



Report
of the Expert Panel
on the REACCREDITATION
of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme
Literature, Theatre and Performing Arts, Film, Musicology and Culture
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb

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INTRODUCTION

The Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) created this Report on the Re-accreditation of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme *Literature, Theatre and Performing Arts, Film, Musicology and Culture* on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report of the Programme, other documentation submitted and a visit to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Zagreb.

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and a full member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), re-accredits higher education institutions (hereinafter: HEIs) and their study programmes in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10). In this procedure parts of activities of higher education institutions and university postgraduate study programmes are re-accredited.

Expert Panel is appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to carry out independent evaluation of post-graduate university study programmes.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Short description of the study programme,
- The recommendation of the Expert Panel to the Agency's Accreditation Council,
- Recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure),
- A brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- A list of good practices found at the institution,
- Conclusions on compliance with the prescribed conditions of delivery of a study programme,
- Conclusions on compliance with the criteria for quality assessment.

Members of the Expert Panel for Humanities and Social Sciences:

1. Prof. Alan O'Leary, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
2. Prof. Tim Woods, Department of English and Creative Writing, University of Aberystwyth, United Kingdom
3. Prof. Claudia Tiersch, Philosophische Fakultät, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Germany
4. Prof. Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom
5. Prof. Bojan Aleksov, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, United Kingdom
6. Prof. Kurt Villads Jensen, Stockholms Universitet, Sweden
7. Prof. Emmerich Kelih, Department of Slavonic Studies, Universität Wien, Austria
8. Prof. Barbara Sonnenhauser, Universität Zürich, Switzerland
9. Iuliana Soficaru, doctoral candidate, Central European University, Hungary
10. Dajana Vasiljevićová, doctoral candidate, Charles University, Czech Republic
11. Prof. James Wickham, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
12. Prof. Gergely László Rosta, Institut für Soziologie, Universität Münster, Germany
13. Prof. Václav Štětka, Loughborough University, United Kingdom
14. Ieva Bloma, doctoral candidate, European University Institute, Italy
15. Nika Đuho, doctoral candidate, Catholic University of Croatia, Croatia.

The higher education institution was visited by the following Expert Panel members:

1. Prof. Alan O'Leary, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
2. Prof. Tim Woods, Department of English and Creative Writing, University of Aberystwyth, United Kingdom
3. Prof. Claudia Tiersch, Philosophische Fakultät, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Germany
4. Prof. Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Glasgow, United Kingdom
5. Prof. Bojan Aleksov, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, United Kingdom
6. Prof. Kurt Villads Jensen, Stockholms Universitet, Sweden
7. Prof. Emmerich Kelih, Department of Slavonic Studies, Universität Wien, Austria
8. Prof. Barbara Sonnenhauser, Universität Zürich, Switzerland
9. Iuliana Soficaru, doctoral candidate, Central European University, Hungary
10. Dajana Vasiljevićová, doctoral candidate, Charles University, Czech Republic

The following Expert Panel members took part in the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report:

1. Prof. Alan O'Leary, School of Languages, Cultures and Societies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
2. Prof. Tim Woods, Department of English and Creative Writing, Aberystwyth University, Wales, United Kingdom

The Panel was supported by:

- Marina Matešić, coordinator, ASHE,

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

- Management,
- Study programme coordinators,
- Doctoral candidates,
- Teachers and supervisors.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk and the classrooms.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme: *Literature, Theatre and Performing Arts, Film, Musicology and Culture*

Institution providing the programme: University of Zagreb

Institution delivering the programme: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Scientific area and field: Humanities, Philology; Science of Arts

Place of delivery: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Number of doctoral candidates (all): 59

Number of HEI funded doctoral candidates: 7

Number self-funded doctoral candidates: 52

Number of inactive doctoral candidates: 0

Number of teachers at the doctoral study: 46 (26 employed at the Faculty, 20 external)

Number of supervisors: 4

Learning outcomes of the programme:

LO 1: critical reading of scholarly literature, with the aim of mastering research concepts

LO 2: analysing and comparing theories within field of research

LO 3: defining relevant research questions

LO 4: proposing and elaborating theoretically founded hypotheses

LO 5: integrating basic factors from the subfields, disciplines, and branches in own research

LO 6: analysing and interpreting material in accordance with mastered theoretical frameworks

LO 7: modifying, creating, and applying methods appropriate for specific research objectives

LO 8: independently producing oral and written reports on research in accordance with the rules of scholarly practice

LO 9: providing valid arguments in research

LO 10: devising and conducting local and international research projects

LO 11: applying ethical principles in planning and carrying out research

Programme outline:

1st module: Literature, theatre and performing arts, film and culture: 74 ECTS in coursework: 100 in research : 6 in teaching

1st year: 48 ECTS in coursework (10 subjects); and 12 in tutorials

2nd year: 6 ECTS in course work (1 subject) + 20 ECTS for attending another doctoral programme (26); and 34 in various research/teaching activities (teaching 6ECTS, tutorials and defence of proposal, conference and publishing.

3rd year: all 60 ECTS in tutorials and work on thesis.

2nd module: Musicology

First 4 semesters all in coursework: 25 ECTS for 14 courses

5th and 6th semesters seminars and conservatory (8 ECTS)

RECOMMENDATION BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

Upon the completion of the re-accreditation procedure and the examination of the materials submitted (Self-Evaluation Report etc.), the visit to the higher education institution and interviews with HEI members in accordance with the visit protocol, the Expert Panel renders its opinion in which it recommends to the Accreditation Council of the Agency the following:

3. **issue a letter of expectation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements. The letter of recommendation does **not** include suspension of student enrolment for the defined period.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. The programme needs to be made consistent with other doctoral programmes across the faculty and university
2. To remove the two-year “disciplinary content” teaching modules and substitute a systematic and rigorous research and methodological skills programme
3. To initiate an independent research trajectory with doctoral candidates as early as possible in semester 1 of the programme
4. To ensure a far stricter time-limit and process of monitoring progression from year-to-year towards a 3- to 4-year submission deadline, and a proper structure for part-time doctoral research with necessarily longer but still time-limited deadline
5. To monitor outcomes and successful completions of all doctoral candidates
6. The institution should ensure that student feedback and representation are an integral part of the running of the doctoral programme
7. To offer more substantial research resources to candidates who need to use archives in other countries or resources to support international conference presentations, and to ensure proper communication of availability of such support
8. The programme needs to ensure a consistent experience for both internal/‘inside’ and external/‘outside’ doctoral candidates (these terms refer to those employed at the institution as teachers, project assistants, etc, or in receipt of a scholarship (internal/‘inside’), versus those in employment elsewhere or, in any case, not based at the institution itself (external/‘outside’))
9. All doctoral candidates should have a university web profile outlining research field and project

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. A good relationship built up between many of the candidates and their supervisors
2. Good facilities within the Faculty and the appropriate Library and study resources
3. Evidence shows that PhD study is advantageous in certain jobs and professions even before award of doctorate
4. Presence of international teaching staff

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. No systematic research skills and methodology programme

2. Scarce resources for students to support overseas archival work or other conference participation
3. The length of time it may take to complete a doctoral programme
4. Too much 'content' teaching and not enough independent research focus

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The requirement for two languages as an entry requirement to the programme
2. The strong focus on ethnomusicology in the Musicology programme
3. The admission of a doctoral candidates from a variety of backgrounds

COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF A STUDY PROGRAMME

Minimal legal conditions:	YES/NO notes
1. Higher education institution (HEI) is listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations in the scientific area of the programme, and has a positive reaccreditation decision on performing higher education activities and scientific activity.	YES
2. HEI delivers programmes in the two cycles leading to the doctoral programme, i.e., first two cycles in the same area and field/fields (for interdisciplinary programmes), and employs a sufficient number of teachers as defined by Article 6 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10).	YES for Literature, but NO for Musicology
3. HEI employs a sufficient number of researchers, as defined by Article 7 of the the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (OG 83/2010).	YES
4. At least 50% of teaching as expressed in norm-hours is delivered by teachers employed at the HEI (full-time, elected into scientific-teaching titles).	NO
Many teachers are either external, adjunct or retired (emeriti), particularly in Musicology. Some lack academic qualifications to hold a course (research fellows). Since there is no table for supervisors, we can assume these are also supervisors.	
5. Student: teacher ratio at the HEI is below 30:1.	YES
6. HEI ensures that doctoral theses are public.	YES
7. HEI launches the procedure of revoking the academic title if it is determined that it has been attained contrary to the conditions stipulated for its attainment, by severe violation of the studying rules or based on a doctoral thesis (dissertation) that has proved to be a plagiarism or a forgery according to provisions of the statute or other enactments.	YES
Additional/ recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council for passing a positive opinion	YES/NO notes
1. HEI (or HEIs in joint programmes) has at least five teachers appointed to scientific-teaching titles in the field, or fields relevant for the programme involved in its delivery.	YES for Literature, but NO for Musicology
In Musicology, it seems that none of the teachers is employed at the Faculty (Davidović is from the university but employed at the Academy of Music?)	
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	YES
3. The doctoral programme is aligned with the HEI's research strategy.	YES for Literature module, no for Musicology (no mention of this field in the Strategy)
4. The candidate : supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	YES

<p>5. All supervisors meet the following conditions:</p> <p>a) PhD, elected into a scientific title, holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position and/or has at least two years of postdoctoral research experience;</p> <p>b) active researcher in the scientific area of the programme, as evidenced by publications, participation in scientific conferences and/or projects in the past five years (table 2, Supervisors and candidates);</p> <p>c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the candidate (or submission of the proposal);</p> <p>d) ensures the conditions (and funding) necessary to implement the candidate's research (in line with the draft research plan) as a research project leader, co-leader, participant, collaborator or in other ways;</p> <p>e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-supervisions etc.);</p> <p>f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.</p>	<p>No (see below)</p>
<p>Note to 5: Since there is no Table with supervisors, we assume the Teachers in the Table are potential supervisors. Then, we have a substantial number of retired, external and adjuncts and fellows (and even high school teachers) who do not meet the criteria for supervision. Among academic employees, there seem to be a large number without an active research record. Several have few papers, or just conference presentations in past 5 years.</p>	
<p>6. All teachers meet the following conditions:</p> <p>a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position;</p> <p>b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course (table 1, Teachers).</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Note to 6: Evidence would seem to suggest that not all teachers hold a scientific-teaching position. Furthermore, not all appear to be active researchers, since some have a publication schedule that stops in 2016.</p>	
<p>7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>8. The programme ensures that all candidates spend at least three years doing independent research (while studying, individually, within or outside courses), which includes writing the thesis, publishing, participating in international conferences, field work, attending courses relevant for research etc.</p>	<p>Unclear</p>
<p>Note to 8: With over 70 ECTS in set courses throughout all three years, this seems unlikely. However, it appears that many candidates will continue the PhD for an unspecified number of years after courses have been completed.</p>	

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

	Quality assessment (“high level of quality” or “improvements are necessary”) and the explanation of the Expert Panel
1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
<p>1.1. HEI is distinguished by its scientific/ artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Zagreb plainly has a strong intellectual tradition, and the success of the programme in terms of enrolment is testament to the reputation and draw of the place, and the high quality of local expertise. SER states that of staff employed in core activities, about 20% are full professor, about 15% are associate professors, and about 23% are assistant professors. Many, including international teachers brought in for special lectures and teaching, maintain an active research profile in relevant fields, but a surprisingly large number of directly and indirectly employed staff seem to be relatively inactive. It was not clear that there are robust procedures for monitoring the research and publication activity of teaching/supervisory staff. When a supervisor is proposed, the programme council and faculty council may ask to see figures for publication; in theory, questions may be asked if no relevant publications can be evidenced. It was not clear, though, how often such questions might be asked in relevant circumstances. Likewise, it was hard to discern procedures for gauging the international visibility of staff.</p> <p>SER did not dwell on research culture as such, but we got some on-site testimony of research events, seminars and conferences organised. It seems, though, that the doctoral candidate experience of these varied across disciplines. It seemed also that the only regular (annual?) dedicated doctoral conference took place in Split, not Zagreb.</p> <p>Staff reported two nationally funded research projects currently ongoing, with a HERA project that lasted until 2016. With a view to better funding the local research culture, we endorse plans to increase research funding bids and the appointment of dedicated research bid writers.</p> <p>Overall, while aspects of good quality are certainly in place, some improvements are necessary.</p>
<p>1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p>

<p>ensure quality doctoral education.</p>	<p>The fact that the teaching and supervision workload in the programme is not currently part of the recognized workload of the teaching staff means that doctoral candidates are likely to experience inconsistent quality and attentiveness in teaching and supervision.</p>
<p>1.3. The teachers are highly qualified researchers who actively engage with the topics they teach, providing a quality doctoral programme.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>While there are obviously many eminent and well-respected researchers involved in the programme, a large proportion of the teaching staff seem to be research-inactive. There is also a sense that much of the research may be somewhat local in interest (lacking a comparative dimension, for example), and much of the publishing is done solely in Croatian.</p>
<p>1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>See 1.3.</p> <p>While information on research projects was missing from the SER, it appears that there are two nationally funded projects in musicology. Zagreb was involved in a HERA project until 2016. There are a number of small scale bilateral 2-year projects. A research support office facilitates funding applications.</p> <p>We got contradictory information about funds available for travel – conferences, research costs etc. — for candidates and staff. This suggests that there is patchy or ineffective communication of support and finance available.</p> <p>A key absence that made 1.4 difficult to gauge is that no records are kept of candidate performance and completion. There seem to be no consequences (or specific protocols for help) for poor performance as far as we could ascertain.</p> <p>Overall, it seemed highly likely that while some candidates would have an excellent experience, this was down to the willingness or good will of individual teachers/supervisors and that better communication and, crucially, better protocols needed to be put in place to ensure consistency of treatment and support for <i>all</i> candidates.</p>
<p>1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The SER states that the programme tries to implement ‘all</p>

<p>supervisors.</p>	<p>university, state and international evaluation forms and procedures’, but the impression gained was that there was an inconsistent and perhaps informal system of monitoring in place. While, for example, student evaluation of the Programme is conducted at the end of each academic year, it was unclear how the content of this evaluation might be acted upon. As set out in 1.3, it seems that many staff are not research active, and it is unclear if the institutional evaluation procedures operate to encourage better and more consistent research activity across the staff body.</p>
<p>1.6. The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.</p>	<p>High quality</p> <p>While the library is mainly education rather than research focussed, there seem to be substantial and adequate e-access for journals—particularly important for ‘outsider’ students. We did not see evidence of dedicated work space for doctoral candidates during our visit, but the SER indicates that adequate space is provided.</p>
<p>2. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME</p>	
<p>2.1. The HEI has established and accepted effective procedures for proposing, approving and delivering doctoral education. The procedures include identification of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social and economic needs.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>This programme is still new so it has not previously been evaluated. However, it is clear that it has grown organically, taking form in response to certain local and national structural conditions. This means that it does not always replicate the protocols or structures of other programmes, and much of the workings and running of the programme seems to be performed on an informal basis. We noted that there seemed to exist no Postgraduate researcher handbook and that, in general, while institutional regulations were in place, there seemed to be no operational guide, setting out, say, the responsibilities of supervisor role. The point, once again, is that this situation makes it unlikely that candidates will encounter consistent treatment, teaching and supervising.</p> <p>The question of the communities the programme might be serving is a complex one that does not seem to have been raised except in an implicit way. It is clear that one of the programme problems has to do with a public perception that it is enough to be registered on a doctoral programme (this seemed to be enough to get a promotion for some ‘outsider’ candidates—i.e. those not employed or not benefitting from a scholarship at the University itself); the</p>

	<p>inevitable result of this is low completion rates, and an over-reliance on individual candidate motivation for successful completion.</p>
<p>2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Aspirationally, yes, the programme is aligned with institutional vision and strategy, but as stated above, there is some way to go to make it consistent with other programmes and to ensure consistency of experience for the doctoral candidates. In addition, it was not clear that there was a shared and transparent perception among staff, students and public of what a PhD means.</p>
<p>2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The SER states that the bibliographies of tenured and adjunct staff are updated annually and that professors and thesis directors report on their activities and plans, also annually.</p> <p>Doctoral candidates report annually on their activities and tutorials.</p> <p>However, processes do not seem to be in place to systematically collect and analyse feedback from candidates, and certainly not from alumni or students who drop out. Hence, it seemed unlikely that effective monitoring could be achieved of the supervision system, the support provided by the institution, or information about reasons to drop out. There was no collection or analysis of feedback from other stakeholders (e.g. employers).</p>
<p>2.4. HEI continuously monitors supervisors' performance and has mechanisms for evaluating supervisors, and, if necessary, changing them and mediating between the supervisors and the candidates.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Again, the SER states admirable intention to comply with the applicable University Regulations, stipulating the rights and obligations of doctoral candidates and thesis directors, and the procedures for resolving possible problems between them. However, more 'present' and transparent mechanisms seemed to be needed. Conversations with doctoral candidates gave the impression that procedures exist, but that functioning seems to rely on relationships with individuals. Again, there seemed the potential for an inconsistent experience across the candidate body.</p>

<p>2.5. HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>SER states that academic integrity (preventing plagiarism and other forms of unethical conduct) and the freedom of research are ensured. The Ethical Board of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences stipulates rules of conduct and sanctions for students and staff in its Ethics Code. The University has an Ethics Council which also stipulates rules of conduct and sanctions. Teachers at the undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate level educate students in academic integrity and inform them of the examples of violation, sanctioning any attempt at unethical conduct. However, it was clear that research ethics is not systematically taught, and certainly not in a dedicated session and to all students. This confirms our strong impression that there needs to be a dedicated generic research skills programme put in place, replacing the current extensive and arduous programme of content teaching.</p>
<p>2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.</p>	<p>High quality</p> <p>This appeared to be the case. Students confirmed the account of procedure outlined in SER.</p>
<p>2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Documents provided and conversations in situ confirmed the procedures for developing and defending the doctoral thesis.</p> <p>It was not demonstrated that publication was encouraged during the doctorate, though this seemed more likely to be the case if the candidate was an ‘inside’ rather than an ‘outside’ candidate (these terms refer to those employed at the institution as teachers, project assistants, etc, or in receipt of a scholarship (internal/‘inside’), versus those in employment elsewhere or, in any case, not based at the institution itself (external/‘outside’), and were used by staff and students during our visit). Again, this raises questions about the consistency of treatment of candidates.</p>
<p>2.8. The HEI publishes all necessary information on the study programme, admissions, delivery and conditions for progression and completion, in accessible outlets and media.</p>	<p>High quality, but consistency must be ensured.</p> <p>This criterion seem to be satisfied but we repeat that procedures and information need to be harmonized and standardized within and across programmes.</p>

<p>2.9. Funds collected for the needs of doctoral education are distributed transparently and in a way that ensures sustainability and further development of doctoral education (ensures that candidates' research is carried out and supported, so that doctoral education can be completed successfully).</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>It appears that the programme is currently funded through student fees, and this seems to be part of the reason for large or at least unselective recruitment. Because teaching and supervision is not part of ordinary workload, teachers are paid from the student fees. The panel received contradictory information about the availability of money to help candidates' research, conference attendance etc. (it seemed that most/all money was used to pay for teaching). Certainly, there was a lack of evidence of systematic help and finance to make candidates become more competitive as researchers and in the academic job market.</p>
<p>2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).</p>	<p>Unclear if high quality or if improvements are necessary.</p> <p>The SER states that tuition fees are approved and supervised by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. A dead web-link made it hard to discern how the tuition fee was arrived at, and we didn't get enough information to gauge if the fees represented value for money.</p>
<p>3. SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION</p>	
<p>3.1. The HEI establishes admission quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary (especially with consistency).</p> <p>The HEI does take account of the number of available supervisors, but there appears to be no teaching workload model operating in the Department, or across the Faculty. The quality of the supervisors is loosely considered but not rigorously and there seems to be a culture of admitting most applicants. This approach appears to be driven by the necessity of paying the two-year teaching element of the programme. The Panel was assured that a teacher does not supervise more than 3 candidates on the programme as a whole within the Department, but there are occasions where a supervisor might also supervise outside the programme and this has the potential for a supervisor to exceed the 3 candidate limit. Therefore, there appears to be no overall way of ensuring the supervisory limit across the Faculty.</p> <p>The Panel was informed that the programme does define the obligations of supervisors and co-supervisors,</p>

	<p>candidates and research teams. There are University/ Faculty guidelines regarding these definitions of duties on the website. Nonetheless, it would appear that in practice, the training of supervisors to undertake supervision and chair Viva panels is done patchily and inconsistently. The Panel wishes to endorse the ambitions of the Faculty to harmonise and standardise these procedures for the future.</p>
<p>3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.</p>	<p>Improvements (in record keeping and data analysis) necessary.</p> <p>The Panel saw no evidence of any admission quotas within the Faculty, and certainly no evidence of a debate about the wider scientific/artistic, cultural, social and economic needs when admitting doctoral candidates. The process appeared to be driven largely by the needs to refresh the academy than by any wider professional or societal needs. The Self Evaluation Report (SER) makes no mention of this issue beyond giving the numbers of enrolments on the Programme. The strong implication is that the Programme admits all or most applicants, suggesting little quality control on admission beyond certain base requirements.</p> <p>The Faculty appears to keep no data on doctoral completion rates, outcomes, or unemployed PhD candidates. The Panel strongly recommends that the Faculty collects and monitors such data in a more systematic manner. This will allow more effective management of the life-cycle of a PhD candidate from admission to completion and beyond.</p>
<p>3.3. The HEI establishes the admission quotas taking into account the funding available to the candidates, that is, on the basis of the absorption potentials of research projects or other sources of funding.</p>	<p>High quality</p> <p>The Panel was only made aware of two research projects that helped fund a very few doctoral candidates. There are some candidates who receive funding from their employers. The majority of the candidates appear to be self-funded, although this is not untypical in Humanities-based PhD programmes in other EU countries as well.</p>
<p>3.4. The HEI should pay attention to the number of candidates admitted as to provide each with an advisor (a potential supervisor). From the point of admission to the end of doctoral education, efforts are invested so that each candidate has a sustainable research plan and is able to complete doctoral research successfully.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The HEI does ensure that candidates admitted to the programme have supervisors are appointed and that students develop a sustainable research plan. However, the Panel felt that this research plan ought to be worked out much earlier for candidates, so that an independent research trajectory can begin more promptly after admission. Evidence would suggest that many candidates do not complete their doctoral studies, or take a very long</p>

	time in so doing. The Panel would advise a far stricter time-limit on carrying out the independent research.
3.5. The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Panel found evidence that project-funded PhD opportunities are advertised publically, but that these tended to still be allocated under a patronage system. There are a few international candidates, although these tended to be from the immediate neighbouring countries. The Panel felt that there was still considerably more work to be done to attract international applicants from a wider international range, especially for the Faculty's disciplinary strengths in central and eastern European studies.</p>
3.6. The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The SER clearly lays out the criteria for admission to the Programme, and these are in keeping with the criteria for many European countries. An interview does occur as part of the admissions procedure. However, while project-funded studentships are advertised publically, there was evidence to suggest that the successful appointments emerged through a patronage system (see 3.7). Given the observations in 3.1 and 3.2, the Panel felt that the quality control on applicants was questionable, when there seemed to be no limit on the number of candidates selected for the programme which produces a low threshold of competence.</p>
3.7. The HEI ensures that the selection procedure is transparent and in line with published criteria, and that there is a transparent complaints procedure.	<p>High quality</p> <p>The HEI does ensure that the selection process is largely transparent and that there is a transparent complaints procedure. No complaints have been received to date.</p>
3.8. There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.	<p>High quality</p> <p>There are procedures in place to recognise applicants' prior learning and qualifications from other countries. The SER outlines these procedures clearly.</p>
3.9. Candidates' rights and obligations are defined in relevant HEI regulations and a contract on studying that provides for a high level of supervisory and institutional support to the candidates.	<p>High quality</p> <p>The HEI has the appropriate regulations and procedures in place at a high level. The Panel would recommend some sort of "Student Handbook" of a more accessible and</p>

	operational nature. A student contract was instituted in 2018/19, and it is, therefore, too early in the programme for any students to have signed it yet. Some slight improvement would be beneficial.
3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The programme is still new and so data on these issues is still patchy. However, evidence suggests that the only candidates who received support for any publications are registered with a project. It was repeatedly stated that there were no resources available to help students with archive work outside Croatia, the presentations at international conferences, or any other financial support to aid in the progression of doctoral research. There are a few support offices (International Office) and procedures (a mailing of grant opportunities), but these were not systematic or consistent.</p>
4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES	
4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.	<p>Unclear if high quality or if improvements are necessary.</p> <p>The Panel found evidence to suggest that the content and quality of the doctoral programme is aligned with international standards in principle, but that in practice it was less comparable. There is not enough evidence at this stage to judge the quality of the outcomes. The two-year teaching pattern that precedes independent research is not in line with many European doctoral models, and as a structure is likely to pose an obstacle to comparing the standards between Croatia and other European countries. The aspiration to undertake interdisciplinary research is laudable, although it is difficult at this stage to see evidence in the final outcomes.</p>
4.2. Programme learning outcomes, as well as the learning outcomes of modules and subject units, are aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF. They clearly describe the competencies the candidates will develop during the doctoral programme, including the ethical requirements of doing research.	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Panel found that several of the Learning Outcomes were of an appropriate level. However, the Panel also felt that LO8 was an expectation at BA level, and that what appeared to be missing were LOs based on “evaluating”, “assessing”, “appraising” material, concepts and arguments. Furthermore, one of the principal and central tenets of a doctoral thesis in many countries in the “original contribution to knowledge” (or some such clause), and this does not appear in the LOs. It was also unclear how LO 10 was carried out (the mapping states it occurs in tutorials). Finally, LO 11 about ethical principles in research appears</p>

	<p>to be taught to some students, but it occurs in a haphazard and ad hoc manner, rather than a consistent approach. Indeed, many of these LOs appear to be inconsistent across modules and supervision, and the Panel would endorse the Faculty's aim to harmonise and standardise many of these research skills and tools across the Faculty doctoral training. The Panel would suggest the removal of the two years' "disciplinary content" teaching and the substitution of Research Skills and Methods modules that are common to all doctoral programmes and requirements. This would bring the benefits of 1) being more efficient to administer across the Faculty and different disciplines, 2) being more sustainable and financially prudent for the Faculty, and 3) bringing the doctoral programmes more in keeping with European models of 3/4-year doctoral schemes.</p>
<p>4.3. Programme learning outcomes are logically and clearly connected with teaching contents, as well as the contents included in supervision and research.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The SER lays out a mapping exercise that matches LOs to the modules, however, in the light of the comments and observations in 4.2., a new and more rigorous mapping exercise may need to occur.</p>
<p>4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>It is still early in the establishment of the programme to measure the full extent of the quality of research outputs. However, a sample of some previous PhDs and publications suggests that most research outputs are in national journals or publication sites. The evidence suggests that previous candidates are able to demonstrate competencies against the LOs, but that the most salient competency "original contribution to knowledge" (see 4.2 above) is absent.</p>
<p>4.5. Teaching methods (and ECTS, if applicable) are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Panel found evidence of some of these skills being taught, albeit in an inconsistent and haphazard manner. Much depended on the module a student took and the tutor that a student had. The Panel felt that the absence of a systematic programme of research and methodological skills was a distinct hindrance to developing successful internationally comparable and confident doctoral candidates. This observation ties into comments in 4.2. The Panel's over-riding conclusion was that too much "disciplinary content" teaching occurred in the first two years, which was far more appropriate to an MA programme rather than a doctoral programme. Advanced</p>

	<p>research skills taught in a systematic and consistent manner across all doctoral schemes was more in keeping with European models.</p>
<p>4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Panel found that the doctoral programme did provide the acquisition of transferable skills but that this was not systematic and somewhat haphazard (see 4.2 and 4.5). The Musicology programme did inculcate specific skills. There was some evidence of a few opportunities for students participate in sessions at other universities (Split, outside Croatia), but again, this was not systematic and regular.</p>
<p>4.7. Teaching content is adapted to the needs of current and future research and candidates' training (individual course plans, generic skills etc.).</p>	<p>Unclear if high quality or if improvements are necessary.</p> <p>The Panel found that individual modules might contain some flexibility in terms of its content, but that the overall programme did not contain any course that could be adapted as suggested in the criteria. Individual supervisors were able to offer specialist knowledge and skills that could be adapted to individual research plans, but there were no individual research plans attached to be able to judge this.</p>
<p>4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.</p>	<p>Improvement is necessary</p> <p>The Panel found that the HEI offers information and processes to encourage student mobility. However, there appeared to be no resources to help students undertake this, with no programmatic help and no practical opportunities even though theoretically available. The SER demonstrates that the HEI is acquainted with the relevant European Charters and Codes. Some staff had opportunities for international travel associated with their research, although evidence for this was sparse.</p>

*** NOTE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AND QUALITY LABEL**

The role of the Expert Panel in the re-accreditation of doctoral study programmes is manifold. The Expert Panel or part of the Expert Panel visiting a higher education institution drafts a report on the basis of a self-evaluation report, the accompanying relevant documentation, and a site visit to HEI. The draft report is adopted by all members of the Cluster Expert Panel, while the president of the Cluster Expert Panel is responsible for coordinating the assessment levels.

The report contains an assessment on whether a doctoral study programme delivered at a higher education institution complies with the prescribed laws and by-laws, as well as any additional/recommended requirements defined by the Agency's Accreditation Council, and whether a higher education institution can obtain a positive, i.e. satisfactory quality assessment according to the criteria set out in this document. Moreover, the Expert Panel must make recommendations for quality improvement.

Based on the assessment of all these elements, the Expert Panel may propose to the Accreditation Council of the Agency to issue either a confirmation on compliance, a letter of expectation for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should eliminate the identified deficiencies, or to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel has assessed that a doctoral study programme delivered by a higher education institution does not meet legal and other requirements or that the quality of a study programme is not ensured (i.e. that HEI does not meet additional requirements or recommendations made by the Accreditation Council, or has a very poor quality assessment), they should propose to the Accreditation Council to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel considers that the relevant laws and bylaws have been met by a higher education institution, but that certain elements mentioned above do not meet the quality requirements, while they consider that the identified shortcomings can be corrected within a time frame of three years, they should issue a letter of expectation.

If the Expert Panel considers that all legal and additional/recommended requirements have been met and the quality assessment is satisfactory, i.e. that a study programme fulfils the learning outcomes appropriately defined for that level and scientific area, they may propose the issuance of a certificate and have a HEI commit to quality improvement and reporting to the Agency during the follow-up period.

Finally, if the Expert Panel has, in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, proposed issuing the certificate of compliance and assessed that, in addition to meeting the minimum quality requirements – i.e. the qualification framework level - for a study programme, the programme should be identified as a doctoral programme of a 'high level of quality', the Expert Panel may propose to the Agency's Accreditation Council that such a doctoral study programme be awarded the 'high quality label'. Thus the Agency, with the consent of the Accreditation Council, grants a higher education institution the right to use the label for their academic and promotional purposes.

The 'high quality label' cannot be proposed or awarded to a programme or a higher education institution that does not comply with the requirements laid down by the laws and bylaws mentioned in this document, and any additional requirements recommended by the Accreditation Council. Moreover, the quality assessment awarded to a study programme should reflect a high level of quality inasmuch that at least half of the sub-criteria in each of the quality assessment criteria are assessed as being of high quality. The Accreditation Council of the Agency issues a final opinion on the label awarded. The content and form of the quality labels shall be prescribed by the Agency in a relevant general act.

The Accreditation Council of the Agency discusses the final report with all recommendations and suggestions, and issues their opinion on the report. Based on a prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation to the minister responsible for science and higher education, and upon receipt of the minister's final decision on the outcome of the procedure, awards the 'high quality label' to a higher education institution.