REPORT of the Expert Panel on the

RE-ACCREDITATION of the Faculty of Kinesiology University of Zagreb

Date of the site visit: 17 March 2014

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INTRODUCTION

This report on the re-accreditation of the Faculty of Kinesiology University of Zagreb was written by the Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education, on the basis of the self-evaluation of the institution, supporting documentation and a visit to the institution.

Re-accreditation procedure performed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) full member, is obligatory once in five years for all higher education institutions working in the Republic of Croatia, in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The Expert Panel is appointed by the ASHE Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to perform an independent peer review based evaluation of the institution and their study programs.

The report contains:

- a brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- a list of good practices found at the institution,
- recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure), and
- detailed analysis of the compliance to the Standards and Criteria for Re-Accreditation of the Faculty of Kinesiology University of Zagreb.

The members of the Expert Panel were:

- Professor Arnold Baca, Faculty of Sport Science, University of Vienna, Austria
- Professor Lasse Kannas, Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
- Gordan Kožulj, MBA, Deloitte Advisory Services Ltd., Croatia
- Professor Maja Bučar Pajek, Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Jure Benić, student, Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Split, Croatia

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report the Panel was supported by the ASHE staff:

- Viktorija Juriša, coordinator
- Frano Pavić, support to the coordinator
- Marko Hrvatin, translator

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

- The Management
- The Working Group that compiled the Self-Evaluation
- The students
- Vice Dean for Academic and Student Affairs
- Vice Dean for Science
- Vice Dean for Business Affairs and Finance

- Secretary of the Faculty
- Meeting with assistants and junior researchers
- Meeting with leaders of research projects

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk, laboratory, practicum rooms, gyms/sports halls and classrooms at the Faculty of Kinesiology University of Zagreb.

Upon completion of re-accreditation procedure, the Accreditation Coucil renders its opinion on the basis of the Re-accreditation Report, an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution and the Report of Fulfilment of Quantitative Criteria which is acquired by the Agency's information system.

Once the Accreditation Council renders its opinion, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation by which the Agency recommends to the Minister of Science, Education and Sports to:

- 1. **issue a confirmation** to the higher education institution which confirms that the higher education institution meets the requirements for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities, in case the Accreditation Recommendation is positive,
- 2. **deny a license** for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities to the higher education institution, in case the Accreditation Recommendation is negative, or
- 3. **issue a letter of recommendation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should remove its deficiencies. For the higher education institution the letter of recommendation may include the suspension of student enrollment for the defined period.

The Accreditation Recommendation also includes an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution as well as recommendations for quality development.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Faculty of Kinesiology University of Zagreb

ADDRESS: Horvaćanski zavoj 15, 10000 Zagreb

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Prof.dr.sc. Damir Knjaz

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE: Department of General and Applied Kinesiology, Department of

Kinesiology of Sports, Department of Kinesiological Anthropology and Methodology, Coach

Education and Training Department, Institute of Kinesiology, Scientific Research Centre,

Centre for Knowledge Transfer in Kinesiology, Sports Diagnostic Centre, Centre for Library

Information and Publication Activities, IT Support Centre, Office for International Cooperation,

Protocol, and Public Relations, Secretary's Office, Department of Finance and Accounting, and

Technical Department.

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES

Active at the moment: Undergraduate university study programme Kinesiology, Graduate

university study programme Kinesiology, Postgraduate (doctoral) university study programme

Kinesiology and Professional study programme Sport Coach Education

Not active at the moment: Postgraduate specialist university study programme Applied

Kinesiology in Recreation, Postgraduate specialist university study programme Applied

Kinesiology in Sport, Specialist graduate professional study programme Sport Coach Specialist

Education.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: part-time: 692 /full-time: 1274 /final-year: 408

NUMBER OF TEACHERS: full-time: 79, external associates: -

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS: doctors of science: 66, elected to grades: 45, full-time

TOTAL BUDGET (in kunas): 41.568.439

MSES FUNDING (percentage): 55.9%

OWN FUNDING (percentage): 37.4%

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

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In 1967, the College for Physical Culture became part of the University of Zagreb. In the academic year 1973/74 it was renamed the Faculty of Physical Culture/Education. The Faculty retained this name right up until 2001, when it was finally dropped in favour of the Faculty of Kinesiology. The Faculty is an academic and scientific institution where the principal scientific interest is focused on kinesiology. Today kinesiology is defined as an empiric transdisciplinary field of science dominated primarily by an experimental approach to comprehensive research into the principles and regularities of human movement, physical activity and exercise, in which the human being is observed as a complete bio-psycho-social entity. From its very beginnings, the Faculty has accepted, developed and advocated an orientation according to which the purpose of academic institutions is in the symbiosis between superior scientific production and the education of experts. From its very beginnings, the Faculty of Kinesiology has been pro-active and open to international communication and cooperation with higher education institutions in the field of kinesiology. As a science, kinesiology gained major recognition with the publication of the Regulations on Scientific and Artistic Areas, Fields and Branches in July 2008, when it was confirmed to be a scientific field within the area of social sciences with six of its associated branches: systematic kinesiology, kinesiology of sports, kinesiological education, kinesiological recreation, kinesitherapy, and adapted physical activity and kinesiological anthropology. The last 10 years of the Faculty's activity was also marked by the active participation of Faculty teachers in international associations in the field of kinesiology, such as EUPEA (European Physical Education Association), where one of their teachers fills the post of a board member, and FIEP (Fédération Internationale D'éducation physique) and the EPCA (European Physical Conditioning Association), in which Faculty teachers act as general secretaries. After nearly 40 years of publication, Kinesiology, a scientific journal published by the Faculty, gained huge international recognition in November 2008 when it was included in the Web of Science, i.e., when it was indexed in major citation databases, the Science Citation Index. Since the foundation of the Faculty in 1959, a total of 4959 students have successfully completed the study programme and acquired the corresponding academic degree of Professor of Physical Education, or Professor of Kinesiology, i.e., the degree equivalent to the present Master of Kinesiology. Having defended their Master's thesis, 304 applicants acquired the degree of Master of Science, while 154 scientists graduated as Doctors of Social Sciences in the scientific field of kinesiology. In addition, special mention should be made of the 3059 senior coaches or trainers who have acquired their bachelor's degrees after graduating from professional studies. In more than 50 years of its existence, the Faculty has consequently educated 8476 kinesiologists in a variety of academic

degrees and sub-specializations in fields of applied kinesiology. More than 350 teachers and expert associates participated in all of the above activities, and more than 7000 scientific and professional papers, books and studies have been published, as well as master's and doctoral thesis and other publications in the field of kinesiology.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

- 1. The staff is highly motivated.
- 2. The institution provides good conditions for international networking (in particular due to the organization of the triennial international conferences on Kinesiology).
- 3. The diagnostic centre is excellent.
- 4. Students are highly satisfied.
- 5. Comparatively good resources and equipment are available.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

- The study program is not generally consistent with the goals of the European Union (EU).
 There is no clear separation between the Bachelor's and Master's degree programme, which negatively affects student mobility.
- 2. There are no clear research focuses defined.
- 3. In the Faculty's current activities there is a rather limited orientation towards contemporary fields such as health or ageing.
- 4. The panel members are not convinced of the added value of the Institute of Kinesiology in relation to the existing departments. The current form of organization may present a confusing image to the outside research community and should better be justified.
- 5. The number of projects funded from EU-programs is low.

FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE

- 1. The Faculty regularly organizes international events.
- 2. There was well-conceived strategic development of the journal Kinesiology, which was included in the Web of Science in November 2008.
- 3. Students are well integrated into decision processes.
- 4. There is a high degree of internal financing (e. g. due to the diagnostic centre).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

• The study program of the integrated university study of kinesiology satisfies requirements for teacher employment in Croatia. However, the current structure is not generally consistent with the goals of the European Union (EU). There is no clear separation between the Bachelor's and Master's degree programme, which may negatively affect student mobility. The panel members recommend implementing a study program, which is better in line with European standards.

2. Study Programmes

- The study programs should, in addition to existing fields of strength be more oriented towards other needs of contemporary society. In particular, this concerns aspects of health and ageing.
- A clear separation between the Bachelor's and Master's degree programme is missing. There is a lack of using international literature and of courses in research methodology in the basic study programme. The number of respective courses should be increased. On the other hand, the percentage of courses related to sports practice is high, when compared to international standards, and should therefore be reduced.
- There are deficits in the availability of supplemental teaching resources, in particular of journal data bases and scientific literature. This appears to be caused by financing problems and/or constraints given by the University. Appropriate measures should be taken.
- Opportunities for students to reinforce and apply their learning in the context of practical applications, such as internships, should better be regulated. Respective procedures should become an integral part of the study programme.

3. Students

• The Faculty maintains contacts with its former students. Data should be collected on their employment in order to be able to use them for improving study programmes.

4. Teachers

• When related to the number of students, the number of teaching staff is comparatively low. This is due to the fact that the Faculty took over the responsibility for all study programmes for the Coach education professional course formerly held by the Polytechnics of Social Sciences in Zagreb by the end of 2011. The institution should be compensated (e.g. by an increase of the teaching staff) for taking over this additional task. The members of the panel suggest widening the spectrum of teaching. Health related disciplines should also be covered.

5. Scientific and Professional Activity

- The research agenda of the institution is general. Parts of strategic planning as proscribed by the Ordinance for issuing licence for scientific activity, conditions for reaccreditation of scientific organisations and content licence are missing. No clear research focus is identified (Article 3). A detailed strategic research programme should be worked out.
- Cooperations with scientific organizations/institutions outside the Balkan region should be deepened.
- Once a more detailed strategic agenda has been worked out, it should be able for an external panel to judge, if number and profile of researchers are adequate for implementation. This is difficult to perform at the moment.
- The number of international and in particular EU funded projects should be increased. Better guidance in applying for EU funded projects should be given to potential applicants.
- The Faculty should check possibilities for the transfer of knowledge with the industry and public sector.

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- In order to facilitate student mobility, the study programmes should have a clear Bachelor-Master structure.
- The number of courses offered in English language should be increased in order to raise the attractiveness of the institution for students from abroad.
- Teachers must know Croatian language in order to be employed. The members of the panel did not identify evidence of longer visits from teachers from abroad. Conditions should be set allowing employment of teachers who do not speak Croatian language.

7. Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

• The library should provide all necessary readings. In particular, the number of (international) books and journals should be increased in order to comply with standards of renowned European institutions.

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE TO THE STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

Institutional Management and Quality Assurance

- 1.1 The institution has a long term strategic plan ("Strategy of the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb, 2014-2020"). All the stakeholders have been included in its development and implementation. Strategic goals and an action plan of reaching these goals have been clearly defined.
- 1.2 The institution has a well-functioning organizational structure, which provides a good basis for teaching and research.
- 1.3 The institution actively contributes to the goals of the University of Zagreb.
- 1.4 The study program has been developed in order to satisfy requirements for teacher employment in Croatia. However, the current structure is not generally consistent with the goals of the European Union (EU). There is no clear separation between the Bachelor's and Master's degree programme, which may negatively affect student mobility.
- 1.5 The quality assurance procedures described in the ordinances are effective and efficient and regularly implemented and improved in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders. The quality assurance procedures meet the standards of the quality assurance systems of renowned European universities.
- 1.6 Mechanisms for monitoring and improving teaching quality are effective and efficient. The procedures for monitoring and improving teaching quality are comparable to those implemented at renowned European institutions.
- 1.7 The quality assurance procedures for monitoring and improving research quality as described in the ordinances are effective and efficient, and regularly implemented and improved in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders.
- 1.8 Ethical standards are governing teaching and research, and all students and teachers are acquainted with them. The procedures for monitoring unethical behaviour are comparable to those implemented at renowned European universities.

Study Programmes

- 2.1 The institution has effective mechanisms for monitoring and improving the quality of study programs. Study programs, including learning outcomes, are clearly defined.
- 2.2 The study programs should, in addition to existing fields of strength, be more oriented towards other needs of contemporary society. In particular, this concerns aspects of health and ageing.
- 2.3 The enrolment quotas are in line with the institutional resources. By the end of 2011, the Faculty took over the responsibility for all study programmes for the Coach education professional course formerly held by the Polytechnics of Social Sciences in Zagreb. The institution should be compensated (e.g. by an increase of the teaching staff) for taking over this additional task.
- 2.4 Learning outcomes as stated for the study programme, modules and courses clearly describe the knowledge and skills students obtain upon completition of the programme / module / course.

- 2.5 Teachers sufficiently ensure that the assessment of student learning is in line with the defined learning outcomes. Although competence assessment includes the whole spectrum (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) of the learning outcomes defined, the Panel is not quite convinced if skills in arguing or collective learning are adequately assessed.
- 2.6 Student workload is assessed realistically and based on standards to calculate hours necessary to perform all student activities.
- 2.7 The current structure of the study programme is not generally consistent with internationally recognized standards. A clear separation between the Bachelor's and Master's degree programme is missing. There is a lack of using international literature and of courses in research methodology in the basic study programme. The percentage of courses related to sports practice appears to be comparatively high.
- 2.8 Teachers make use of different teaching methods in different settings (lecture room, laboratory, gym/sports hall).
- 2.9 There are deficits in the availability of supplemental teaching resources, in particular of journal data bases and scientific literature. This appears to be caused by financial problems and/or constraints given by the University.
- 2.10 Opportunities for students to reinforce and apply their learning in the context of practical applications, such as internships, should be better regulated. Respective procedures are currently not an integral part of the study programme.

Students

- 3.1 The competencies of applicants evaluated upon admission are sufficiently aligned with the demands and expectations of their future careers.
- 3.2 The institution fosters student involvement in extracurricular activities (in particular elite sport activities) and ensures that the conditions for their active involvement are met.
- 3.3 The institution offers excellent counselling, mentorship and professional orientation services to ensure personal and professional development of the students.
- 3.4 Knowledge assessment procedures and methods are established and published. In some cases, students seriously miss mid-term examinations. The Panel recommends that the ability of students to argue, criticize or to be able to question the knowledge should also be assessed.
- 3.5 The Faculty maintains contacts with its former students. There are no data collected on their employment.
- 3.6 The institution regularly informs the public on study programmes and study related matters. The manner of informing the public on studying at the institution is comparable to practices at renowned European institutions.
- 3.7 Students can express their opinions and give suggestions for improvement. They thereby can influence the decision-making and problem-solving processes on issues that concern them. There are well defined communication channels between the students and the institution. Communication between the Student Union and students should be improved.
- 3.8 Feedback on collected opinions and suggestions is provided to students in timely manner. They are informed on the measures that have been taken in order to solve the problems they have commented on.

Teachers

- 4.1 When related to the number of students, the number of teaching staff is comparatively low. Again, it has to be taken into consideration that by the end of 2011, the Faculty took over the responsibility for all study programmes for the Coach education professional course formerly held by the Polytechnics of Social Sciences in Zagreb. The institution has not been compensated (e.g. by an increase of the teaching staff) for taking over this additional task so far. The members of the Panel suggest widening the spectrum of teaching. More teachers should be hired covering health related disciplines.
- 4.2 The Faculty's policy of development of human resources takes into account potential retirements and sustainability of study programmes and research activities. The institution could benefit from a more international staff.
- 4.3 The number of permanently employed teachers is sufficient but comparatively low (see 4.1).
- 4.4 The Faculty's system of scientific teaching-staff is based on good practice and ensures the professional development as needed to advance the institution's mission.
- 4.5 In terms of total workload and allocation of load to the scientific teaching-staff the institution is comparable with renowned European higher education institutions.
- 4.6 The Faculty ensures that the teaching and research activities of the teaching staff are not affected by their external commitments.

Scientific and Professional Activity

- 5.1 The research agenda of the institution is general. Parts of strategic planning as proscribed by the Ordinance for issuing licence for scientific activity, conditions for reaccreditation of scientific organisations and content licence are missing. No clear research focus is identified (Article 3).
- 5.2 The Faculty clearly envisions and provides for cooperation with other scientific organizations in Croatia and the Balkan region. A more powerful global network would be beneficial.
- 5.3 The question if the Faculty has an appropriate number and qualification/expertise of researchers for accomplishing its strategic agenda and goal is difficult to answer, because of 5. 1. The strategic agenda needs to be refined before answering.
- 5.4 The institution presents a good profile in high level publication output. Most of the researchers publish in/with transnational respectable journals or publishers.
- 5.5 The Faculty has effective mechanisms in place for recognizing and encouraging research achievements. A reward system based on scientific productivity has been implemented.
- 5.6 The Faculty has a sufficient number of peer-reviewed scientific publications.
- 5.7 The Faculty has an adequate number of domestic projects. There is a lack of international and in particular of EU funded projects.
- 5.8 An excellent diagnostic centre is part of the Faculty. However, there is only limited technology transfer with the industry and public sector.
- 5.9 The Faculty sufficiently supports professional activities thereby maintaining a good ratio between making additional earnings and its core activity. There are, for example, contracts with the Croatian Olympic Committee.
- 5.10 The Faculty has implemented a high-quality doctoral programme.

International Cooperation and Mobility

- 6.1 The institution has clear rules for admitting students from other institutions or programmes who wish to enrol to graduate study or transfer to a programme. However, since there are just 1-2 courses in English language the attractiveness for students from non-Croatian speaking countries is low.
- 6.2 The institution has signed a number of contracts fostering student mobility. Support is available to the students providing sufficient information to applicants. The structure of the study programme may complicate student mobility.
- 6.3 The Faculty encourages international cooperation and mobility of its teachers/researchers.
- 6.4 The Faculty is part of renowned international associations. There are numerous partnership agreements. The institution was the organizer or co-organizer of a number of international scientific conferences thereby providing a forum for international exchange and establishing new cooperations.
- 6.5 Due to the small number of courses offered in English language the attractiveness of the institution for students from abroad is limited.
- 6.6 Teachers must know the Croatian language in order to be employed. The members of the panel did not identify evidence of longer visits from teachers from abroad.
- 6.7 The Faculty has sufficiently developed different forms of inter-institutional cooperation through EU programmes, bilateral agreements and joint programmes.

Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finances

- 7.1 The institution has access to well-equipped classrooms, gyms/sports halls, outdoor facilities and laboratories, modern computer equipment and adequate learning spaces.
- 7.2 The ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff is sufficient and meets professional standards and requirements of a good learning experience.
- 7.3 The Faculty ensures professional development of non-teaching staff. The non-teaching staff provides good support for teaching and research.
- 7.4 The number of laboratories and equipment available enable good conditions for research and studying. However, there is some potential for improvement.
- 7.5 There is modern equipment, technology and technical support for teaching, Again, there is some potential for improvement.
- 7.6 There is a library in the institution. This library does not own all the necessary readings; there is a lack of (international) books and journals.
- 7.7 The institutional funding is sufficient to cover all costs, enabling students to successfully complete their study programmes. In order to sustainably invest into quality improvements, additional funding would be beneficial.
- 7.8 Through its various activities the Faculty generates income and uses it for improving its teaching and research.