

Approval of the Application by Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) for Renewal of Inclusion on the Register

Register Committee
27/28 June 2022

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Application of:	2020-12-07
Agency registered since:	2011-08-01
External review report of:	2022-03-08
Review coordinated by:	European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education (ENQA)
Review panel members:	Asnate Kazoka, Tia Loukkola, Damian Michalik, Tadej Tuma
Decision of:	2022-06-28
Registration until:	2027-03-31
Absented themselves from decision-making:	Aleksandar Šušnjar
Attachments:	1. External Review Report, 2022-03-08 (separate file) 2. ASHE Change Report & Annex, 2022-04-07 3. Minuted clarification to the Review Panel, 2022-06-07.

1. The application of 2020-12-07 adhered to the requirements of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.
2. The Register Committee confirmed eligibility of the application on 2020-12-22.
3. The Register Committee considered the external review report of 2022-03-08 on the compliance of ASHE with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015 version).
4. The Register Committee further considered the Change Report submitted by ASHE together with its review report on 2022-04-07.
5. The Register Committee sought and received clarification from the chair of the review panel on 2022-06-07.

Analysis:

6. In considering ASHE's compliance with the ESG, the Register Committee took into account the following external QA activities:

- *Reaccreditation of higher education institutions;*
- *Re-accreditation of the Part of the Activities of Higher Education Institutions (Reaccreditation of PhD study programmes);*
- *Audit of higher education institutions;*
- *Initial accreditation (of higher education institutions and programmes);*

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7. In addition the Register Committee also took into account the ESG compliance of two new activities:

- *Evaluation of joint programmes using the European Approach*
- *Cross-border study programme accreditation.*

8. Since these activities have not been covered by the self-evaluation and external review report of ASHE, the Committee considered the information provided by the agency in its change report. The Committee noted that the new activities largely follow ASHE's established external QA activities reviewed against the ESG [see ESG 2.1-2.7 below].

9. The Register Committee understood that the activity *thematic evaluations* is an activity outside the scope of the ESG (see also under ESG 3.1) and therefore its compliance with the ESG was not addressed by the panel.

10. ASHE's other activities: *initial accreditation of new scientific organisations, recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, applications to study programmes, analytics and statistic in higher education and science, support to strategic and professional bodies in the system of science and HE, international projects* are not external quality assurance activities within the scope of the ESG. They are thus not pertinent to ASHE's registration on EQAR.

11. The Register Committee found that the report provides sufficient evidence and analysis on ASHE's level of compliance with the ESG.

12. With regard to the specific European Standards, the Register Committee considered the following:

ESG 2.1 – Consideration of internal quality assurance

13. The Committee noted that the joint study programme accreditation process is based on standards employed for the European Approach for the QA of Joint Programmes, which are aligned with the standards and criteria of ESG.

14. The Committee noted that ASHE has translated ESG 1.1-1.10 into its *cross-border study programme accreditation* activity. The Committee however could not establish how the new activity addresses all standards of ESG Part 1 in practice. This is expected to be further covered in the next external review of the agency.

ESG 2.2 – Designing methodologies fit for purpose

15. The Register Committee noted that methodologies used by ASHE in Croatia have been developed in close cooperation with stakeholders.

16. With regards to the *cross-border study programme accreditation activity*, the agency explained that the procedure has been developed and adopted by its Accreditation Council, which is formed of representatives from various stakeholder organisations. The agency added that prior to the accreditation process for cross-border procedures, stakeholders within the country of the reviewed higher education institution/programme are contacted in order to ensure that contextual information is reflected in the final accreditation report.

17. While the Register Committee welcomed the consultation of stakeholders prior to the accreditation process, the Committee underlined that ASHE is expected to follow an in depth approach in the design, review and update of criteria and methodology for *cross-border study programme accreditation* and to ensure a wider engagement of stakeholders through e.g. surveys, focus groups etc.

ESG 2.3 – Implementing processes

18. The Register Committee noted that site visits are part of the new activities and in implementing processes ASHE follows the same guidelines as in its other external review processes. All processes are pre-defined and published.

19. The consistent implementation of ASHE's external quality assurance processes for the new activities is expected to be covered in the next external review of the agency.

ESG 2.4 – Peer-review experts

20. The Register Committee noted that in the selection, training and briefing of the expert review panels ASHE follows the general principles (criteria) defined in the methodology for all its assessment procedures, including for its new activities.

21. The Register Committee could verify that in the case of the completed *cross-border study programme accreditation* procedures the expert panels included representatives of higher education institution(s), a representative with expertise in quality assurance in higher education and a student representative.

ESG 2.5 – Criteria for outcomes

22. In its last review, the panel identified a number of concerns with regards to the inconsistency in the application of ASHE's criteria and the transparency of ASHE's decision-making policies.

23. The Register Committee noted that ASHE has since introduced procedural guidelines and professional support by its staff to prevent

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inconsistencies in the application of criteria. The representatives of higher education institutions whom the experts met confirmed that the decisions (even the negative ones) have been well justified and explained.

24. In ensuring consistency and transparency in the application of its criteria for *evaluation of joint programmes using the European Approach* and *cross-border study programme accreditation* ASHE explained that it provides professional support to the panel and that it organises informative meetings for higher education institutions to explain the evaluation process, quality standards and the manner in which they are assessed.

25. While the Committee welcomed the improvements to support the consistency in the decision making of the Accreditation Council, the Committee further underlined the panel's recommendation of ensuring that the experts are informed of the comments received on their report from higher education institutions and that higher education institutions are informed of the changes that have been made to the expert report.

26. The Committee further underlined the panel's recommendation to pay special attention to the reasoning set out in the letter of expectation leading to an enrolment ban and to consider including in the methodologies a more clear definition when enrolment ban can be applied.

27. Despite some room for improvement identified by the panel in ensuring the consistency in the preparation of the final reports and clarity in the reasoning in the application of enrolment bans, the Register Committee considered that ASHE has largely addressed its earlier shortcomings and therefore concurred with the panel's conclusion that ASHE complies with the standard.

ESG 2.6 – Reporting

28. In its last review, the panel noted that ASHE's reports of initial accreditation procedures were not published. The panel commented that the agency has since its last external review increased the visibility of its review reports but recommended that ASHE rethinks the search criteria available on its report database.

29. The Committee welcomed ASHE's policy to publish all reports, and could verify that outcomes of both initial accreditation procedure and *cross-border study programme accreditation* are available on the agency's website.

30. Having been able to verify the publication of initial accreditation reports the Register Committee was able to concur with the panel's judgement that ASHE now complies with ESG 2.6.

ESG 2.7 – Complaints and appeals

31. In its last review, the panel noted that the body deciding on appeals was the same body that made the decision being appealed. The Committee also noted that the appeals procedure did not cover the review outcomes for initial accreditation procedures.

32. In response to the shortcomings, ASHE established a separate Complaints Committee in charge of reviewing complaints¹ against all the outcomes (recommendations) of the Accreditation Council, including initial accreditation. The Register Committee understood from the panel's analysis that the documentation on the complaints was sufficient and that the reasoning for unsubstantiated and substantiated cases was convincing.

33. The Committee however noted that the complaints procedure addresses only the outcomes of external QA activities, and it does not allow higher education institutions to raise substantiated concerns on 'procedural grounds' about the external QA process or conduct of review experts (i.e. complaints as described in the guidelines).

34. Considering the lack of policies and processes for handling concerns by institutions about the conduct of the process or those carrying it out, the Register Committee remained unable to conclude that ASHE meets the requirement of the standard, but concluded that ASHE complies only partially with standard 2.7.

ESG 3.1 – Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

35. The review panel's analysis shows that while stakeholders are actively represented in the governing and decision-making bodies, student participation has not been considered for two recently established governing bodies (Complaints and Follow-up Committee). The Register Committee concurs with the panel's view that the activities of the two committees are directly linked with the ones performed by the Accreditation Council and that the agency should allow for student participation irrespective of the workload or formal nature of the activities performed by these bodies.

36. The Register Committee noted that ASHE carries out the *initial accreditation of new scientific organisations* of higher education institutions or units belonging to higher education institutions, an activity that is not covered by EQAR-registration i.e. not within the scope of the ESG. The Register Committee found the presentation of such activities is not effectively distinguishable on the agency's database of reviews, i.e. the results of *initial accreditation procedures of new scientific organisations* is presented together with other accreditation procedures covered by EQAR registration. The Committee has therefore asked the panel to clarify how ASHE ensures an adequate level of separation between these procedures and those activities within the scope of the ESG.

37. The panel stated that on its website, ASHE has a distinct presentation for each of its different evaluation and licensing procedures explaining their different scope. The panel added that the accreditation of scientific organisations is different to a regular accreditation procedure of study programmes or of universities as the licensing/accreditation of scientific activity does not grant power to such institutes to open study programmes,

¹ Complaint is here understood as appeals, following the description under the ESG 2.7 guidelines. The terminology is however adapted, following the way it is employed by ASHE and review panel.

but only allows them to perform scientific activities, apply for different projects and to finance their research.

38. The panel was asked to further clarify what was the main reasoning for not considering *thematic evaluations* within the scope of the ESG and whether thematic evaluations are effectively distinguishable from ASHE's other external QA activities covered by EQAR-registration. The panel explained that thematic evaluations do not follow a pre-defined and unified methodology, but are always adapted following a request from the Ministry; the activity is not carried out cyclically (as required by ESG 1.10) but only upon request. The panel considered that these reviews are distinguishable from regular study programme or higher education accreditation procedures given the approach to thematic evaluations is wider in scope i.e. in addition to the assessment of individual units of higher education institutions, the assessment concludes with the review of a full higher education system.

39. The Committee underlined that in its external review of 2017 the results of thematic analysis lead to the system-wide re-accreditation of PhD study programmes which at that time were considered as being in the scope of the ESG (see Review Report 2017, p. 13). The Committee understands that the form taken by thematic evaluations might be adapted to different request and that it does not always address teaching and learning in individual higher education institutions. The Register Committee can also follow the reasoning of the agency that the activity is outside the scope of the ESG, but underlined that the agency is expected to be consistent and unambiguous in the way it defines such activities. The presentation currently on ASHE's webpage does not provide sufficient clarity on whether the activity is within or outside the scope of the ESG, being currently listed along other activities that are within the scope of the ESG².

40. The Committee finds that ASHE lacks a clear communication that would reduce the risk of confusion between external quality assurance within the scope of the ESG and its other activities i.e. thematic evaluations, and it does not sufficiently involve stakeholders in all its governing bodies (in particular considering the participation of students in the Follow-up Committee).

41. While individually the two above-mentioned issues would be of limited concern, weighting in both matters the Committee is unable to concur with the panel's conclusion of compliance, but considered that ASHE only partially complies with the standard.

ESG 3.3 – Independence

42. The Register Committee noted that the Ministry for Science and Higher Education decides on the final outcome of the evaluation procedure based on the opinion/recommendation of the Accreditation Council and asked the panel to clarify under what circumstances can the Ministry decide differently from the formal opinion/recommendation of the Accreditation Council.

²See Annex 2 of EQAR's Use and Interpretation of the ESG
<https://www.eqar.eu/about/official-documents/#use-and-interpretation-of-the-esg>

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43. The panel explained that the ministry may not change the recommendation/opinion made by the Council and that it has to follow the legal proceedings in place. The decision on accreditation has to be based on two main sources: the formal application documentation by the higher education institution and the recommendation (opinion) of the ASHE Accreditation Council. The decision of the ministry is in practice a formality and there have not been cases where this would have differed from the opinion of the Accreditation Council. The review panel discussed with the Ministry the possibility of delegating the final formal decision-making power on the outcome of an accreditation procedure to the Agency. The Ministry was open to this proposal, but explained this cannot be simply done by a Ministerial act, as this would require a change in the legislation of higher education in Croatia.

44. The Committee concurs with the panel's proposal on the need to strengthen the agency's autonomy, i.e. of having the final formal decision-making power on the outcomes of accreditation procedures.

45. Considering the clarifications provided, the Register Committee can follow the panel's conclusion that ASHE complies with ESG 3.3.

46. For the remaining standards, the Register Committee was able to concur with the review panel's analysis and conclusion without further comments.

Conclusion:

47. Based on the external review report and the considerations above, the Register Committee concluded that ASHE demonstrated compliance with the ESG (Parts 2 and 3) as follows:

Standard	Review panel conclusion	Register Committee conclusion
2.1	Full compliance	Compliance
2.2	Full compliance	Compliance
2.3	Full compliance	Compliance
2.4	Full compliance	Compliance
2.5	Full compliance	Compliance
2.6	Full compliance	Compliance
2.7	Full compliance	Partial compliance
3.1	Substantial compliance	Partial compliance
3.2	Full compliance	Compliance
3.3	Full compliance	Compliance
3.4	Full compliance	Compliance
3.5	Full compliance	Compliance
3.6	Full compliance	Compliance
3.7	(not expected)	Compliance (by virtue of applying)

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48. The Register Committee considered that ASHE only achieved partial compliance with some standards. In its holistic judgement, the Register Committee concluded that these are specific and limited issues, but that ASHE continues to comply substantially with the ESG as a whole.

49. The Register Committee therefore renewed ASHE's inclusion on the Register. ASHE's renewed inclusion shall be valid until 2027-03-31³.

50. The Register Committee further underlined that ASHE is expected to address the issues mentioned appropriately and to resolve them at the earliest opportunity.

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³ Inclusion is valid for five years from the date of the external review report, see §4.1 of the EQAR Procedures for Applications.

EQAR Substantive Change Report

Reference #	22090939
Status	Complete
Login Username	medju@azvo.hr
Login Email	medju@azvo.hr
Agency #1	Agency for Science and Higher Education
Agency acronym	ASHE
Expiry date #1	28/02/2022
Contact #1	Emita Blagdan
Phone #1	+38516274 880
Email #1	emita.blagdan@azvo.hr
Other organisations?	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed?	No
C. Changes in EQA activities	1. One or several new external QA activities were introduced
Description new/changed	<p>Upon a number of requests from the representatives of foreign HE institutions to carry out various types of external evaluation processes, the ASHE has developed additional standards for:</p> <p>a) cross-border study programme accreditation and</p> <p>b) joint study programme accreditation based on European Approach.</p>
1. New EQA activity:	

1	Cross-border study programme accreditation
2	Joint study programme accreditation based on European Approach
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • study programmes or higher education institutions • joint programmes using the European Approach for the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes
ESG 2.1	<p>Regarding cross-border study programme evaluation processes, in the document STANDARDS FOR THE EVALUATION OF QUALITY OF STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE PROCEDURE OF CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION (attached to this report), each assessment area is linked to the relevant ESGs based on which a specific set of standards have been developed. The document has been adopted by the ASHE's Accreditation Council.</p> <p>The joint study programme accreditation process is based on European Approach Standards.</p>
ESG 2.2	<p>ASHE's methodology for all types of external evaluation processes is developed and adopted by the ASHE's Accreditation Council. Members of the ASHE's Accreditation Council are representatives from different stakeholders in the higher education (representatives of public and private HEIs, labour market, student, international QA expert). Their vast expertise in quality assurance and diverse experience in HE ensures that each new processes and criteria are fit for purpose.</p> <p>In the cross-border accreditation process and joint-study accreditation process, stakeholders in the process (HEIs or consortia of HEIs, national Ministry, national Agency, ASHE's ENIC/NARIC</p>

office, etc.) are contacted by the ASHE in order to collect all relevant contextual information prior to the start of the evaluation process. Gathered information refer to the national HE system, status of the HEIs delivering the programme subject to accreditation, national standards and criteria, national licencing procedure, if such exists, national minimum criteria, etc. In that way, national context(s) is taken into account during the accreditation process and the outcomes of the accreditation process are recognised in the country and internationally.

ESG 2.3

1

<https://www.azvo.hr/en/evaluations/evaluations-in-higher-education/cross-border-activities>

ESG 2.3

The site visit (either conducted online, in presence or hybrid) is always part of the accreditation procedure.

ASHE always carries out the external evaluation procedures independently.

ESG 2.4

The expert panels are appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council.

The panel has 3-5 members:

- Two - four representatives of HEIs
- One representative of HEIs with expertise in quality assurance
- Student representative

In order to create the panel, the ASHE uses its data base of international and national reviewers as well as approaches relevant experts through its own networking and communication channels.

The ASHE screens the CVs of potential

candidates according to the following criteria:

- Academic qualification(s)
 - Further professional development
-

- International experience
- Memberships and role in professional bodies
- Managerial role in HEIs in the past 10 years
- Experience with developing curricula
- Knowledge of the EQF
- Experience in QA processes and ESGs
- Knowledge of English or other relevant language
- Quality of scientific output

The selected panel members are independent from the HEI delivering the study programme under review. Before commencement of the procedure, all selected reviewers have to sign a non-conflict of interest declaration.

The ASHE organizes a training with a panel. The aim of the training is to provide reviewers with guidance regarding accreditation procedure and to facilitate a common understanding of accreditation standards and their link to the relevant ESG standards.

The ASHE ensures that all experts understand national legislation and are experienced in working with the ESGs and standards based on ESGs.

ASHE provides the HEI with the list of experts appointed by ASHE's Accreditation Council to which the HEI has the right to complain.

ESG 2.5

Well defined, clear and unambiguous quality standards together with elements of standard and examples of evidence are one of the principal mechanisms for ensuring consistency in the assessment of quality standards made by various expert panels involved in external evaluation process. In doing so, a thorough preparation of the expert panel during which the focus is on understanding the quality standards and the manner in which they are assessed, is extremely important.

Moreover, throughout the external evaluation process, ASHE coordinator provides professional support to expert panel members.

Before the QA evaluation procedure/site visit, members of the panel have a training organized by ASHE (national system/s, ESG, procedure and goal of the evaluation process) and a joint preparatory meeting, where panel members harmonize their views of fulfilment the standards based on collected evidences for the study program undergoing the external evaluation procedure. ASHE coordinator guides the panel members during whole QA procedure, ensuring well understanding and consistent implementation of the evaluation standards and criteria.

Before writing the SAR, ASHE organises the informative meeting for HEI during which the focus is on understanding the evaluation process, quality standards and the manner in which they are assessed as well as the outcome of the process.

ESG 2.6

1

https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/vrednovanja/medunarodna/Panel-report-Algebra%20Epitech_final%20English.pdf

2

<https://www.azvo.hr/ishodi-vrednovanja/?lang=en>

ESG 2.7

The HEIs may lodge a complaint on the composition of the panel and final decision thereof is passed by the ASHE Accreditation Council (AC). If the Council finds that the complaint has merit, it will appoint other members of the panel.

The HEIs may comment on the panel's final report, referring only to factual inaccuracies.

HEI's official statement to the report is submitted

to the AC as one of the relevant documents for issuing ASHE accreditation Opinion.

The opinion of the AC is submitted to the HEI which has the right to file a written objection to the AC's Opinion.

An objection can be filed for substantial violations of the accreditation rules which could have rendered inaccurate the opinion of the AC.

The Complaints Committee appointed in the Agency decides on the objection.

The Committee members are not in any conflict of interest and sign a Confidentiality and Non-Conflict of Interest Statement.

The composition and role of the Committee is defined by the Rules of Procedure of the Complaints Committee.

The Committee may request additional explanations from the coordinator and/or the members of the expert panel, if needed to render an opinion on the objection.

The Committee's opinion is submitted to the AC. The AC discusses the opinion of the Committee, reach a decision and submit it to the Agency for the purpose of adopting an accreditation recommendation.

In such a case the AC's opinion is final, and the HEI is not allowed to submit another objection.

ESG 3.4/ESG 3.6

In the light of strengthening cross-border cooperation in the higher education sector and following the Agency's Strategy 2021-2025, strategic Objective 01 Preserve and improve the relevance of external quality assurance in line with social trends and Sub-objective 1.2 Development of new external evaluation procedures in accordance with needs and national and international strategic guidelines, the ASHE has developed new quality assurance models adapted to different national and sectoral

environments.

The ASHE has recently started with the implementation of this new strategic goal through:

- a) seven program evaluations carried out throughout 2021 and 2022 in Ukraine and
- b) the first joint study programme accreditation carried out in 2021.

Both of these procedures were carried out in accordance with the ESG 2015 and the latter one in accordance with the European Approach.

The implementation of this strategic goal is an integrated part of the internal quality assurance system of the ASHE in the same way as implementation of all other external evaluation processes through collection of feedback from the stakeholders and introducing improvements in the cross-border / joint-study evaluation procedures as well as by producing thematic analyses of the effectiveness of such activities.

D. Activity outside the scope of the ESG	No
File #1	QUALITY_STANDARDS_Cross-border_ASHE.pdf (353 KB)
Submit form?	I am ready to submit the change report form
Last Update	2022-04-07 11:44:11
Start Time	2022-04-07 10:36:06
Finish Time	2022-04-07 11:44:11
IP	193.198.183.8
Browser	Chrome
Device	Desktop
Referrer	https://fs22.formsite.com/EQAR_forms/substantive-change/form_login.html



STANDARDS FOR THE EVALUATION OF QUALITY OF STUDY PROGRAMMES IN THE PROCEDURE OF CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

The document includes **standards** for quality assessment, which are also used to evaluate adherence to the **standards** and to pass a **grade of quality of a study programme**.

Assessment area - standards are grouped into units (5 assessment areas), which refer to various aspects of assessment of quality of a study programme.

Standard – a clearly defined level of quality of a particular aspect of quality of a study programme.

Description/level of compliance/elements of the standard - elements taken into account in the assessment of compliance of an aspect of quality of a study programme against a standard.

Evidence - data (facts) used to make a conclusion on the level of fulfilment of the standard.

**The evidence stated in this document are only examples that the higher education institution may use in drafting the Proposal of the study programme. Moreover, a higher education institution may also use other evidence. It can also help the expert panel in assessing the level of fulfilment of a quality standard. In addition to this evidence, the expert panel may use other evidence as well as information gathered from the Proposal of the study programme and during the site visit in making their decision.*

Assessment area I: Internal quality assurance system of the higher education institution delivering the study programme (ESG 1.1., ESG 1.7., ESG1.8.)

1.1. Internal quality assurance system (IQAS) of the higher education institution ensures adequate implementation and monitoring of all activities related to the delivery of the study programme, revisions and improvements of the study programme.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution has developed clear and transparent mechanisms for periodic monitoring and supervision of the quality of delivery and continual improvement of the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>Development activities of the higher education institution related to the study programme are systematic and regular, and include various stakeholders (representatives of the business sector, students, associations, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution defined key indicators for monitoring the quality of the study programme delivery and the method of collecting them.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution analyses suggestions for improvement of the study programme delivery based on earlier evaluation procedures and implements them.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution records study programme revisions and analyses their fitness for purpose.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution provides support to teachers and students in the quality assurance procedures.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of implemented study programme revisions; • Form for instigating the procedure for the study programme revision. 			
<p><u>Comment/note/commendations/recommendations</u></p>			

1.2. The higher education institution ensures availability of all information on the study programme and important aspects of its activities (teaching and/or scientific and social role).	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Information on the study programme is publicly available on the website of the higher education institution in national language and English.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution informs the public on the admission criteria, enrolment quotas, learning outcomes and qualifications gained by completion of a study programme, graduate employability, drop-out rates and pass rates on the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution publishes information about all forms of student support available.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website of the higher education institution, social networks, open doors days, public activities designed for informing the public, etc.; • Information on cooperation with high schools and programmes organized for prospective students; • Information and documents posted on the website of the higher education institution, brochures, flyers, etc. 			
<p>Comment/note/commendations/recommendations</p>			

1.3. The higher education institution supports academic integrity and prevents all types of unethical behaviour.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution supports academic integrity and freedom, upholds ethical standards in work, and preserves academic integrity and freedom.</i></p> <p><i>The system of competencies for resolving conflicts and irregularities is functional at all levels of the higher education institution.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution has a developed system for monitoring and preventing all types of unethical behaviour and discrimination, and carries out activities related to the sanctioning of such behaviour.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution systematically addresses issues of plagiarism, cheating, forging of results, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Teacher recruitment procedures arise from the higher education institution's development goals, and they are aligned with the legislation and internal regulations in effect.</i></p> <p><i>In selecting, appointing and evaluating teachers, the HEI takes into account their previous activities (teaching activity, research activity, feedback from students, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Promotion of teachers into higher grades is based on the evaluation and rewarding of excellence and the HEI takes into account important achievements (successfully completed projects, success in securing additional funds, mentoring, supervision of final and graduation theses, authorship of textbooks and study materials, popular lectures, etc.).</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Ethics, Commission for solving disputes, student ombudsman and/or student representative on the Ethics Committee; • Examples of tools for detecting plagiarism (appropriate software, etc.); • Student ombudsman and/or student representative on the Ethics Committee; • Procedures for assessing adherence to ethical standards in research and examples of the carried out procedures to detect and sanction unethical behaviour; • Internal acts prescribing teacher appointment procedure, examples of completed recruitment procedures (copies of vacancy announcements, composition of selection committees, reports of selection committees and decisions made by expert bodies); 			

- Examples of carried out procedures of appointment and re-appointment to scientific/teaching grades.

Comment/note/commendations/recommendations

Assessment area II: Learning outcomes (ESG1.2., ESG 1.9.)

2.1. Learning outcomes of the study programme are clear and transparent, and aligned with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution has clearly defined the learning outcomes of the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes are clear, easily understandable and measurable.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution proves the alignment of learning outcomes with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution proves the alignment of learning outcomes with the general goals of the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution publishes learning outcomes of the study programme.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• List of learning outcomes of the study programme;• Mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution.• <u>Table 2.1. Learning outcomes at the level of the study programme for the academic year of evaluation.</u>			

2.2. Learning outcomes at the level of the study programme are aligned with the EQF level at which the programme is proposed.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes achieved in the study programme are aligned with the EQF level descriptors.</i></p> <p><i>If the study programme is delivered at the graduate level, the learning outcomes of that study programme clearly differ from the learning outcomes achieved at the undergraduate level of the study programme.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on study and/or student grading; • Study programme syllabus and curriculum; • Learning outcomes of the study programme; • <u>Table 2.1. Learning outcomes at the level of the study programme for the academic year of evaluation.</u> 			
<p>Comment/note/commendations/recommendations</p>			

2.3. Learning outcomes at the level of the study programme are aligned with the competencies a student should gain by completing the study programme.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes of the study programme are aligned with professional requirements and internationally recognized professional standards, and ensure that the programme is up to date.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes of the study programme clearly reflect competencies required for finding employment, continuing education or fulfilling other individual/society needs.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes of the study programme are comparable to learning outcomes of similar study programmes in the country and abroad.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes of the study programme also include the development of generic (general/key/transferrable) and profession-specific competencies.</i></p> <p><i>If the study programme is delivered at the graduate level, the learning outcomes of the graduate study programme clearly differ from the learning outcomes achieved at the undergraduate level of the study programme, and ensure progressive competence profile.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on study and/or student grading; • Employer survey on the necessary competencies on the labour market; • Survey of student employability upon completion of the study that include opinions issued by three organizations working on the labour market; • Alignment of the learning outcomes with recommendations of professional associations, where applicable; • Alignment of the learning outcomes with the internationally defined learning outcomes for that profession, if any (for example, learning outcomes recommended within TUNNING project for certain disciplines). • <u>Table 2.1. Learning outcomes at the level of the study programme for the academic year of evaluation.</u> 			
<p>Comment/note/commendations/recommendations</p>			

2.4. Learning outcomes of the course are aligned with the learning outcomes of the study programme.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution clearly defined learning outcomes of all courses in the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution checks and ensures alignment of learning outcomes at the study programme and course level.</i></p> <p><i>Learning outcomes at the course level also include the development of generic (general/key/transferrable) and profession-specific competencies.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on study and/or student grading; • Study programme syllabus and curriculum; • Learning outcomes at the study programme level; • Learning outcomes at the course level; • Alignment of learning outcomes with recommendations of professional associations, where applicable; • <u>Table 2.1. Learning outcomes at the level of the study programme for the academic year of evaluation.</u> 			
<p>Comment/note/commendations/recommendations</p>			

Assessment area III: Study programme (ESG 1.2., ESG 1.7., ESG 1.9.)

3.1. The study programme justification was provided with regard to social and economic needs, which is also reflected in the enrolment quota.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Justification of fitness for purpose of the study programme was provided as well as confirmation that the study programme does not overlap with similar study programmes delivered in the region.</i></p> <p><i>Justification for delivering the study programme with regard to social and economic needs is provided, and includes an analysis of resources of the higher education institution required for delivering the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>Enrolment quotas are aligned with labour market needs and resources of the higher education institution, and result from systematic strategic consideration.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution informs existing and prospective students about the opportunities to continue education or find employment upon graduation.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution regularly analyses employability of its graduates and maintains contacts with alumni.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The justification for delivering a study programme has been provided; • Survey of student employability upon completion of the study programme, which includes opinions of three organizations involved in the labour market; • Analysis of resources necessary for the study programme delivery; • Optimal number of students that can enrol in the study programme with regard to available space, equipment and the number of teachers; • Feedback from alumni and employers; • Career development support services for students • <u>Table 3.1. The number of students per study programme for the academic year of evaluation</u> • <u>Table 3.2. Employment of graduates/alumni in the last three calendar years.</u> 			

Comment/note/commendations/recommendations

3.2. The curriculum is coherent and enables the achievement of expected learning outcomes and an uninterrupted progress to students.

Not implemented

Partially implemented

**Fully
implemented**

Elements of the standard

The higher education institution proves alignment of the content of each course with the expected learning outcomes of that course.

The higher education institution ensures an appropriate order of courses and clearly defined enrolment requirements for each course.

Core disciplines necessary for acquiring all professional competencies are well covered.

In addition to the profession-specific knowledge and skills, the study programme also ensures the acquisition of generic competencies.

Examples of evidence

- Regulations on study and/or student grading;
- Study programme syllabus and curriculum;
- Expected learning outcomes at the study programme and course level;
- Syllabi of all courses;
- Enrolment requirements for particular courses.

Comment/review/commendation/recommendations

3.3. The study programme curriculum is scientifically/professionally founded and comparable to similar study programmes abroad.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The curriculum is at the level of the latest scientific achievements and skills based on them.</i></p> <p><i>The curriculum is aligned with professional standards and up-to-date achievements in a particular field.</i></p> <p><i>The curriculum follows trends and uses best practice of similar international study programmes.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution encourages innovation and creativity in the study programme design.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on study and/or student grading; • Study programme syllabus and curriculum; • Content of the study programme is aligned with recommendations of professional associations, where applicable; • Comparability analysis with similar accredited study programmes in the home country and EU member states; • Syllabi of all courses. 			
<p><u>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</u></p>			

3.4. If the study programme leads to degrees in regulated professions, it is aligned with the national and European regulations and recommendations issued by national and international professional associations.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The study programme is harmonized with the minimum training conditions based on agreed professional standards (at the national and European level, for example, according to the EU Directive Guidelines).</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution cooperates with the competent professional chambers or other professional associations in making changes and improvements of the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>Graduates are able to compete in the national and international labour market.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent/opinion of the competent professional chamber or other professional association (if any) on the acceptance of proposals for revisions of the study programme and the possibility of taking the qualification (licence) exam; • Analysis of alignment of the study programme with regulations and recommendations. 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

3.5. The higher education institution allocates ECTS credits in accordance with actual student workload.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution allocates ECTS credits for each study activity in accordance with the actual student workload.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution has appropriate mechanisms for regular monitoring, analysis and alignment of ECTS credits with actual student workload.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECTS credits allocated to courses in the study programme; • Expected and/or existing mechanisms for checking compliance of the allocated ECTS credits with the actual student workload; • Expected and/or existing mechanisms for improving and revising student workload expressed in ECTS credits; • Syllabi of all courses. 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

3.6. Student practice is an integral part of the study programme.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution allows for learning and obtaining new skills through student practice in accordance with professional requirements and the international practice.</i></p> <p><i>Student practice is an integral part of the study programme and is organised outside the higher education institution, in cooperation with the labour market, in a clear and transparent manner.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution allocates an adequate number of ECTS credits for student practice.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution ensures mechanisms for carrying out student practice in a systematic and responsible manner, which ensures the achievement of the expected learning outcomes connected to student practice.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study programme syllabus and curriculum; • Practice-related learning outcomes; • The assessment of the achievement of practice-related learning outcomes; • The number of ECTS credits allocated to student practice; • Contracts with employers, regulations on student practice; • Feedback on cooperation from employers which participate in the organization of the student practice; • Mechanisms for ensuring the quality of student practice (record of student practice, evaluation questionnaire for student practice and supervisors from or outside the higher education institution); • Expected learning outcomes at the study programme and course level; • Syllabi of all courses. 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

Assessment area IV: Teaching process and student support (ESG 1.3., ESG 1.4., ESG 1.6.)

4.1. Admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies are clearly defined and transparent, and ensure the necessary prior knowledge of students.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The criteria for admission or continuation of studies are clear and appropriate, and ensure the selection of candidates with appropriate prior knowledge.</i></p> <p><i>Admission quotas and criteria for the enrolment in the study programme or continuation of studies are aligned with the requirements of the study programme.</i></p> <p><i>The procedures of recognition of prior learning are defined and publicly available.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined admission criteria (evaluation of high school GPA, State Matura level, elective exams, additional assessments of knowledge and skills); • Defined decision-making procedure in relation to the admission criteria; • Defined procedures of recognition of national and foreign higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning in the case of continuation of studies; • Analysis of student performance on the study programme, depending on the admission criteria or criteria for the continuation of studies, and examples of improvements to the admission criteria/criteria for the continuation of studies based on the obtained results; • Examples of good practice concerning the involvement of students from other higher education institutions or study programmes; • Feedback from students who have transferred from other higher education institutions with regard to their experience with the recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning in case of continuation of studies (interviews, surveys); • Planned number of students per study programme (for the first year of study) • <u>Table 4.1. The structure of enrolled students and interest in the first-cycle study programmes* in the academic year of evaluation and the two previous academic years</u> • <u>Table 4.2. The structure of enrolled students and interest in the graduate and postgraduate study programmes in the academic year of evaluation and two previous academic years.</u> 			

Comment/review/commendation/recommendations			
4.2. The higher education institution gathers and analyses information on student progress and uses it to ensure the continuity and completion of study.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Procedures for monitoring student progress are clearly defined and available.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution ensures adequate mechanisms for analysing student performance and pass rates, and initiates necessary actions accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>Information on student progress is regularly collected and analysed, and used to improve the social dimension of higher education by identifying those students facing the risk of drop out and by taking timely action to prevent drop outs.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on student pass rates; • Completion and drop-out rates; • Examples of measures to increase pass rates and completion rates (e.g. mentorship training programme, changes of admission criteria/curricula, differential courses, etc.); • Services or individuals are in place to provide support to students from vulnerable and underrepresented groups during the studies • <u>Table 4.3. Pass rate at the end of the first year of the study programme (only for undergraduate and integrated study programmes in the past five academic years)</u> • <u>Table 4.4. Completion rate at the study programme.</u> 			
Comment/review/commendation/recommendations			

4.3. Teaching methods ensure student-centred learning and achievement of all expected learning outcomes.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution encourages various modes of programme delivery, in accordance with the expected learning outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>Various teaching methods are used that encourage interactive and research-based learning, problem solving, creative and critical thinking, independence and responsibility (for example, individual and group projects, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, field work and other interactive methods).</i></p> <p><i>Teaching methods are adapted to a diverse student population (non-traditional student population, part-time students, senior students, under-represented* and vulnerable groups**, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Teaching process is adjusted to the individual needs of students from vulnerable and under-represented groups.</i></p> <p><i>State-of-the-art technologies are used in teaching.</i></p> <p><i>The HEI ensures mechanisms for the assessment and adjustment of the used modes of programme delivery and teaching methods, especially in special and exceptional circumstances.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on student grading/study; • Examples of programme delivery modes and teaching methods used; • Mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the mode of programme delivery and teaching methods used (surveys, questionnaires, conversations, etc.); • E-learning systems (LMS, VLS), repositories, etc.; • Readiness to transfer to online teaching in case of need; • Space is adjusted to students with disabilities. 			
Comment/review/commendation/recommendations			

4.4. The higher education institution ensures adequate student support.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The higher education institution provides guidance on study and career opportunities to students (for example, tutors, mentors and other advisers as support to students learning and progress).</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution has established functional procedures for student career guidance, psychological and legal counselling, support to students with disabilities, support in outgoing and incoming mobility, and library and student administration services, at university or faculty level.</i></p> <p><i>Student support is tailored to a diverse student population (part-time students, mature students, students from abroad, students from under-represented and vulnerable groups, students with learning difficulties and disabilities, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution employs an adequate number of qualified and dedicated professional, administrative and technical staff.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations on study, regulations on internal organisation; • Information packages for new students; • Number, qualification structure and availability of library and administrative staff; • Decisions on establishing the library and advisory services and their rules of procedure; • Established student support and counselling services (psychological, academic/study, legal, career guidance) at the level of university or university constituent; • Availability of teaching staff to students (for example, information on consultation hours published); • Feedback on student satisfaction with professional support provided by the HEI (tutors, mentors, advisers, ECTS coordinators, library, student administration office, office for international cooperation, etc.); • Feedback on student satisfaction with counselling services (psychological, academic/study, legal, career guidance, etc.). 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

4.5. The higher education institution ensures participation in international mobility programmes to students.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Students are informed about the opportunities for completing part of their study abroad.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution ensures the recognition of ECTS credits gained at another higher education institution.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution provides support to students participating in the incoming mobility programmes in the process of applying and studying, and gathers and analyses feedback on satisfaction from those students.</i></p> <p><i>Students participating in the incoming mobility programmes have the opportunity to attend classes held in a foreign language.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution collects information on student satisfaction with the quality of the HEI's support regarding practical matters of student mobility.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and other types of exchange agreements (bilateral agreements) or projects that enable incoming and outgoing student mobility; • Foreign language teaching, international dimension of the programme (exposing students to foreign literature, foreign experiences and practices, work with foreign professors and colleagues); • Records of the number of students who had the opportunity to complete a part of their study abroad and records of the recognition of ECTS credits, i.e. the knowledge and competencies acquired abroad/records of the number of foreign students who studied at the higher education institution; • Established office for support to students participating in the ERASMUS programme • <u>Table 4.5. Student mobility (total) in the last five academic years.</u> 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

4.6. The higher education institution ensures an objective and consistent assessment and grading of student achievements in order to ensure acquisition of all expected learning outcomes.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The criteria and methods for assessment and grading are clear and published before the beginning of a course.</i></p> <p><i>The criteria and methods for assessment and grading are aligned with the expected learning outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>The criteria and methods for assessment and grading are aligned with the teaching methods used.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution has mechanisms in place which ensure objectivity and reliability of assessment and grading of student achievements.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A functional student appeals procedure; • Student feedback on objectivity and consistent implementation of assessment and grading procedures; • Examples of carried out activities related to the support provided to assessors in the development of skills related to testing and assessment methods; • Examples of implemented procedures ensuring the objectivity and reliability of grading (e.g. double marking); • Examples of modification of the assessment procedures (for example, for students with disabilities). 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

4.7. The higher education institution issues diplomas and diploma supplements in accordance with the relevant regulations.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Upon completion of their studies, students are issued appropriate documents (diploma and Diploma Supplement) in accordance with the regulations in effect.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution issues the Diploma Supplement in national language and English, free of charge.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of diplomas and diploma supplements; • Feedback from students and alumni. 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

Assessment area V: Resources (ESG 1.5. and ESG 1.6)

5.1. The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities for delivering the study programme and for acquiring expected competencies.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The number and qualifications of teachers* (with an election in an appropriate field and/or area) are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme and achievement of the expected learning outcomes, and performing scientific/professional activity.</i></p> <p><i>The ratio of students and full-time teachers at the higher education institution is appropriate and ensures a high quality of study.</i></p> <p><i>Teacher workload is in line with relevant legislation and bylaws in effect, acts adopted by competent bodies, collective agreements, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Teacher workload ensures appropriate distribution of teaching, professional and/or scientific activities, personal and professional development, and administrative duties.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers are qualified for the course/courses they deliver.</i></p> <p><i>Course leaders are qualified for the course they lead.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution clearly defined the manner of provision of support to teachers in their professional development.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers participate in mobility programmes, collaborative projects, networks, etc.</i></p> <p><i>*Teachers – employees of a higher education institution appointed into scientific-teaching grades (or teaching grades at professional study programmes).</i></p>			

Examples of evidence

- Data on the percentage of courses delivered by full-time teachers for the study programme;
- Information on student-teacher ratio;
- Information on teaching workload;
- Information on the number of teachers with the academic degree of Doctor of Science;
- Information on each teacher engaged in the study programme (CV, employment agreement, decision on the election into title, regulated health and pension insurance);
- Information on course leaders;
- Plan for professional development of teachers in the study programme and the method of reporting on that;
- Information about the method of encouraging teachers to participate in the mobility programmes and about the actual outgoing teacher mobility (stays at foreign higher education institutions, etc.)
- Table 5.1. Teachers in the study programme
- Table 5.2. Total mobility of teachers and associates in the last five academic years.

Comment/review/commendation/recommendations

5.2. Qualifications and work experience of external associates are appropriate for the programme delivery and acquisition of the expected learning outcomes.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>External associates have the required work experience.</i></p> <p><i>External associates include the latest research, trends and know-how from the labour market in the teaching process.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution encourages the participation of external associates in the supervision of final and graduation theses.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution encourages the organization of student practice in the institution in which external associates work full time.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution organizes training on the method of preparation and delivery of teaching for external associates from the business sector and/or from abroad, and introduces them to the regulations and practices from higher education (for example, ECTS credits, learning outcomes, teaching methods).</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of external associates, institutions in which they work full time and positions; • Appropriate qualifications of external associates for the course/courses they deliver (their CV should be submitted); • Examples of co-supervision; • Agreement on student practice. 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

5.3. Space, equipment and entire infrastructure (classrooms, laboratories, library, etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme, ensuring the achievement of expected learning outcomes.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>Space, equipment and entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities, etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme and ensure the achievement of expected learning outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>Space, equipment and entire infrastructure (laboratories, IT services, work facilities, etc.) are appropriate for the implementation of professional and/or scientific activity.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination of resources during the site visit to the HEI; • Information on space (ownership documents, document proving the right to use the premises in the period of five years); • Evidence of secured own equipment or leased equipment for the period of at least five years necessary for achieving the expected learning outcomes; • Number of copies of required reading for each course has to amount to 20% of the number of students who enrolled in a course; • Optimal number of students who enrol in the programme with regard to available space, equipment and the number of teachers. • <u>Table 5.3. Space.</u> 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

5.4. The library and library equipment, as well as the access to additional resources, ensure the availability of literature and library services necessary for a high quality of study, as well as professional and/or scientific activity.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The library and library equipment, as well as additional resources, meet the conditions for a high quality of study.</i></p> <p><i>The library and library equipment, as well as the additional resources, ensure a high quality of professional and/or scientific activity.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution ensured a sufficient number of copies of professional literature for each course in accordance with the legislation in effect.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of library resources during the site visit; • Availability of up-to-date literature; • Subscriptions to appropriate bibliographic databases and databases with full-text access; • Availability of the network library catalogue of the evaluated higher education institution; • Availability of teaching materials via protected websites; • Adequate number of copies of required reading, relative to the number of enrolled students • Table 5.4. Library equipment. 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

5.5. The higher education institution ensures the necessary funds for the organization of work and high-quality delivery of the study programme.	Not implemented	Partially implemented	Fully implemented
<p><u>Elements of the standard</u></p> <p><i>The funds necessary for the study programme delivery and for achieving expected learning outcomes are sufficient.</i></p> <p><i>The higher education institution proves financial sustainability and effectiveness.</i></p> <p><u>Examples of evidence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about income and expenditure; • Evidence on sustainability and transparency of financing; • Explanation on the spending of income gained from participation, subsidies and tuition fees; • Regulations or decisions on the manner of using own or dedicated funds (for public higher education institutions) • <u>Table 5.5. Financial sustainability.</u> 			
<p>Comment/review/commendation/recommendations</p>			

KLASA: 605-04/21-10/0001

URBROJ: 355-03-21-0002

Zagreb, 16. veljače 2021.

Application by Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) for Renewal of Registration

Minutes of Telephone Conversation

Register Committee

Ref. A105
Date 2022-06-13
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Date of the conversation:	07/06/2022
Representative of Review Panel:	Tia Loukkola (Chair), Asnate Kazoka (Secretary)
Representative of EQAR:	Melinda Szabó

1. ASHE has submitted on 2020-12-07 an application for renewal of registration on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).
2. In order to prepare the deliberations of the Register Committee on ASHE's application to EQAR, the EQAR Secretariat contacted the Chair and Secretary of the review panel via a Zoom call to clarify the matters below.
3. ESG 3.3: With a view to the independence of formal outcomes, the review panel was asked to explain in which situation can the ministry change the opinion issued by the ASHE Accreditation Council. The panel clarified that while the ministry may in theory decide differently to the Accreditation Panel, the ministry may not change the recommendation/opinion of the Council. According to the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education, the decision of the Ministry for Science and Higher Education on accreditation is taken based on two main sources: the formal application by the higher education institution and the recommendation (opinion) of ASHE's Accreditation Council. The decision of the ministry is in practice a formality and there have not been cases where it would have differed from that of the Accreditation Council. The review panel discussed with the Ministry the possibility of delegating the final formal decision-making power on the outcome of an accreditation procedure to the Agency. The Ministry was open to this proposal, but explained this cannot be simply done by a Ministerial act, as this would require a change in the legislation of higher education.
4. ESG 3.1: The activity thematic evaluations was introduced by ASHE as an activity within the scope of the ESG and agreed to be added to the ToR of its review. The panel clarified that it has followed the judgment of the previous panel and the recent explanations of the agency and found the activity to be outside the scope of the ESG. The panel came to this conclusion because thematic evaluations do not follow a pre-defined and unified methodology, but are always adapted following a request from Ministry; the activity is not carried out cyclically (as required by ESG 1.10) but upon request in an ad-hoc manner; there is a desk-

research process to such evaluations (no site visits) ; while addressing individual higher education institutions the final aim is to review a full higher education system and take stock of a certain issue/topic.

5. ESG 3.1: In its Self-Evaluation Report ASHE stated that where possible ESG is used in the development of methodologies for external evaluation in science that the evaluation process is similar to its other external QA procedures (p. 10, p 25). The accreditation of scientific activities are considered to be outside the scope of the ESG (according to the ToR of the review). Since these activities sometimes concern the licensing of scientific activities of higher education institutions the panel was asked to clarify whether they found a risk of confusion between these activities and other accreditation procedures carried out at higher education level.
6. The representatives of the review panel explained that they did not question this separation. They found the presentation on the different licensing procedure on the website to be clear as different processes and procedures are applied. The aims for such activities are different as these organisations pursue a license for scientific activity to be able to apply for projects and to finance research. The licensing does not grant power to such institutes/organisations to open study programmes.

Register Committee

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