on students' passing of exams and their progress through studies are systematically collected. In collaboration with UNIRI, FFRI conducted a survey (2016-2019) on drop-outs and possible ways to improve study programs. Study programs are regularly revised by each acad. yr. with the aim of their improvement. From acad. yr. 2017/18. FFRI is introducing systematic support to students in their studies through the teacher-mentor and student-mentor system, and the growing level of student satisfaction with studies and the reduced number of dropouts may indicate an improvement in the quality of study.

Quality standard 3.3. which refers to ensuring the implementation of student-centred learning is difficult to measure objectively, because it primarily depends on individual ways of teaching and evaluation. Insight into the existing documentation, visiting classes and talking to representatives of students and teachers, members of the Expert Panel got the impression of good teaching practice that is realized through various forms of teaching by combining different social forms of teaching in compulsory and elective courses. However, the Panel thinks that the teaching practice is different in quality in different departments and that it is necessary to eliminate the observed shortcomings of teaching technology in order to ensure the smooth running of the teaching process.

FFRI provides support to its students during their studies systematically and in various ways (e.g., through the work of the Center for Psychological Counselling, the Office for Students with Disabilities, the Office of Careers). In addition, a mentoring system for freshmen has been established. Nevertheless, shortcomings in this quality standard were noticed, which relate to insufficient care for students from different sub-populations, mentoring care exclusively for freshmen and insufficient administrative support.

Although UNIRI and FFRI make significant efforts to meet the specific individual needs of students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups, most initiatives are aimed exclusively at students with disabilities. It is necessary to develop systematic help and support at the faculty level to other student sub-populations, starting with a clearer definition of the phrase "students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups" in order to meet their specific needs.

At FFRI, there is a clear procedure for outgoing mobility for students who are allowed to implement parts of the study program at a foreign university. However, it is necessary to develop systematic support in providing financial assistance, as well as to establish the practice of collecting data on student satisfaction with mobility.

FFRI provides adequate study conditions and systematic assistance and support for foreign students in incoming mobility. Foreign students have the opportunity to study in English. But the practice of conducting parts or the entire study programs in

English in different departments is not uniform. The possibility of more successful attraction of foreign students through the improvement of the faculty's website in English was also noticed.

A number of ordinances at the faculty level clearly elaborate the procedures for evaluating students' knowledge and abilities and completing study programs (especially for undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs). Exam deadlines are announced on time and transparent, written exams are given to students, and exam results are announced on the department's bulletin boards (virtual and physical) and on the Merlin virtual platform, in compliance with the rules on personal data protection. Students with disabilities have the right to adapt their assessment methods to their specific needs, but similar support is lacking when it comes to students from other vulnerable and underrepresented groups. FFRI provides its teachers with the opportunity to attend various trainings aimed at improving their teaching competencies, but the problem of insufficient involvement of teachers in these forms of training is highlighted.

FFRI issues diplomas and diploma supplements free of charge after the completion of undergraduate and graduate studies in accordance with the applicable regulations, which prove the achievement of a certain academic level and title. The diploma supplement contains all the necessary information and is issued in Croatian and English.

According to the data of the Croatian Employment Service and the results of the research that in 2019/20 acad. yr. was conducted by UNIRI, in which alumni participated, FFRI analyses the employability data of its graduates. The lack of a clear educational policy at the national level aimed at determining the (future) educational needs of the country at the higher education level is emphasized. Nevertheless, some programs are designed and developed in accordance with the needs of the EU labour market. Although the alumni club was founded only in June 2019 and its development and inclusion of a larger number of alumni is still expected, through a conversation with alumni representatives we got a picture that some of them have intensive and successful cooperation with FFRI after their graduation (through various projects, participation in the work of expert groups, lifelong learning programs, methodical exercises in schools, etc.). In the future, it is expected to intensify relations with alumni at the faculty level, which could contribute to the further development of study programs, the determination of appropriate enrolment quotas and the subsequent easier employability of students graduating from FFRI.

Recommendations for improvement
- Harmonization of enrolment practices in different departments.

- Determining enrolment quotas according to labour market needs.

- Improvement in teaching practice through standardizing teaching practices across diverse departments, adequate offer of elective courses attractive to students, more flexible schedule of classes.

- The problem of insufficient resolution of projected images through ceiling projectors – this shortcoming must be eliminated as soon as possible.

- The Expert Panel members emphasizes the need for clearer identification and definition of individual student subpopulations ("students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups") in order to provide them with systematic support tailored to their specific needs.

- Teacher-mentor system must be extended to other years of study, not just for the 1. year of study.

- In order to reduce the administrative duties of teaching staff it is necessary for FFRI to find ways to employ more highly qualified and competent administrative staff.

- The Expert Panel members recommend to start a systematic collection of data on student satisfaction with mobility and to develop a systematic approach to providing additional financial assistance to outgoing students.

- Better information of incoming students about the possibilities of studying at FFRI through the FFRI websites in English.

- Unification of the practice of conducting courses in English in different departments.

- Inclusion of more teachers in different forms of training for improvement of teaching competencies, organization of training specifically focused on teaching evaluation methods and evaluation tailored to the needs of students from different subpopulations (students with disabilities, vulnerable and underrepresented groups).

- Strengthen activities of the Alumni Club.

- Conduct the analysis of the employability rates in order to improve employability of graduate students.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

Analysis

The teaching and institutional capacities of the FFRI are sufficient. There are enough teachers to effectively deliver teaching and teachers are very well qualified. Advancement and hiring, when possible, follow clearly stated guidelines. Teachers' workload is effectively monitored, though more transparency and equity are needed, particularly between full-time, part-time, and temporary staff. Teachers have ample opportunities for professional development and mobility and are encouraged to take advantage of them. International mobility from FFRI is fairly good; mobility to the FFRI could be better. Overall, the FFRI premises provide an excellent learning environment and the library is well equipped, though it would benefit from more copies of compulsory learning resources and expanded e-resources. The FFRI manages its finances rationally and transparently.

Recommendations for improvement

- The Panel recommends that the FFRI takes steps to reduce excessive workload for non-permanent and part-time staff as well as for teachers who receive project funding.

- Hiring and advancement should be standardized across departments and the role of teaching evaluations somewhat reassessed.

- Mobility is satisfactory, but could be further improved, particularly to the FFRI from elsewhere.

- In terms of technical infrastructure, the Panel recommends that the FFRI work towards having its own designated IT support.

- Library acquisitions should be coordinated at the faculty level and the number of e-resources and/or physical copies of compulsory learning materials increased.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

V. Scientific/artistic activity

Analysis

Among the listed goals, several seem to be fulfilled: increasing the number and quality of published scientific papers (cc 120 per department, most of them in the highest category); increasing research funding through larger budgets generated by domestic

and foreign research projects; increasing the number of projects with a wide range of important and innovative topics, and making FFRI recognizable as an outstanding Faculty nationwide; the number of mentors, doctoral students, and defended dissertations; increasing the visibility of their journals. However, leaders of the CSF projects, which should be considered outstanding, did not receive ample teaching relief, and continued to teach full loads, despite assurances to the contrary.

FFRI monitors high-quality scientific publications, much effort has been made to meet standards of the highest quality of their own journals, which are notable in the fields of art history, and philology nationwide. Since 2015, researchers were praised, acknowledged, or awarded, for scientific research, special achievements in scientific work, for popularization of science, as well as scientific work as young researchers.

The teachers and associates participated at national and international conferences: on average app. 26 at each department per year. The number of conference participations and invited lecturers is not exceptionally high considering that eight departments and two divisions organized on average 18 per year (and that some invited speakers were invited at those conferences). The Department of Philosophy was the most active in organizing international conferences. The FFRI prepares the financial plan, but there is no comprehensive system of support for resource planning for scientific research. Secured annual funds are not enough to support scientists in all needs, e.g. literature, equipment, databases, programs.

The students, especially postgraduates, are not (systematically) involved in research projects. The English webpage is under construction at the moment and not much information is available. The FFRI invests a lot of energy and time in its teachers and associates' dissemination of research results and expertise, monitors and takes into consideration the needs of society, particularly the local and regional context, as well as in local and media coverage.

Recommendations for improvement

- *Publishing and visibility* - All departments within FH should try to publish more high-quality publications to match departments in FSS. Measures should be taken to either recognize the successful researchers from those other departments or to support or motivate researchers to strive for excellence. Efforts should be made to promote FFRI teachers and scholars internationally.

- *Record keeping* - Scientific conferences should be recorded separately from the professional conferences as the latter are not evidence of achievement in science.

- *PhD thesis* - It should be obligatory that English-language summaries include all the same information as the extended Croatian summaries of PhD theses written in foreign languages; this will ensure international visibility.

- *Regulations and control* - Protocol of the rights and duties of future project leaders and project participants and control system between the management of the FFRI and departments should be made. Regulation of procedures and assessment for different kinds of extra activities should be made.

- *Support* - The new FFRI strategy should be implemented and monitored. FFRI should offer more systematic support (esp. in calculation of budgets) for applicants for major external research funding.

- *Students* - Students' involvement is all levels should be systematic in all or most of the departments. Doctoral students should be obliged to participate in at least one scientific project.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE FOR EACH STANDARD

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

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

Analysis

FFRI has an established internal quality assurance system, which is overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee and evaluates *most* aspects of FFRI's operations, including the study programmes, the teaching process, student support, and learning resources, etc. FFRI's quality assurance policies and procedures are laid out in *The Quality Policy of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences* and *The Quality Assurance Manual*. These documents consolidate regional (European), national and University of Rijeka standards and guidelines alongside FFRI's specific requirements for quality assurance, into a comprehensive and easily accessible document which is available on the FFRI website. Both *The Quality Policy of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences* and *The Quality Assurance Manual* were formulated in direct alignment with the University of Rijeka and FFRI's strategic objectives as laid out in *The University of Rijeka 2014-2020 Development Strategy* and The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka 2019-2023 Development Strategy. The Quality Assurance Committee provides information about teaching assessment results, student satisfaction, and the teaching evaluation results-comparison of data over a five-year period, etc. on its website.

One of FFRI's main strengths is that is has a very responsive faculty governance team which is clearly committed to continually and proactively improving the quality of its policies, procedures, and existing study programmes, etc. as well as developing new courses which respond to changing contexts and needs: all these aspects have clearly been influenced and improved by serious and systematic responses to previous ASHE evaluations, as well as many internal review processes which bear the mark of proactive strategic management, and implementation, of the quality assurance policy and system. As is detailed further in the analysis of standard 1.2, following the previous evaluation, FFRI undertook a thorough review in line with the recommendations and responded in a strategic and co-ordinated manner in the form of an appropriate action plan, followed by a series of internal reviews. In particular, the Panel noted that FFRI devoted substantial effort to improving the quality of its existing programmes as well as to develop new ones. At all stages of proposing/improving study programmes, FFRI considers the social

and economic need for that particular programme, current labour market needs, the contribution of a programme to individuals, local community, civil society etc., as well as the purposefulness of a programme.

At the same time, the Panel did note areas of the internal quality assurance system that require improvement. For instance, FFRI's Quality Assurance Committee does not have nominated representatives from each department who are responsible for reporting to the Committee and implementing changes recommended by the Committee on a departmental level, and, as such, FFRI's quality assurance mechanisms are not working as effectively or efficiently as they could be.

Unrelatedly, as detailed in the analysis of standard 3.5, neither FFRI nor the University of Rijeka have an accepted definition of students from vulnerable and/or underrepresented groups. One of the key strategic goals of UNIRI is to improve the access and success of underrepresented groups in higher education and facilitate access to study and the provision of support during studies with students of lower socio-economic status and for students with disabilities. Whilst FFRI have many initiatives which provide help and support to students with disabilities, without an accepted definition of students from vulnerable and/or underrepresented groups, FFRI does not have a framework through which The Quality Assurance Committee can monitor and appraise the help and support it offers to such students.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel recommends that: FFRI should ensure that each department have a nominated representative on the Quality Assurance Committee whose responsibility is to feed into the Quality Assurance Committee and ensure any changes in procedure are fully implemented on a departmental level; and, FFRI adopt a definition of 'students from vulnerable or underrepresented groups' and ensure that it monitors, analyses and improves the specific help it provides for such students.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

Yes, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FFRI) implements the recommendations for quality improvement from previous evaluations.

Following the previous evaluation in 2014, FFRI developed its *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Action Plan* to implement the recommendations, conducted an internal review and reported on the implementation to ASHE in 2015, and,

conducted a subsequent internal review in 2019 ahead of the re-accreditation process. A full list of the recommendations which were implemented was provided in the Self-Evaluation Report. The most significant changes include:

- the development of an FFRI-specific *Quality Assurance Manual* consolidated regional (European), national and University of Rijeka standards and guidelines alongside FFRI's specific requirements for quality assurance, into a single and easily accessible document;

- better alignment in the student-teacher ratio across FFRI departments;

- new provision for elective activities as part of study programmes;

- an increase in the number of lifelong learning programmes offered (from one to seven) to teaching staff to improve the quality of the skills and competencies required for higher education;

- the increase in provision for training staff in English and changes to policies and procedures to enable more teaching in English; and

- the creation of an alumni association (though, it must be noted that, substantive engagement with the alumni community has been slow and still requires improvement if it is to be used as a mechanism for providing feedback to FFRI).

Recommendations for improvement

The Self-Evaluation report states that the 2019 internal review identified the need for more members on the Quality Assurance Committee to ensure that all FFRI departments are represented. In recognition and support of this forthcoming improvement which FFRI has set itself, the Panel recommends that every department has *at least* one formally recognised representative on the Quality Assurance Committee *and* that that representative will take responsibility for implementing any FFRI-level recommendations on a departmental level.

Quality grade

High level of quality

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

Analysis

Most fundamentally, FFRI follows the University of Rijeka's Code of Ethics which lays out institutional policies and mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity and freedom, and

preventing any form of unethical behaviour, intolerance and discrimination, including procedures for detecting and addressing instances of plagiarism.

At a faculty level, The Quality Policy of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences lays out FFRI's policies which incorporate the Code of Ethics' guidelines into FFRI's quality assurance mechanisms. Within FFRI, there is an Ethics Committee which monitors the implementation of the Code of Ethics and monitors activities in order to identify any violations. Any matters arising with respect to ethical guidelines are covered under the remit of the FFRI Ethics Committee, which itself follows the guidelines set out in the Regulation on the Performance of the Ethics Committee.

In order to ensure that the students understand their obligations and comply with them, information on plagiarism, other ethical expectations, and the consequences for non-compliance are detailed in course syllabi. Plagiarism is guarded against through the checking of all student assignments through the state-of-the-art Turnitin system.

Where violations or disputes arise, FFRI has a number of mechanisms for resolving them, depending on their nature. For teachers, such matters are considered by the Disciplinary Committee for Teachers and Associates of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in accordance with the Regulation on Disciplinary Responsibilities of Teachers and Associates of the FFRI. Whereas for students, such matters are covered under a separate Regulation on Disciplinary Responsibilities of Students. The Student Council has an elected student attorney and in the event that proceedings are initiated against a student, the student attorney can participate in the proceedings. Where students have cause for complaint or feel they have not been dealt with according to the guidelines, the student attorney can also lodge complaints on their behalf. In order to guard against any irregularities or flaws in the system, FFRI nominates a point of contact to confidentially raise concerns (such as, institutional non-compliance with laws and regulations, negligent management, etc.) for investigation, as per The Regulation on the Procedure for Internal Reporting of Irregularities and the Appointment of a Confidential Person.

However, in the Panel's meetings with the students and alumni, the participants were unaware of the process for raising complaints. Whilst the Panel acknowledges that this is common throughout the higher education sector, it is recommended that FFRI takes steps to improve students' awareness on these matters, such as incorporating this information into the induction process and including this information alongside the information on plagiarism that is provided in course syllabi.

Recommendations for improvement

It is recommended that FFRI takes steps to improve students' awareness on the process for raising complaints, such as incorporating this information into the induction process and including this information alongside the information on plagiarism that is provided in course syllabi.

Satisfactory 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

FFRI ensures the availability of information through its website and Facebook page. The information is provided for students, staff, other stakeholders, and the general public, and refers to the organization of FFRI, its study programmes, scientific activities, outreach activities, international cooperation, and various events. The Faculty has an information officer who acts according to the Law on the Right to Access Information. Departments and centres have their own websites, as well as Student Council, offices for student support, associations, and the library. Separate pages also exist for information about the quality assurance system. Six departments have their own websites linked to the official website of the Faculty. Since February 2018 the Faculty publishes information related to social, professional, scientific and other activities in the printed edition of Vox Academiae, a supplement to the regional daily newspaper *Novi list*, which is available on the University's website. Media are also used for giving information about workshops, lectures, and other ways of popularizing science.

The Faculty has the procedure for collecting information on planned and completed events and activities. The information is collected in the Dean's Office and published in various media. Monthly and other significant activities are presented at the Faculty Council meetings.

The Quality Assurance Committee gives information about teaching assessment results, student satisfaction, and the teaching evaluation results-comparison of data over a five-year period on its website.

The Faculty organizes presentation activities for prospective students in high schools, formally or informally, organizes Open Door Days, whereas some departments promote themselves also independently. Information about enrolment is available on the Faculty's website, and in the Student Guide. Study programmes, lifelong learning programmes and syllabi are available on website, as well as learning outcomes which are available in Croatian and English. Some teaching information is also given to students through the Merlin e-learning system.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel finds that FFRI has developed a good procedure for collecting and publishing information. However, the Panel finds that the structure and overview of information especially for students should be improved by putting all the necessary information and

links on one page. During out visit, FFRI informed us that the website was in the process of being redesigned, so we expect substantial improvement on the quality of the website within the notice for improvement period of one year.

More information about departments, study possibilities, activities, and promotional material have to be developed in English in order to accommodate international students, and strengthen FFRI's international visibility and reputation.

As we were informed, department sites are managed by teachers and/or students in their spare time. We believe that all departments and divisions should have their website to inform their students about activities, procedures and regulations.

The Panel finds that this standard is satisfactory but needs improvement, and the notice of improvement should be sent within a year.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
FFRI is part of the UNIRI covering education and research in the field of humanities and social sciences. Its public function is stated in FFRI's Strategy, and is also clear in educating students for teaching professions. FFRI initiates cooperation with the local community through collaborative projects, lifelong learning programmes, and communis elective courses, which enables the visibility of FFRI, but also prepares students for their future professions. Teachers and students participate in public events, lectures, and popularisation activities, but also volunteer actively in the community or participate in civil society organizations. FFRI holds non-formal educational programmes for the third age in its facilities.

The Self-Evaluation report contains evidence of many activities which contribute to the community, such as *pro bono* counselling by psychology teachers in the University Psychological Counselling, volunteer teaching foreign languages to pensioners, humanitarian activities of the Student Council, collaborative research-analytical process in cooperation with various public institutions (educational, health, cultural, social welfare) and associations, development of the "Rijeka model" of civic education and its implementation in primary schools in Istria, Osijek, Sisak, Zagreb County, and cooperation with cultural institutions through projects and courses, especially regarding the cultural heritage. The Self-Evaluation states that in the period after the last accreditation, students have established cooperation with more than two hundred different entities in Rijeka, and in the local communities of their origin.

The number and quality of the programmes and activities developed for the community are impressive, and have been recognized on the local, regional, national and international level. This kind of activity and contribution to the community can only be further encouraged.

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.

FFRI currently has 16 accredited lifelong learning programmes, which are in line with its Strategy and the commitment related to the strengthening of teaching competencies. Programmes performed between 2015/2016 and 2019/2020 are:

1. Supplementary Pedagogical and Psychological Education for Teachers (SPPE)
2. Teacher Competencies in Higher Education Institutions: *Learning and teaching* (TCHEI-LT)
3. Teacher Competencies in Higher Education Institutions: *Evaluation of knowledge* (TCHEI-EK)
4. Teacher Competencies in Higher Education Institutions: *Quality assurance in higher education* (TCHEI-QAHE)
5. Teacher Competencies in Higher Education Institutions: *Modern teaching methods*
(TCHEI-MTM)
6. Teacher Competencies in Higher Education Institutions: *Critical thinking* (TCHEI-CT)
7. Professional Language Training of Teachers for English in Higher Education (EHE)
8. How to Write a Scientific Paper in English
9. Applied Course of the Croatian Language for Proof readers and Translators (ACCLPT)
10. "School of Journalism: Ethics Culture Design - NOVINA.RI"
11. Young People in Modern Society (is performed in partnership with the Institute for Social
Research in Zagreb (IDIZ))

12. Learning of Croatian as a Second and Foreign Language: *School of Croatian Language,*
Culture and Civilization and an Intensive Croatian Language Course
13. Contemporary Poland: Language and Culture
14. Professional Development for Italian Language, Communication and Culture 1 and 2
15. Professional Development: Contemporary Topics from the Italian Language and Literature
Programmes
16. Differential Education for Enrolment in the Graduate Study of Education (DEE)
17. UNICULT 2020

Revision and development of LLPs is a clear-cut process: first, LLP is proposed according to the forms of UNIRI, acceptance follows at the department or Faculty, and Faculty Council, upon which it is sent to the UNIRI Commission for Lifelong Learning for approvement. LLPs are in line with regulations of UNIRI and *Supplementary Pedagogical and Psychological Education for Teachers programme (SPPE)*. The satisfaction of LLPs' participants is continuously monitored through surveys and reports after the programme had been realized.

Recommendations for improvement
This standard is given high quality, because it is evident that FFRI is devoted to developing LLPs in its Strategy, as well as to improving teacher and research competences.
Not all syllabi of LLPs are available on the FFRI website, and this should be amended.

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
As evident from the FFRI self-evaluation, as well as on-site visit and talks with relevant stakeholders, the general objectives of all study programmes are indeed in line with the mission and strategic goals of HEI. FFRI has university study programmes in the

categories of undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate doctoral study programmes structured according to the 3-2-3 scheme. Both undergraduate and graduate study programmes are given as single and double majors, while it is important to notice that graduate programmes have an option to be studied as a teaching track or a non-teaching track.

The specific documents that ensure the alignment of study programmes with the mission and strategic goals of FFRI are: The University of Rijeka 2014-2020 Development Strategy and the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka 2019-2023 Development Strategy. Both of those documents are aligned with the Strategy of Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Croatia.

The Panel has especially noticed that, following the previous re-accreditation, FFRI has devoted substantial effort to improve the quality of the existing programmes as well as to develop new ones. When proposing a new study programme, many factors have to be taken into account, such as social and economic need for a particular programme, labour market needs, the contribution of a programme to individuals, local community, civil society *etc*., as well as the purposefulness of a programme. We find one document especially important for this: Justification Study for Delivering the Proposed Study Programme. Also, when developing a programme, FFRI relies on the recommendations from the Croatian Employment Services regarding enrolment policy. Moreover, it is very important that FFRI regularly monitors demand for study programmes. FFRI also accepts recommendations and requests from various professional organizations when developing a study programme.

Recent study programmes that have been developed are: in the academic year 2018/2019 – university graduate study in the German language and literature as a double major – general track; and university graduate Translation study; while in in the academic year 2019/2020 university graduate study in History and Heritage Interpretation was created general-track.

The Panel was also informed that several new study programmes are in development, of which we find the university graduate study in cognitive sciences as very interesting and important as an example.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel has only one minor recommendation for improvement in the context of this standard. Namely, one of the recommendations from the previous re-accreditation cycle was that FFRI should fix the enrolment quotas using more sources than just the local employment office. Although the Panel feels that FFRI has made efforts in that direction, still the main source in determining the quotas remains the local employment office. In future this problem should be looked upon more broadly by taking national, as well as international sources into account.

High 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.

According to the Self-evaluation, learning outcomes for all study programmes at FFRI should be clearly defined and for each individual course. In discussion at all levels (including the staff, students, and alumni), the Panel did not encounter any major problems with the learning outcomes, so we can concur regarding the description in the self-analysis. The documents that regulate learning outcomes at the level of a study programme are the "Regulation on studies at the University of Rijeka" and the "Regulation on Studying at the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka". Those documents ensure that the description of a course mandatory contains learning outcomes and scoring methods that reflect the realization of learning outcomes. Regarding the alignment of learning outcomes with the labour market needs, those competencies are listed in the supplement to the diploma. The Panel recognizes that FFRI made a substantial effort regarding aligning and refining learning outcomes, such as many workshops held on that theme, the University Manual, and other documents such as "Curriculum Development Based on the Learning Outcomes Approach". Recently, following the new Action Plan, a revision of learning outcomes was made for all study programmes, both at the undergraduate and graduate level. Moreover, FFRI has also made efforts to align learning outcomes with the Croatian Qualification Framework (CROQF). An excellent example for that effort is a three-year project Croatian Language and Literature, Andragogy, Philosophy and Cultural Studies – Alignment with the CROQF (KAFK). FFRI has also achieved intensive cooperation with employers regarding aligning learning outcomes with professional competencies needed and labour market demands. However, as evident from self-evaluation, the collection of data from employers and alumni should be more systematic and the Panel feels that the labour market needs and professional competencies develop much faster than the revisions of learning outcomes. Therefore, more effort should be put into faster revisions of learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes should be more aligned with competencies that are important for employers and a larger pool of potential employers and alumni should be consulted as important stakeholders in this context.

Satisfactory level of quality

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

FFRI's Self-evaluation and talks with relevant stakeholders provided ample evidence regarding the achievement of intended learning outcomes of the study programmes. FFRI ensures that for each course there is constant monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes in a way that 50-70% of the grade could be earned during the course, and the rest could be earned during the final exam. For the courses that do not have a final exam all of the grade is earned during the course through ongoing evaluation. Once again, the documents that regulate methods of monitoring and evaluation of learning outcomes are the "Regulation on studies at the University of Rijeka" and the "Regulation on Studying at the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka". Other important documents for this matter are: course description of the study programme and the Course Syllabus and all the documents listed are publicly available at FFRI website. Achievement of intended learning outcomes is evaluated through a variety of method such as seminar papers, project and independent assignments, mentoring, practical work, research, essays, mid-term exams, to name but a few, and all relevant information regarding that is also available at FFRI website. Furthermore, to ensure the achievement of learning outcomes, it is important to state that the undergraduate studies are finished with a final thesis and/or with a final exam, while the graduate studies are finished with a graduate thesis and a graduate exam. Both the undergraduate and graduate final examinations are regulated with relevant documents. During the last year, a workshop for teachers on defining learning outcomes and their alignment with other aspects of teaching process was organized. FFRI also regularly monitors students' satisfaction with teaching methods and evaluation of student work.

Therefore, the Panel recognizes the effort FFRI has made in tracking the evidence of the achievement of learning outcomes. Students from various departments were in general satisfied with learning outcomes. However, the Panel also observed that more harmonization should be done regarding the learning outcomes and teaching methods across various departments. Moreover, there are cases where students are overburdened with obligations at seminars and this should be more aligned with learning outcomes.

In some courses, students are overwhelmed with seminars' obligations, which should be decreased and better aligned with learning outcomes. More harmonization should be done regarding learning outcomes across various departments.

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.

Apart from the above mentioned documents that ensure the quality control of existing study programmes, their revision and developing new programmes, such as: "Regulation on studies at the University of Rijeka" and the "Regulation on Studying at the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka", FFRI adheres to other documents regarding the study programmes development, such as: "Provision of the Decision on Amendments Procedures of the Study Programme", the "Manual for Accreditation and Evaluation of Study Programmes and Lifelong Learning Programmes at the University of Rijeka", as well as nationally relevant documents. Those documents ensure that information from many relevant stakeholders is regularly collected during the procedure of study programmes revision. Feedback for revision rests upon study performance on individual studies, students' satisfaction with undergraduate or graduate studies, students' evaluations of teaching and feedback from alumni and employers. The Panel finds that one important positive feature is the inclusion of students in amending the study programmes on many levels, since their representatives are members of the Departmental Council, Faculty Council and Quality Assurance and Improvement Committee. One example of active student involvement in revising the study programmes is from the academic year 2018/2019, when the Student Council proposed to revise all teaching-track studies to raise the quality and increase practical training. The proposal was accepted by FFRI and it will be included in a review of all study programmes. However, FFRI was not particularly quick in collecting data from alumni. Although one of the recommendations in the previous re-accreditation cycle 6 years ago was that alumni organisations for all disciplines should be established and used in providing feedback, the Alumni Club of the FFRI was established only in 2019 and the system for collecting data on graduates is yet to be developed. Regarding employers, during the academic year 2018/2019, a survey was conducted in which teachers-mentors at training schools of FFRI were asked about competencies of teacher education students, and

FFRI partners with CROQF on various projects aimed to improve the quality of study programmes.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel has only one recommendation for improvement regarding this standard, and that is that FFRI should be more active in collecting data from alumni regarding their view on study programmes as well as their employability after finishing the studies.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

FFRI has also devoted a lot of effort in adequate allocation of the ECTS. A year ago, the Commission for the Accreditation and Evaluation of the Study Programmes of the University of Rijeka provided instructions for allocation of ECTS credits in courses and during the same year, a workshop for teachers was held regarding the learning outcomes and awarding of ECTS credits. Following that, a revision of ECTS credits allocation was made on the basis of student work monitoring in all study programmes. Feedback regarding ECTS allocation is collected through the Teaching Evaluation Survey conducted through the ISVU system, the content analysis of the study programme, the course syllabi and guided discussion with the students. During the visit, both on-site and on-line, the Panel did not encounter any major problems with ECTS allocation. However, there are still individual cases when students express their dissatisfaction with ECTS allocation, in the sense that obligations are higher than the number of ECTS per course. Students' representatives proposed different models of aligning the ECTS credits with the actual student workload, but these models are yet to be implemented. One potential problem this Panel has found pertains to *communis elective courses*. It should be clearer what courses, and on what basis, are available as communis courses; for which students from other departments; and whether enrolment in a communis course increases the total number of ECTS that a student should collect, or not. It should be clearer how students choose among communis courses, and whether communis courses are taught in Croatian or in the language studied at the department in question.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel recommends that communis elective courses should be better defined, especially in their relation to ECTS allocation and to the other elective courses in which students can enrol.

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
The FFRI's Self-evaluation stresses that practical ways of learning are an integral part of all study programmes with ECTS credits given for practical training courses. Regarding teaching track graduate courses, practical training pertains to school teaching, conducted in cooperation with Rijeka primary and high schools. An important factor in this collaboration are teacher-mentors in schools who follow students' progress in practical training. Study programmes that stand out in terms of students' practical work are Psychology and Pedagogy. Regarding he department of Pedagogy, the courses that stand out in practical training are Pedagogical Practicum 1 and 2, although there are other courses for gaining practical experience such as Action Research, Project Management in Education etc. The department of Pedagogy offers a course important for helping in the community, *Student and community*, which is also offered as a communis course for students from other departments. Regarding the students of psychology, at the graduate level there is mandatory Student practical training, but there are other courses with substantial practical components, such as Clinical Psychology in Practice, Teaching Practice etc. Other non-teaching departments provide different models of student practice, for example, the Department of Cultural Studies cooperates with Rijeka 2020 – European Capital of Culture, offering practical courses such as Practical Training in Culture. History students can gain experience in various institutions such as galleries, museums etc., while students of Translation Studies, naturally, can benefit from courses in Translation Exercises.

Students' satisfaction with practical components of their education is an integral part of student evaluations.

It is also commendable that FFRI applied and received funds from the European Social Fund for the three-year project to improve practical training of students in History, Art History, Italian and German language and the models developed from this project are to be applied to other studies at FFRI.

Taking everything in consideration, FFRI has made substantial efforts to raise the quantity and quality of students' practical work. However, according to the self-evaluation, the amount of practical training is still insufficient and some programmes lack the mandatory courses in practical training. As during the previous re-

accreditation, departments of Psychology and Pedagogy excel in terms of students' practical work, and other study programmes should follow that example.

Recommendations for improvement
All programmes should introduce mandatory courses in practical training, and the amount of practical training should be increased. Other departments should follow the Departments of Psychology and Pedagogy in terms of students' involvement in practical work.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

III. Teaching process and student support

3.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are in line with the requirements of the study programme, clearly defined, published and consistently applied.

Analysis
The candidate selection procedure guarantees the equality of all applicants and takes place in accordance with all rules, procedures, regulations and decisions. Applications for enrolment in the 1st year of university undergraduate study programs (USP) are conducted *online*. All information related to the application procedure for enrolment in study programs are available on the mentioned website, also in the Brochure on its website where it also announces the results of enrolment in the 1st year of study and available vacancies.

FFRI consistently adheres to the clearly defined conditions of enrolment. In accordance with the recommendation of the 2014 Accreditation Council, the introduction of criteria of excellence for enrolment in graduate studies at departments and at the Center for Teacher Education (CTE) was discussed at the meetings of the Extended Dean's Colleges. Thus, three departments: English, German Studies and Cultural Studies introduced a grade point average in undergraduate studies as a criterion for enrolment at the graduate level of study. As not all departments acted in the same way, students of double major studies in certain combinations of study programs lost the opportunity to continue their studies at FFRI by failing to achieve a grade point average (GPA) in one study, regardless of the average grade achieved in another study.

Criteria for progress through the study and enrolment in courses from higher years of study are clearly defined. From ac. yr. 2017/18 FFRI has introduced *online* case enrolment through Studomat, and since September 2020, students enrol in courses

independently, while ECTS coordinators control the enrolled courses. All relevant information related to progress through the study are available on the FFRI website, including lists *communis* subjects for undergraduate and graduate studies.

The departments propose possible amendments to the conditions for undergraduate study. In some cases, due to the specifics of study programs, departments introduce additional tests of special knowledge, skills and abilities for enrolment in undergraduate studies. However, due to the decline in the number of students in the Republic of Croatia, the enrolment policy is also changing, so instead of selecting students at the entrance exams, they will work on supplementing the competencies in the first year of study. All information on additional examinations is available.

In the procedures of recognition of a foreign diploma and of a period of study at a foreign HEI for the purpose of continuing higher education at UNIRI FFRI cooperates with the University and the Ministry of Science and Education. Information. The procedure on the transition from another HEI to the FFRI is transparent and appropriate.

Students who have completed non-equivalent and incomparable studies can realize the possibility of enrolling in graduate studies at FFRI, by taking differentiated exams or differentiated programs, and each application is considered individually in the departments. Based on the analysis of student achievement, the departments adopt possible measures to improve the enrolment criteria for applicants who have completed a non-equivalent study or the criteria for continuing their studies (example of good practice - Department of English).

Recommendations for improvement
The Expert Panel evaluates this quality standard with a high level of quality, but with a strong recommendation that enrolment practices in different departments be standardized and that enrolment quotas of individual studies (e.g. study of philosophy, study of Croatian language and literature) be taken into account in order to harmonize them with labour market needs.

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

Based on the data from the ISVU system, every academic year an analysis of pass rates by subjects and FFRI studies is made, the results of which are discussed by members of the Extended Dean's Council, and presented at the Faculty Council.

In addition to the above, FFRI and UNIRI conducted a survey on dropouts and changes in study programs for a period of three years (2016-2019). The key reasons that students state in connection with the decision to change the study program are: excessive demands on studies, dissatisfaction with the organization of studies, personal problems and inability to find employment. The results were analysed in all departments and improvement measures were suggested, which were consolidated at the FFRI level, and has been proposed measures to UNIRI to improve in four areas: electives, programs, internships, and a weekly schedule.

Study programs are regularly revised every year, and the changes introduced are aimed at improving the quality of study (e.g. engagement of demonstrators, additional classes in language exercises, introducing a general direction of language study program in addition to teaching, launching new graduate programs and accreditation of translation studies, projects of professional practices, reduction of enrolment quotas, etc.).

FFRI is taking steps to improve student progress through studies so at ac. yr. 2017/18 it's been established support system teacher mentor and student mentor for freshmen and demonstrators are engaged in all departments. ECTS coordinators in each of the FFRI departments also play a significant role here, and they can be a significant help in choosing the subjects that the student enrols in.

As student satisfaction increased into ac. yr. 2018/19, it can be assumed that the proposed measures have contributed to improving quality and will be reflected in a reduction in the number of students dropping out of school.

Recommendations for improvement
The recommendation of the Expert Panel is that FFRI should continue the good practice of systematically collecting data on the progress of its students in order to support them in their continuation and successful completion of their studies.

Quality grade
High level of quality

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

Analysis
For all courses taught in the FFRI study programs, an executive curriculum is prepared every academic year, which is adopted by the FFRI Faculty Council, and then the implementation plans are published on the Faculty's website.

The syllabus, in addition to basic information about the course, the grading and evaluation system and the bibliography, also contains a table with a constructive link between learning outcomes, content, activities and evaluation methods. According to the syllabus, teaching practice promotes student-centred learning and teaching, in which knowledge and skills are acquired through active learning, different assessment methods are applied in teaching, and expected learning outcomes are constructively linked to learning and teaching activities and methods of evaluation.

The teaching process is realized through different teaching models and various teaching methods, all depending on the specifics of each study subject. Teaching forms are: lectures, seminars, exercises, laboratory work, discussions, debates, e-learning (Merlin), field teaching, independent assignments, mentoring, practical teaching, problem and project teaching, and social forms of teaching are: frontal work, group work and individual student work. Working in small groups, quality interaction between teachers and students and an individualized approach to teaching are possible due to the good ratio of the number of teachers to the number of students (1: 13.37). In recent years, students have somewhat more positively evaluated their satisfaction with the teaching methods used (student satisfaction survey given at the end of undergraduate and graduate studies), compared to the results from previous ac. yr. so we can assume that on average they are satisfied with the forms of teaching at FFRI, but there is still room for improvement in teaching practice, especially when it comes to standardizing teaching practices across diverse departments.

Teaching methods are being revised and adjusted. FFRI organized a workshop for all ECTS coordinators, heads of departments and board members on linking learning outcomes and ways of evaluating student achievement, thus enabling more precise harmonization of learning outcomes with teaching methods and ways of checking achieved outcomes. In addition, the use of appropriate teaching methods is continuously evaluated through student evaluation of teaching and teacher work at the end of each semester, and teachers adjust the teaching methods as needed based on the results. This job at FFRI is approached very systematically; after the results of the student survey, the Chairman of the Quality Assurance Committee and the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs identify potential threats to quality teaching, the results are submitted to heads of departments, discussed in departments and talked to teachers to improve their own teaching work. The whole procedure is carried out in accordance with The Quality Assurance Manual. At the beginning of each semester, students in each of the courses are introduced to the results of this evaluation and the planned changes in the ways of teaching. All participants in this process at the meetings with the Expert Panel testified to the thoroughness and commitment in the work when it comes to the reactions of teachers to the results of student evaluation of teaching work and its improvement.

By flexing study programs through the possibility of replacing elective courses provided by the study program with formal, non-formal and informal learning activities

in which students acquire additional competencies (up to 10% of total ECTS credits provided by the study program), students are enabled to develop personal learning paths and careers. In addition to the above, students can enrol in *communis* elective courses (at the level of FFRI and UNIRI). As an example of good practice, the *online* course Student and Community of the Department of Pedagogy stands out, this enables students to connect study and helping the community through socially useful learning.

In addition to compulsory and elective courses, FFRI gives its students the opportunity to engage in a variety of extracurricular activities, activities that teachers carry out with students and student associations (e.g. various workshops, fieldwork, joint research, writing scientific and professional papers and their presentation at scientific and professional conferences, joint projects, literary evenings, humanitarian actions, quizzes). Involving students in these activities encourages their autonomy and responsibility. Teachers also dedicate their work to further encourage students to engage and increase their motivation to engage in various activities, as evidenced by the very good average percentages of student satisfaction with the possibility of engaging in extracurricular activities at FFRI in the last two years.

Although the positive efforts of FFRI to enable the use of modern technology with the aim of its improvement and modernization of teaching in general, there stood out the problem of insufficient resolution of images projected through a (ceiling) projector, which in some cases can significantly disrupt the teaching process. This is especially the case when it comes to, for example, the Study of art history where an adequate visual experience of the projected work with the ability to focus on the details of the image is necessary for quality teaching and learning (which in some classrooms due to the lack of existing equipment is not possible).

Recommendations for improvement

The Expert Panel sees here the possibility of further improvement in teaching practice, especially when it comes to standardizing teaching practices across diverse departments, through an adequate offer of elective courses attractive to students; a more flexible schedule of classes.

Members of the Expert Panel noticed the problem of insufficient resolution of projected images through ceiling projectors - this shortcoming must be eliminated as soon as possible because it prevents a quality teaching process, especially in certain departments (e.g. Department of history of art).

Based on the previous comments, the Expert Panel evaluates this quality standard with a satisfactory level of quality, noting that the pointed imperfections need to be eliminated as soon as possible.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

3.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.

Analysis

UNIRI and FFRI, as its component, provide support to their students during their studies in a variety of ways. The FFRI website contains a Student's Guide with all the basic information about study programs and studying. UNRI has a University Counseling Centre with the aim of providing various forms of support and assistance to its students and staff. The University Counseling Center has The Psychological Counseling Centre - supported by psychologists with additional training in psychological counselling and psychotherapy, the Office for Students with Disabilities (see 3.5) and the Career Office - which provides professional support to students in developing career management skills and entrepreneurial competencies, informing students about employment opportunities and connecting students and potential employers.

Although FFRI strives to provide quality and systematic support to students from different student groups, the Expert Panel emphasizes the need for clearer identification and definition of individual student subpopulations in order to provide them with systematic support and support tailored to their specific group and individual characteristics and needs (see 3.5.).

Counselling on studying and student support opportunities is also organized through a mentoring system for freshmen (teacher mentor and student mentor) who provide support to students in achieving academic goals.

In addition to the above-mentioned system of mentors, for help and support students can also turn to the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, teachers, ECTS coordinators, department secretaries and Student Services staff. The Expert Panel ascribed the lack of this system to the lack of quality administrative staff at FFRI. This is partly due to the temporary inability to hire public and civil service employees, which FFRI cannot influence, but it would be necessary to find ways to attract more highly qualified and competent administrative staff in order to increase the quality of administrative support at the higher education institution level and to relieve existing employees.

Recommendations for improvement

In view of the identified imperfections, the Expert Panel evaluates this standard with the satisfactory level of quality with a strong recommendation to consider the stated possibilities for improvement and introduce qualitative changes based on this report as soon as possible.

The Expert Panel emphasizes the need for clearer identification and definition of individual student subpopulations in order to provide them with systematic support and

support tailored to their specific group and individual characteristics and needs (see 3.5.).

The Expert Panel suggests that the teacher – mentor system be extended to other years of study to provide systematic individual support to students throughout their entire studies.

In order to increase the quality of administrative support at the higher education institution level and to relieve existing employees, it would be necessary for FFRI to find ways to attract more highly qualified and competent administrative staff.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
One of the strategic goals of UNIRI, highlighted in the 2014 Strategy for Education, Science and Technology (the Strategy was written for the period from 2014 to 2020 and the new one is in preparation), is to improve the access and success of underrepresented groups in higher education and facilitate access to study and the provision of support during studies with students of lower socio-economic status and for students with disabilities. The support of students from these groups begins with introductory information to freshmen about the work of the University Counseling Centre and the Office for Students with Disabilities. In addition to systematically collecting data on students with disabilities, informing them, determining the necessary forms of support in adapting the academic environment, this Office also conducts commendable activities to sensitize the academic and wider environment on the challenges of studying students with disabilities. Every year on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, the Office for Students with Disabilities awards the prize to the most successful student with a disability at the UNIRI level (so far it has always been students with FFRI). The architecture of the FFRI building is fully adapted for students with disabilities.

During the pregnancy and up to one year of the child's life, or in case of a serious illness of the student, etc., the student has the right to suspend obligations, which is defined by the Regulation on Undergraduate and Graduate Study Programme. Students of lower socio-economic status are granted a deferral and instalment payment by FFRI, and UNIRI supports them by awarding scholarships / financial aid from the "Solidarity" program of the "Alexander Abramov" Fund (in the academic year 2018/19, 5 FFRI students received scholarships).

Although significant efforts are being made by UNIRI and FFRI to meet the individual specific needs of students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups, these initiatives are directed mainly at students with disabilities while students from other vulnerable and underrepresented groups are not provided with systematic help and support.

Recommendations for improvement

For the reasons stated above, the Expert Panel evaluates this criterion with a minimum quality assessment and strongly recommends the FFRI management to adopt a definition of "students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups," clarify the institutional procedures for monitor and providing help, provide specific assistance and support to all students from these groups, as soon as possible, and establish adequate representation of such groups in all appropriate settings.

Quality grade

Minimum level of quality

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

Analysis

Student mobility at FFRI is mainly realized through 113 Erasmus+ and bilateral agreements and 5 CEEPUS networks, and according to the number of outgoing students (213 in the last five acad. yr.), FFRI is the second component of UNIRI.

Students can find out about the possibilities of participating in international mobility programs on the FFRI and UNIRI websites. At the Faculty Council, the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs informs student representatives about the announced competitions, and further support is provided by the Head of the Project Office, Erasmus coordinators at the departments and Student Service staff responsible for incoming and outgoing students.

Before going to a foreign higher education institution, the student, in cooperation with the department Erasmus coordinator, considers the possible choice of courses and makes a decision on enrolling in a specific study program that is enrolled in the *Learning Agreement*. Upon the return of the student from the international exchange, all completed courses are recognized, and in case the course is not compatible with the outcome, scope and content of the compulsory course in the study program, it is recognized as an elective course. All Erasmus coordinators in 2020 participated in a workshop on the recognition and evaluation of prior learning, to ensure uniformity of exam recognition practice. Since 2020, courses are recognized in accordance with The Regulation and Assessment of Prior Learning.

Although FFRI does not systematically collect data on student satisfaction with the quality of support, which is one of the reasons why the Expert Panel assessed this criterion as satisfactory, and not high level of quality, it still receives feedback from students necessary to improve the process (through the Erasmus Coordinators in the Department, Head of the Project Office, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, who is also the FFRI Erasmus Coordinator). In this way, it was found that there are two main obstacles to the inclusion of students in international exchange programs: insufficient funding (e.g. Erasmus scholarship is not enough to cover all material costs, so additional co-financing of parents is necessary, which puts different students in unequal positions) and the duality of study programs (e.g. sometimes due to the impossibility of enrolling in the same study programs at the foreign university, students have the opportunity to put their obligations on standstill in one of the study programs).

Recommendations for improvement
The Expert Panel recommends to start a systematic collection of data on student satisfaction with mobility at the FFRI level and to develop a systematic approach to providing additional financial assistance to students in outgoing mobility.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
International students have the possibility of incoming mobility at FFRI through the Erasmus+ program (113 Erasmus contracts) or the CEEPUS network (5 CEEPUS networks). They are informed about Erasmus programs through the central website for the Erasmus program. For foreign students, the FFRI website contains an information package and lists of courses in English. In the last five years there have been a total of 208 international incoming students at FFRI, making FFRI the third largest component of UNIRI.

The FFRI Project Office, in particular Head of the Office, systematically monitors students throughout the duration of their student mobility program. To support incoming students, there are also Erasmus+ FFRI Coordinator, Erasmus+ Department Coordinators, CEEPUS Coordinators and employees of The University of Rijeka Office for International Cooperation. The Office for International Mobility organizes an Erasmus Welcome Day for incoming students, and an introductory lecture on relevant information related to studying at FFRI is organized at the FFRI level.

FFRI does not offer any complete study program in English, but incoming students choose courses from various study programmes that are also open to domestic students. However, domestic students rarely choose courses in English which makes it difficult to integrate foreign students. That is why the FFRI in ac. yr. 2019/20 introduced a new *communis* elective course to help students develop adequate competencies to study in a foreign language.

Although a significant number of courses are offered in foreign languages, the greatest emphasis is still on the implementation of the program in English. In addition, the practice of conducting the study program or its parts in English in different departments is uneven (with the language departments predominating). Incoming Erasmus students can also enrol in Croatian language classes for foreigners within the Rijeka School of Croatian Studies (until 2020, it was attended by 250 international incoming students).

In 2019, in order to encourage teachers to increase the availability of courses in English, FFRI introduces incentive measures for teachers, organizes a lifelong training programme Language Development for English-medium Instruction for teachers, a foreign language course and plans to develop a module in the field of cognitive sciences in English, and the development of a graduate study program in English at the Department of Cultural Studies is in progress.

Recommendations for improvement
There is still further room for improving incoming student mobility, which concerns better information of incoming students about the possibilities of studying at FFRI through the FFRI website in English and unification of the practice of conducting courses in English in different departments.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
Clear evaluation criteria and various methods of evaluation and assessment are an integral part of the syllabus that teachers develop before the beginning of the academic year, and are harmonized with the curriculum and are accepted by the Faculty Council. Every year, the Faculty Council adopts a teaching calendar within which teachers determine the exam schedule, exact date and time of the exam and they are advertised on the FFRI website, and are defined in accordance with The Regulation on Undergraduate and Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The same Regulation also defines the rights and obligations of students, testing of knowledge, duties of teachers, exam deadlines and the possibility of appealing the grade. The exams are public, organized through two regular exam periods (winter and summer) and two part-time exam periods (spring and autumn), and the possibility of taking additional mid-term exams is provided. The spring exam period was introduced in 2019 at the initiative of students through their representatives in the FFRI Student Council. Students have the right to take the exam from one course three times in one academic year.

The obligation of the teacher to provide feedback in due time on students' achievements is defined by The Regulation on Studying. In addition, students receive their corrected assignments or written exams, and are allowed to attend the oral exam of other students. The exam results are advertised on the classes themselves, on the Merlin virtual platform, on the departments bulletin boards and on their websites. Through interviews with teachers and students, the members of the Expert Panel received confirmation that the stated obligations are indeed realized in accordance with the prescribed procedures.

Procedures for completing studies at FFRI are precisely elaborated in several regulations: Regulation on Final Thesis and / or Final Exam at Undergraduate Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, Regulation on the Graduate Thesis and the Graduate Exam at University Graduate Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka, Regulation on the Postgraduate (Doctoral) Studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka.

Students with disabilities have the right for adjustment in examination of their knowledge in classes and during the grading process according to their specific individual needs. However, the question arises as to what happens to support for students from other vulnerable and underrepresented groups (see criterion 3.5).

FFRI provides a variety of training opportunities for teachers to work in classes and to improve their teaching competencies (e.g. *The Professional Development for Improvement of Teachers' Competences*, EMI, British Council's Academic Teaching Excellence courses, project KAFK, project *Development, Enhancement and Implementation of Practical Training – PerPeTuUm a Gile*, workshops on the constructive alignment of learning, teaching and evaluation).

Recommendations for improvement

Although the previously mentioned initiatives for improving teacher competencies are highlighted as very significant and valuable, further improvements are possible through the inclusion of more teachers in these forms of education and through the organization of training specifically focused on teaching evaluation methods, as well as evaluations tailored to the needs of students from vulnerable and underrepresented group.

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

FFRI issues diplomas and Diploma Supplements according to relevant regulations (The Regulation on the Diploma and the Diploma Supplement, The University of Rijeka Regulation on the Format of Diploma and the Content and Format of Report Cards, Attests and Certificates, and The Regulation on Studying at the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences). Students are issued a diploma after completing the undergraduate and graduate studies, and it confirms that a student acquired the corresponding academic title or degree. It contains all necessary data in accordance with regulations of Croatian Ministry of Science and Education. Diploma Supplement is issued in Croatian and English, with a list of exams the student passed and grades they obtained, as well as ECTS credits obtained, competencies, and all activities during the study time.

Recommendations for improvement

The Expert Panel finds that the good practice of issuing diplomas and Diploma Supplements in accordance with regulations should be continued.

Quality grade

High level of quality

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

Analysis

FFRI analyses the employability of graduates according to the data of the Croatian Employment Institution (CEI), and the survey conducted by UNIRI in 2019/2020, in which 202 FFRI alumni took part. In the Self-Evaluation, FFRI points out that there is no national policy or indicators which could help decide on enrolment quotas and establishment of new study programmes. Also, the Collective Agreement must be taken into account when planning quotas, because the Ministry of Science and Education does not finance study programmes with less than 10 enrolled students.

According to the analysis, the highest number of unemployed former students occurred in 2019. Looking at the average on study programmes between 2017 and 2019, the highest unemployment rate is among masters of cultural studies (70), masters

of Croatian education 105 (57 single major and 48 double major) and masters of psychology (56). The least numbers are among masters of German language education (1), Italian language (1) and informatics (1).

FFRI founded Alumni Club in June 2019, so it plans to expand it, and conduct further analysis of the employability of the alumni.

Two new study programmes were accredited in 2019, the translation study programme and German language and literature-general track, and graduate study programme History and Heritage Interpretation of the Department of History in 2020. These programmes were created in accordance with interest of the labour market in the EU.

Information about possibilities of continuing studies is given to students by their home departments, the Student Services and the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs. Information on employment is gained through projects and courses that enable engagement in community service, or through practical training in schools and educational institutions. Students can also find information at the Career Office within UNIRI's University Counseling Centre, which aims to connect students and potential employers. FFRI plans to form its own career office within the project for practical training "PerPeTuUm aGile."

As far as feedback from alumni and employers is concerned, teachers in charge of teaching methodology courses regularly visit mentors and schools.

FFRI has contacts with former students who work at educational institutions through students' practical training and lifelong learning programmes.

FFRI has established procedures for informing students about possibilities of continuing their studies, and plans to develop its own Career Office, separate from the existing UNIRI Office. Some alumni have excellent contacts with their mentors, and they work together on projects or within practical trainings. However, we recommend that this contact should be developed on FFRI level, determining procedures in which FFRI would benefit from feedback from the alumni considering study programmes, enrolment quotas, and employment possibilities. In our meetings with alumni, it was stressed that graduates from some departments (e.g. history) do not find jobs easily.

Recommendations for improvement
The Expert Panel strongly recommends to strengthen activities with the Alumni Club, and analyse employability rates in order to improve employability of their students.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

IV. Teaching and institutional capacities

4.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis

The number of teachers and their qualifications are appropriate for effectively delivering study programmes and for conducting scientific activity (MOZVAG tables 4.1.a, 4.3). FFRI has ensured that it maintains sufficient teaching capacity by replacing teachers whose contracts ended and hiring more teachers to accommodate the growth in study programs. From 2015-2019, nine teachers' contracts expired while FFRI employed 44 new teachers and 34 new associates (MOZVAG table 4.2). The overall ratio of teachers on full-time permanent contracts to students is 11.35 to 1 (*Analiza uvjeta izvođenja studija*), which is very good and conducive to high-quality teaching delivery. For every study programme, the FFRI meets and exceeds the minimum requirement for teaching delivery by its own full-time staff. Teacher workload is in line with legislation and policies and there are clear monitoring mechanisms in place, including a monthly form in which teachers describe the teaching activities that they have undertaken (Self-Evaluation Report). The annual teacher workload is evaluated twice per academic year, once in November and once in March. Individually, teachers also assess how much time they devote to administrative duties and to scientific research (along with how much time they should have for scientific research depending on their involvement in projects) and submit these self-assessments to the Dean of Faculty.

However, based on meetings held on 23 October 2020, the Panel notes that assistants and postdoctoral researchers are burdened with a particularly high workload when compared with more senior FFRI colleagues – especially with regard to administrative and student-facing tasks which are concentrated in the pre-enrolment period in September, such as coordinating ECTS, facilitating Erasmus, etc., and teachers who receive funding for scientific projects do not always (or even often) see a considerable decrease in teaching responsibilities. This means that the workload distribution of teachers who also have research funding is not always well balanced and should be adjusted to ensure an acceptable workload for more junior members of teaching staff, such as teaching assistants and postdoctoral researchers. This was noted as a disadvantage in the 2014 ASHE evaluation report, and recommendations made for improvement, which do not appear to have been acted upon. Given that excessive workloads are a serious limiting factor on educational and research quality, international mobility, and career development for early-career researchers and teaching assistants, such excessive workload burdens for lower-ranking members of staff represent a serious deficiency FFRI's delivery of teaching and teaching support tasks, and places an unfair burden on precisely those members of staff who are in most need of institutional support and consideration.

The Panel strongly recommends that steps be taken to reduce the workload of teaching assistants and postdoctoral researchers, even if these groups do not qualify as 'teachers' in a strict sense. It also recommends that the FFRI implement appropriate and transparent procedures for reducing the workload of teachers who receive external funding for scientific research.

Quality grade
Satisfactory 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
Due to the current hiring freeze in the Republic of Croatia, it was not possible for the Panel to scrutinize ongoing or very recent hiring processes for new positions. Regarding promotion and the filling of existing positions that become vacant, FFRI follows guidelines for recruitment and advancement in accordance with national frameworks. The overall approach to such appointments is adequate (Self-Evaluation Annexes 'Examples of teacher employment and promotion models 2019-2021' and 'Retirement, employment and promotion plan and changes 2019'). But, as the Self-Evaluation Report recognizes, it will be necessary to implement greater transparency and the Panel commends the FFRI for prioritizing this in the 2019-2023 Development strategy.

Recommendations for improvement
In addition to outward-facing transparency, the Panel recommends implementing greater consistency and transparency across and within the FFRI in the criteria that are set for coefficients. The Panel also recommends a slight change to how the FFRI gauges teaching evaluations in the promotion process. While great importance is attributed to student evaluations of teaching in promotion, the Panel notes a disjuncture between staff and student expectations regarding these evaluations: the staff need evidence of teaching excellence for advancement, but students tend to regard these forms as an opportunity to air their grievances, as multiple student participants in the Panel's 22 October 2020 meeting with students made clear. Paradoxically then, high student satisfaction may result in low participation in evaluations, which academic staff need in order to apply for promotion. The Panel suggests an adjustment to the way these evaluations are presented to students.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

Provision of Lifelong Learning Programmes (LLPs) is one of the FFRI's particular strengths. There is a wide range of LLP offerings (currently 16 programs) and the FFRI plans to expand them. As conveyed in the Panel's 20 October meeting with FFRI management, departments lead in deciding which LLPs to offer and the priority is improving teaching competencies. The FFRI has commendably built increasing teacher competencies into its strategic planning (FFRI's 2014-2020 and 2019-2023 Development Strategies). Teachers, with whom the Panel met on 21 October, are well informed about the opportunities available to them and take advantage of them. This applies as well to teaching assistants and postdoctoral researchers, with whom the Panel met on 23 October.

There is a sufficient amount of international mobility to and from the FFRI. In the last five academic years, FFRI teachers and associates took advantage of a total of 156 stays at other HEI of up to 3 months for teaching, professional and research reasons (MOZVAG table 4.5). FFRI employees had 17 total stays of over three months at other HEIs for teaching and research purposes. There were 121 visits of up to three months by academic staff from other HEIs to FFRI in the same period. High quality instruction in English and other foreign languages (e.g., Italian) facilitates mobility, particularly of assistants and postdoctoral researchers. However, in the past five academic years, no colleagues from other HEIs stayed at the FFRI for longer than three months (MOZVAG table 4.5). There is no doubt that the FFRI would benefit from more long-term mobility to Rijeka.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel notes that the dissemination of information to teachers about international mobility programmes and external project funding opportunities could be streamlined. Several participants in the 23 October meeting with leaders of research projects noted excessive and unprioritized communication coming from the FFRI and the UNIRI. Teachers could also be more actively encouraged to pursue mobility. The FFRI should aim to attract colleagues from other universities to stay for longer than three months.

Quality grade

High 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

The FFRI building provides appropriate space for the teaching and scientific activities undertaken on the premises. Those members of the Panel who visited the site on 20 October 2020 were impressed by the space and facilities available. The library, common spaces for student socialization, and lecture halls struck the Panel members as particularly good features of the building. A piano in one of the central common spaces added to the spirit of community. Those of the Panel who did not have the opportunity to conduct an on-site visit watched the FFRI's promotional video and noted on the quality of the premises and clear access for disabled students. The technical specifications of the building support the conclusions of the Panel in this regard. Nearly all teaching offices and classrooms are equipped with computers and nearly 5,000 square meters are devoted to learning activities (MOZVAG table 4.8). Based on the Panel's 22 October meeting with students, they seemed satisfied with the facilities available, though the lack of sufficient heating in some of the lecture theatres during the winter was remarked upon.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel recommends improvement in the area of IT services. Specifically, the FFRI should have its own IT support, as is the case at comparable HEIs elsewhere in Croatia. First, designated IT support would help ensure consistency in the information disseminated by the various departments, something that the Panel notes is currently a weak point. Second, it would likely help increase the amount of information in English available to international students and teachers. Third, although teachers expressed satisfaction with enhanced IT support since the beginning of the COVID-19 situation, the Panel foresees sustained demand for increased IT support in future. Designated FFRI IT services would guarantee a continuing robust response to such situations.

Quality grade

Satisfactory 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

Overall, the FFRI library is an impressive facility that adequately supports teaching and research activities. It is spacious (460 square meters) and well appointed. In terms of holdings, it boasts extensive repository of materials necessary for teaching along with specialist journals and monographs. It contains 78,396 volumes along with 108 printed foreign journals and 229 printed Croatian journals (MOZVAG table 4.10). Students can access compulsory titles (1,262) in multiple volumes (4,904). According to FFRI management, the library provides electronic access to around 50 bibliographic and citations indices, local databases, and several thousand digital resources (books and articles). Undergraduate and postgraduate theses and dissertations are available. Students and teachers both expressed satisfaction with their access to e-resources. Effort could be made to more widely index the FFRI's in-house journals, e.g. Western Croatian History Journal.

There are several areas in which the Panel recommends minor changes. First, the library's opening hours (9:00-17:00 on weekdays) seem inadequate to meet student demand, particularly during examination periods. Second, the library could reduce the number of essential resources available only for one-day loan (Self-Evaluation Report) through the acquisition of more copies or, preferably, electronic versions of these resources. Third, as revealed in the 20 October meeting with FFRI management, library acquisitions are led by individual departments. The Panel recommends implementing some coordinated acquisitions strategy among the departments, potentially in the form of a library committee composed or representatives of the various departments.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
The FFRI manages its financial resources rationally. In none of the Panel's meetings with various groups of stakeholders during the reaccreditation process was there any mention of financial impropriety. This, along with extensive documentation of income and expenditures (e.g., MOZVAG table 4.11), leads the Panel to conclude that the FFRI manages its financial resources transparently and appropriately. It is commendable that each department receives an equal amount of money.

Recommendations for improvement

The Panel generally approves of how departmental resources are allocated, though it recommends somewhat higher remuneration for ECTS coordinators (currently 2,000 Kuna per annum) along with standardization of this across departments.

Quality grade
High level of quality

V. Scientific/artistic activity

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

Analysis
There is considerable evidence that teachers and associates have been publishing papers in both fields covered by the FFRI. The FFRI has compiled a list with comprehensive data on number of publications in the fields of humanities, i.e. humanities (FH) within five-year period - 639 by 8 departments: cc 80 per department, cc 98 % of them in the highest category, ie.16 per year), and of social sciences, i.e. social sciences (FSS) - 390 by 2 departments: cc 190 each, cc 70 % of them in the highest category, cc 133 each (26 per year). Hence, while per department FSS published more than double in comparison to departments in FH, it also published 60% more high-quality category publications. Within both fields there was a similar number of published book chapters, 30 vs. 33 per department. All relevant publication data has been studiously recorded.

An example of the increased number of Q1 and Q2 articles published in the SCOPUS database shows a total increase of 13 articles (12 vs. 25) at the end of five-year period in FH, while there was no increase in FSS (12). A small positive tendency is clear.

Evidence – List of publications with citation impact of publications, total h-index (where applicable); List of publications categorized in accordance with the Ordinance on the Conditions of Appointment to Scientific Grades (i.e. OCASG).

The quality of scientific publishing was one of the Action Plan goals in the previous re-accreditation procedure 2009-2013, and three years later has become a part of the FFRI Research Development Strategy 2016-2020 (i.e. RDS 2016-2020). There is considerable evidence that the FFRI monitors high-quality scientific publications and encourages teachers and associates to publish in them. Since 2015/16, scientists and editors-in-chief have been awarded for their work (published works in Q1 journals or their successful work on increasing the international recognition of the FFRI journals, number of articles in foreign languages, internationalization of the editorial board, regularity and frequency of publishing, in accordance with the

University of Rijeka 2014-2020 Strategy (i.e. URS). Since the end of 2017 scientists were awarded on the principles of excellence regulated by the Ordinance on Awards and Recognitions of the FFRI. Much effort has been made to meet standards of the highest quality of their own journals, which are notable in the fields of art history nationwide (Ikon), and philology (Fluminensia).

The FFRI annually keeps records through reports of strategies or scientists' personal reports, and monitors citation impact and h-index through Google Scholar and updated CROSBI database. The library offers bibliometric certificates. There is a coordinator for science at each department who collaborates with the Vice Dean for Research and International Cooperation. There is considerable evidence that the FFRI keeps records of scientific publications (e.g. on site lists). All kind of lists were offered on site with neatly categorized data, such as List of publications categorized in accordance with the OCASG for the field; List of citation impact of publications, total h-index (where applicable); list of WoS publications.

The Self-evaluation states that there are four doctoral studies, in both fields, but that one has ceased to operate and that within the five-year period 26 PhD thesis were defended (including 11 at the UPG History and Dialectology of the Croatian language and 7 at the UPG Philosophy and Modernity, on Mozvag and web-pages the title is Philosophy and Contemporaneity), on average 5 per year. The English webpage is under construction at the moment and not much information is available. There was a list of defended theses offered. The examples of the defended PhD thesis offered on disposal were not all representative with regards to FFRI scientific activity and their structure was not always clear. One PhD thesis in Croatian had only a short summary in English which was not informative enough for people that could not read in Croatian (information on specific research questions or hypothesis, on data or methodology was not included and the conclusion was not always clear).

There is considerable evidence (List of participations of teachers and associates at research and professional conferences; List of teachers and scientists who were members of organizing of program committees; List of conferences organized by the FFRI (on site lists), even clips of local papers that reports on them was presented) that the teachers and associates participated at national and international conferences: 1321 within the five-year period, on average app. 264 participations per year, 26 at each department. However, two departments in the FSS published much more peer-reviewed conference publications per department than the eight departments in HS: 17 vs. 40. Within the five-year period the FFRI organized 90 conferences, on average 18 per year, which is very impressive as it requires a lot of work in addition to other duties.

Recommendations for improvement

We note an imbalance in the publishing output of the FH and the FSS and we recommend that all departments within FH try to publish more high-quality publications to match departments in FSS. It should be obligatory that English-language summaries include all the same information as the extended Croatian summaries of PhD theses written in foreign languages; this will ensure internationally visibility. Scientific conferences should be recorded separately from the professional conferences as the latter are not evidence of achievement in science.

Quality grade
Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis
FFRI provides evidence for the social relevance of its scientific / artistic / professional research and transfer of knowledge is a mission of the FFRI's included is RDS 2016-20. The FFRI invests a lot of energy and time of its teachers and associates' dissemination of research results and expertise. There is considerable evidence that the FFRI monitors and takes into consideration the needs of society, particularly the local and regional context, e.g. a partial list of teachers who have cooperated with society and labour market institutions through digitization, proofreading, translation, writing or publishing books; cooperation with cultural, artistic and touristic institutions (such as museums and national theatre; tourist board; various exhibitions), educational institutions (such as Agency for Education, schools), medical and social institutions (such as Clinical hospital centre, health care institutions), as well as in local and media coverage.

There is considerable evidence that the FFRI is oriented toward popularization of knowledge, both on the local (e.g. Rijeka of Psychology) and the national level (e.g. Science Festival, Brain Week), and some are financially supported by the FFRI. There were 288 activities recorded in the self-evaluation with various topics, e.g. reports and expertise (17), articles in professional journals (34), popularization articles (76), forums and workshops organized (169).

Teachers and associates are involved with various scientific organizations (e.g. national committees for some scientific fields), educational organizations (eg. University Council), professional organizations (e.g. Croatian Philology Society, Croatian Applied Linguistics Society, Croatian Society for Analytic Philosophy) on local, regional, and national level.

Lists with roles or memberships of FFRI's teachers and associates in different boards, advisory boards and committees, public literature readings, broadcasting, and

TV-programs; list of expertise's, reports, and reviews; lists of professional papers and newspaper articles that promote the FFRI and its activities; lists of workshops and public lectures etc. Their goal of promoting the importance of humanities, psychology and pedagogy is thus recognizable nationwide. It is an example of a very good practice.

Recommendations for improvement

FFRI teachers are eager to participate in all kinds of activities, but it is not quite clear that there is regulation of procedures and financial support, hence those could be clarified. As many teachers are involved in time-consuming research besides teaching, assessment of those extra activities should be quite transparent. Also, not all departments participate equally, e.g. Art History and History 1%, Psychology 21%.

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

Teachers and researchers have received FFRI, university and national awards. Apart from 2014, when a group of 15 scientists received the annual Croatian Parliament award for the organization and active participation in a local psychology event and one philologist was awarded a CASA award, every year one or two awards were given to researchers of the FFRI, together three state awards (2015, 2018) and two international awards (2016, 2017), two of them to young researchers. University of Rijeka awarded four psychologists from the FFRI twice (2015, 2017) and in 2018 one young scientist (2016, 2018). Seven employees received significant professional awards for art books or psychological contributions and one for the best novel. Two employees received local awards for research of interwar architecture, and for study of Cristian art (2016) and one for promoting of the European dimension in education (2018).

The University of Rijeka financially supported 24 of the FFRI projects in the 2013-2017 cycle (11 projects in FH and 13 in the FSS), and supported three young researchers for networking. In the cycle 2018-2020 it supported 33 of the FFRI's scientific research projects (17 in FH and 16 in the FSS), including eight young researchers who received finances for their mutual networking. Although listed as projects, young researchers explained that the support enables them to cover travel expenses and literature purchases.

The FFRI had 12 CSF projects in 2018, which is a remarkable effort due to great and time-consuming administrative tasks, challenges between CSF requirements and FFRI implementation possibilities, as well as success as they had only four in 2014.

However, leaders of the CSF projects, which should be considered outstanding just by virtue of having successfully applied for them (due to competition and obstacles), did not receive ample teaching relief and continued to teach full loads, despite assurances to the contrary (23 October meeting with CSF leaders).

Teachers and associates participate in 17 international research projects. These projects have a wide range of important and innovative topics, and made FFRI recognizable as an outstanding Faculty nationwide, i.e. AThEME, UE4SD, e-Confidence.

Teachers, associates and professional staff have participated as invited lecturers in 27 international conferences in Croatia or abroad (average 5,4 per year) and 45 national conferences (9 per year). There is evidence that the FFRI employees were invited to the plenary presentations (on site lists), list of invited speakers, example of invitation letter, conference programs. However, the number is not exceptionally high considering that there are eight departments and two divisions within the FFRI and that FFRI itself has organized 90 conferences (on average 18 per year), and that some invited speakers were invited at those conferences.

Within the five-year period, teachers and associates were committee members for the program or organization of conferences, most of which were international or with international participation: 68 were organized elsewhere and 76 at the FFRI. The Department of Philosophy was the most active in organizing international conferences.

The FFRI publishes five journals, which appear in 1-3 issues per year. One publishes articles in English only (European Journal of Analytic Philosophy), one in Croatian as well (Psychological Topics), two in four languages (Ikon, Western Croatian History Journal) and Fluminensia in Croatian, English and other foreign languages. They are all included in the Hrčak database. Two of them, Fluminensia and Psychological Topics, met the criteria of the MSE and received support from it until 2018 (later MSE transferred funding to the universities). Editors of four journals managed to increase visibility of those journals by including them in the journal database. Fluminensia and Ikon are included in Web of Science; both of them and Psychological Topics are included in the Scopus database. Editorial boards include 10 to 32 members, 4 to 14 from Croatia, 6-18 from abroad, hence the percentage of foreign members ranges from 36% to 60 %.

Teachers and researchers are members of editorial boards of 33 journals, out of which 17 are quoted in WoS and Scopus databases, 17 only in Scopus and nine are recognized as A2 journals. Besides Fluminensia and Ikon, the FFRI were members of editorial board in eight other journals in the highest quartiles (Q1 and Q2). The list of editorial boards together with their function (editors-in-chief, executive editors, guest editors, members of editorial board) was presented as the evidence (on site lists), and database hrcak.srce.hr gives free access to complete articles.

Recommendations for improvement

A protocol should be made that would clearly state the rights and duties of future project leaders, as well as project participants, between the management of the FFRI as well as control system that will immediately solve the problems if they appear, e.g. if departments do not fulfil the obligation of allowing researchers to concentre on research activities when the lead competitive projects rather than teach full time, too many different courses or even over full time.

As most of the rewarded teachers and researchers are from the Dept. of Psychology, and then Dept. of Art History, and employees from some departments did not receive a single reward, measures should be taken to either recognize the successful researchers from those other departments or to support or motivate researchers from those departments to strive for excellence. Efforts should be made to promote FFRI teachers and scholars internationally, through joint programs or maybe joint studies.

Quality grade
High level of quality

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

Analysis
The research activities are in line with the University of Rijeka 2014-2020 Strategy because they rely on it, as well as FFRI Research Development Strategy 2016-2020 (the vision of the development of FFRI and established scientific activities). Their own strategy was prepared in 2019 (Development Strategy of FFRI 2019-2023). The set strategic goals are monitored through annual reports on institutional, department and individual level.

Among the listed goals, several seem to be fulfilled: increasing the number and quality of published scientific papers, increasing research funding through larger budgets generated by domestic and foreign research projects; increasing research funding from EU programs.

The FFRI shows increased productivity of scientific research, i.e. the number of publications cited in the SCOPUS database (from 50 in 2014 and 45 in 2015 to 63 in 2018), the number of projects, the number of doctoral students, particularity full-time doctoral students, mentors (from 31 in 2014 to 56 in 2018) and defended thesis dissertations.

The FFRI prepares the financial plan which is subject to rigorous review. But there is no comprehensive system of support for resource planning for scientific research. Secured annual funds are not enough to support scientists in all needs, e.g. literature, equipment, databases, programs.

The Action plan was implemented, and in 2017 the Regulation of Awards and Recognitions of FFRI was elaborated. Since 2015, various researchers and editors-in-chief were praised, acknowledged, or awarded, and from 2017/18, they were awarded for scientific research, special achievements in scientific work, for popularization of science, as well as scientific work as young researchers. List of awards and recognitions was presented, and teachers mentioned that their achievement even at other levels are publicly praised, such as participation in a marathon.

Recommendations for improvement

The goal to increase the number of researchers in the circulation system (visiting professors and researchers coming to FFRI or going abroad) should be more observed in order to increase international visibility of FFRI researchers, esp. the number of person-days realized at the University of Rijeka. The new FFRI strategy should be implemented and monitored.

Workshops and seminars for young mentors could be a FFRI regular and integral part of doctoral studies and Ph.D. student conferences.

FFRI is aware that a comprehensive system of support for resource planning is a necessity, hence it should be made. FFRI should offer more systematic support (esp. in calculation of budgets) for applicants for major external research funding.

Quality grade

Satisfactory level of quality

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

Analysis

Despite evidence that students, especially postgraduates, participate in research projects, only a few heads of projects with whom the Panel met on 23 October mentioned that they (systematically) involve PhD students in some projects; the numbers and type of involvement were not elaborated upon. Several members mentioned that some graduate students are involved with the organization of events.

Teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels that was observed by a couple Panel members to some extent reflects professional activities and achievements of FFRI. Some courses that were established to fulfil the needs of local and regional needs are examples of good practice, as well as the fact that some theses were written in Italian, German. Some departments cooperate extensively with each other. There was a list of scientific and professional publications co-authored by students; List of publications co-edited by students; List of final, graduation and doctoral theses

developed within projects. Doctoral theses to some extent reflect the scientific research and professional activities and achievements of the FFRI (on site lists and examples).

Recommendations for improvement
Students' involvement at all levels should be systematic in all or most of the departments. Doctoral students should be obliged to participate in at least one scientific project.

Quality grade
Satisfactory 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	

SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

Tuesday, 13th October 2020
Education of Panel members in virtual form

11:50 -12:00 (CEST)	Joining the ZOOM meeting via link
12:00 – 14:00	- Presentation of ASHE - Overview of the higher education system in Croatia - Re-accreditation procedure - Standards for the evaluation of quality - How to write the Final report

Monday, 19th October 2020
Preparation of the Expert Panel members for the meetings
with HEI in virtual form

12:50 -13:00 (CEST)	Joining the ZOOM meeting via link
13:00 – 16:00	Preparation of the Expert Panel members for the meetings with HEI (discussion on the Self-evaluation report and supporting documents)
16:00	Departure of Croatian Expert Panel members to Rijeka

Tuesday, 20th October 2020
Preliminary site-visit of Expert Panel members to the HEI

8:50– 9:00 (CEST)	Joining the part of the Expert Panel members to the ZOOM meeting via link
9:00 – 10:00	Meeting of Expert Panel members with the Dean and Vice-Deans
10:00– 10:20	*Break*
10:20 – 11:20	Meeting of Expert Panel members with the Quality Assurance Committee
11:20 – 12:45	***Document analysis***
12:45 – 14:00	**Tour of the Faculty** (classrooms, computer classrooms, library, student services) **and participation in teaching classes**
14:00 –	return of Croatian Expert Panel members to Zagreb

Wednesday, 21st October 2020
First day of re-accreditation in virtual form

9:50 – 10:00 (CEST)	Joining ZOOM meeting via the link
10:00 – 10:30	Meeting of Expert Panel members, discussion on observations and impressions from the preliminary site-visit, preparation for the meetings with HEI stakeholders
10:30 – 11:15	Meeting of Expert Panel members with vice dean for academic affairs and dean's assistant for study programmes
11:15 – 11:30	*Break*
11:30 – 12:30	Meeting of Expert Panel members with heads of departments and heads of divisions
12:30 – 13:30	*Break, Internal meeting of the Panel members*
13:30– 14:30	Meeting with full-time employed teachers, except those in managerial positions
14:30 – 14:45	*Break*
14:45 – 15:15	Organisation of an additional meeting on open questions, if needed
15:15 – 16:00	*Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members – comment on the first day and preparation for the second day*

Thursday, 22nd October 2020
Second day of re-accreditation in virtual form

9:00 – 9:30 (CEST)	Joining ZOOM meeting via the link and a short internal meeting of the Expert Panel members
9:30 – 10:20	Meeting with: • Head of the Centre for Teacher Education • Head of the Office for Projects and International Cooperation • Heads of Faculty Centres for Lifelong Learning • ECTS coordinators
10:20 – 10:30	*Break*
10:30 – 11:30	Meeting with students
11:30 – 12:30	*Break*
12:30 – 13:00	Meeting with Alumni (former students who are not employed by the HEI)
13:00 – 13:30	Organisation of an additional meeting on open questions, if

	needed
13:30 – 14:30	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members – comment on the second day and preparation for the third day

Friday, 23rd October 2020
Third day of re-accreditation in virtual form

9:40 – 10:10 (CEST)	Joining ZOOM meeting via the link and a short internal meeting of the Expert Panel
10:10 – 10:50	Meeting with the Vice-Dean for Research and International Cooperation
10:50 – 11:00	*Break*
11:00 – 11:40	Meeting with the Heads of research projects
11:40 – 11:50	*Break*
11:50 – 12:30	Meeting with Teaching Assistants and postdoctoral researchers
12:30 – 13:00	*Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members*
13:00 – 13:30	Organisation of an additional meeting on open questions, if needed
13:30 – 13:45	Exit meeting with the Dean and Vice-Deans
13: 45 –	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members – assessment according to quality standards

SUMMARY

In summary, in all categories except 3.5, FFRI was graded either as satisfactory or high level of quality. Overall, then, FFRI is clearly a well-structured, organised and managed institution (with particularly strong professional services, financial administration and human resources) which was very well-prepared for, and committed to, the evaluation process and engaged in an open, reflective and authentic manner. It has a very responsive faculty governance team which is clearly committed to continually and proactively improving the quality of its policies, procedures, and existing study programmes, etc. as well as developing new courses which respond to changing contexts and needs: all these aspects have clearly been influenced and improved by serious and systematic responses to previous ASHE evaluations, as well as many internal review processes.

At the same time, the Panel did have some concerns about some aspects of FFRI's operations. Firstly, early-career researchers, teaching assistants and doctoral students at FFRI are burdened with a particularly high workload when compared with more senior colleagues – especially with regard to administrative and student-facing tasks which are concentrated in the pre-enrolment period in September, such as coordinating ECTS, facilitating Erasmus, *etc.* Moreover, this imbalance was noted in the previous FFRI evaluation and has not been resolved.

Secondly, the procedures for managing student complaints at a departmental level are not as effective as it could be, and many students are unaware of the complaint procedure on both a departmental and faculty level. Relatedly, FFRI's Quality Assurance Committee does not have nominated representatives from each department who are responsible for reporting to the Committee and implementing changes recommended by the Committee on a departmental level, and, as such, FFRI's quality assurance mechanisms are not working as effectively or efficiently as they could be.

Thirdly, the quotas for each study programme are not necessarily aligned with the demand for those programmes: some departments offer too many places when compared with that labour market demand, whereas others offer fewer places when compared with the labour market demand.

Fourthly, FFRI's Croatian and English websites are not consistent in their quality and ease of access of information such that FFRI is not as visible as it could be to prospective international students, and, as the institution moves towards offering more programmes delivered in English, potentially limits the scope of access to necessary information for international students who are not fluent in Croatian.

Finally, at present, neither FFRI nor the University of Rijeka has a formal and codified definition of 'underrepresented groups' and the equality assurance policy appears to be implicitly centred around disabled students. In order to effectively measure the faculty's performance in accommodation 'underrepresented groups' of all

types and make clear to students from 'underrepresented groups' that they can approach the faculty and/or university for support, the faculty needs to have a definition to refer to.

In conclusion, though, the Panel would like to commend FFRI for engaging in the evaluation process in an open, reflective and authentic, as well as responding quickly, decisively and effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic to optimise the delivery of its teaching during the pandemic and prioritise developing its students' digital skills.