REPORT
of the Expert Panel
on the

RE-ACCREDITATION OF

Department for Studies in the Italian Language, Department of Humanities and Teacher Training Department Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Date of the site visit:

19th-21st of May 2014

June 2014

INTRODUCTION

This report on the re-accreditation of the Department for Studies in the Italian Language, Department of Humanities and Teacher Training Department Juraj Dobrila University of Pula 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 and 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 every 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 Department for Studies in the Italian Language, Department of Humanities and Teacher Training Department Juraj Dobrila University of Pula .

The members of the Expert Panel were:

- Professor Stefano Colangelo, PhD, Università di Bologna, The Republic of Italy
- Professor Alan O'Leary, PhD, School of Modern Languages and Cultures, University of Leeds, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

- Professor Leo Rafolt, PhD, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia
- Professor Assumpta Aneas Alvarez, PhD, Facultad de Pedagogia de la Universitat de Barcelona, Kingdom of Spain
- Professor Edeltraud Röbe, PhD, Pädagogische Hochschule Ludwigsburg, Ludwigsburg University of Education, Federal Republic of Germany
- Gordan Ravančić, PhD, Senior Researcher, Croatian Institute of History
- Barbara Vuković, student, Centre for Croatian Studies University of Zagreb, Republic of Croatia

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

- Frano Pavić, coordinator, ASHE
- Vlatka Šušnjak Kuljiš, coordinator, ASHE
- Goran Briški, translator, ASHE

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

- The Management;
- Meeting with the head of General committee for quality, Associate in the Office for Quality and all three heads of Committees for quality of the University constituents;
- Meeting with the Vice-rector for teaching and students;
- Meeting with Vice-Rector for science and researches;
- Meeting with Vice-Rector for International cooperation;
- Meeting with heads of research projects;
- Meeting with teaching assistants and junior researchers;
- Meeting with teachers' representatives;
- Meeting with students

- Meeting with the heads of sub-departments and heads of chairs

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk, and the classrooms at the Department for Studies in the Italian Language, Department of Humanities and Teacher Training Department Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, where they held a brief question and answer session with the students who were present.

Upon completion of re-accreditation procedure, the Accreditation Council 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 enrolment 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: Department for Studies in the Italian Language, Department of Humanities and Teacher Training Department Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

ADDRESS: I. Matetića Ronjgova 1, Pula

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Rector Prof. Alfio Barbieri Ph.D.,

Head of the Department for Studies in the Italian Language Prof. Rita Scotti Jurić Ph.D. ,

Head of Department of Humanities Prof. Valnea Delbianco Ph.D.,

Head of Teacher Training Department Prof. Fulvio Šuran Ph.D.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE:

Department for Studies in the Italian Language: Head of Department, heads of Chairs

Department of Humanities: Head of Department, Heads of sub-departments, Heads of Chairs

Teacher Training Department: Head of Department, heads of Chairs

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES:

Department for Studies in the Italian Language: undergraduate university programme if Italian language and literature; graduate university programme if Italian language and literature and postgraduate specialist programme of Translation as a part of Croatian-Italian bilingualism

Department of Humanities: undergraduate university programme Croatian language and literature, History and Italian language and literature all as single major and double major and Latin language and Roman literature only as double major. Graduate university programme Croatian language and literature, History and Italian language and literature all as single major and double major.

Teacher Training Department: integrated undergraduate and graduate university programme of Teacher study in Croatian and Italian language and professional undergraduate programme of Pre-school Education in Croatian and Italian language.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS (part-time/full-time/final-year) according to self-evaluation document:

Department for Studies in the Italian Language:

Full-time students – 31

Part-time students – 0

Absolvents – 42

Department of Humanities:

Full-time students – 253

Part-time students – 0

Absolvents – 65

Teacher Training Department:

Full-time students – 321

Part-time students – 137

Absolvents – 150

NUMBER OF TEACHERS (full-time, external associates) according to self-evaluation document:

Department for Studies in the Italian Language:

Full-time teachers – 5

Assistants – 5

Junior researchers – 3

Department of Humanities:

Full-time teachers – 26 (21 – scientific-teaching grade, 5 – teaching grade)

Assistants – 14

Junior researchers – 7

Teacher Training Department:

Full-time teachers – 23 (10 – scientific-teaching grade, 13 – teaching grade)

Assistants – 5

Junior researchers – 1

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS (doctors of science, elected to grades, full-time) according to self-evaluation document:

Department for Studies in the Italian Language:

Scientists - 5

Department of Humanities:

Scientists - 21

Teacher Training Department:

Scientists - 10

TOTAL BUDGET (in HRK) according to self-evaluation document:

Department for Studies in the Italian Language:

Total budget – 177.134,33 HRK (23.198.79 €) all from the State budget

Department of Humanities:

Total budget – 808.380,88 HRK (105.871.37€)

MSES FUNDING (percentage): 87,5%

OWN FUNDING (percentage): 12,5%

Teacher Training Department:

Total budget – 2.672.671,73 HRK (350.032.31€)

MSES FUNDING (percentage): 58%

OWN FUNDING (percentage): 42%

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

The Department was founded in 1978 as a part of the Pedagogical Academy in Pula, but the first two-year study programme in Italian Language and Literature was established in academic year 1961/1962 and became a four-year study programme in 1978./1979. Later, Department

became a part of Faculty of Philosophy in Pula which belonged to University of Rijeka. In 2006, Department merged with the University of Pula which was founded in 2006.

Almost the same was with the Department of Humanities (started in 1961.) and with the Teaching Training Department (started in 1948.) Both Departments were part of Pedagogical Academy in Pula and after that, they were a part of Faculty of Philosophy in Pula till the 2006. when they became a part of University of Pula.

CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL

ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. There is a good policy of including quality research results in the study programmes on the level of elective courses, especially on History sub-department
2. The integrative structure enables quick rotation of teaching staff across departments regarding study programmes
3. Small Size: familiarity with students and close relationships between colleagues, including senior and junior colleagues
4. A dynamic history section
5. Valuable expertise in, and academic concern with local, regional, national and greater regional themes
6. The potential to develop 'glocal' status as part of polycentric network of smaller universities
7. Uniqueness of bilingualism and multiculturalism in the local context
8. Attractiveness of natural and cultural environment
9. Commitment and passion of teaching staff

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION

1. The small size also functions as a disadvantage and a vision for expansion seems to be underdeveloped
2. The institutional anomaly of the parallel programmes in Italian language and lit in Humanities and Dept. of Studies in Italian - the structure should be clarified
3. Timetable clashes in double major programmes
4. Impression of insularity in the research culture
5. Incompletely applied procedures for quality assurance.
6. Some apparent resistance at individual (rather than institutional) level to change and to the importation of good practice models from comparable universities (evident also in certain staff members' ostentatious resentment of reaccreditation procedure)
7. International cooperation concentrated on bordering countries
8. Underdeveloped strategy for internationalization.

9. Some staff, in one section in particular, complained strongly about issues to do with communication and transparency of decision making in the institution.
10. Rather old-fashioned 'Secondary school style' approach in some sections and in treatment of students
11. Individual interests of people or departments seem to preside sometimes over the interests of students, for example in the doubled programme of Italian
12. Inadequate infrastructure and facilities and delay in provision of necessary facilities
13. Research and teaching culture sometimes seems to lack cooperation, co-responsibility, and collegial identity
14. National policies on employment and funding limit autonomy and ability to act

FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The involvement of students in publication and research. (As ever, in such involvement, An ethically correct approach needs to be assured)
2. Participation in social development of the Istrian region.
3. Development of local and regional cultural interests especially connected to the study of Italian and History in the university
4. Attention to the linguistic minority (Italian)
5. Dept. of Teacher Training: Early monitored contact practice experience for trainees
6. Dept. of Education: use of autobiographical reflections to reflexively narrate the transition from pupil to teacher
7. Dept. of Education: Perception of pupils and interpretation of their behaviour in the light of theoretical approaches and theories
8. Founding of new elective courses on basis of student feedback
9. Information about the university shared with the public through various means
10. Cultivation of the relationship with alumni, for example by the Dept. of Studies in Italian

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

- Apply planning and strategy for quality assurance
- Insure that communication circulates throughout the university, from the institution to teachers to students, and also in the other direction

2. Study Programmes

- Avoid timetable clashes in double major programmes
- Vigorously activate quality control committees and implement results in the creation of new curricula and programmes
- Synchronise ECTS credits at all levels, especially in Undergraduate studies in order to facilitate and encourage internal mobility of students
- Include more research activity in the programmes (positive exception sub-dept. Of history)
- Rationalise provision of courses to minimise overlap of syllabi and curricula
- Increase degree of interdisciplinary in the programmes (positive exceptions in Italian and History)
- Encourage more internal and external mobility (across faculty and departments)
- Encourage opening of graduate course related to Latin studies
- Encourage profiling 'global' and transcultural interests in the creation of new interdisciplinary graduate programme and modules
- Increase number of elective courses in various areas (Croatian studies and modern history especially noted)

3. Students

- Improve communication between teachers and students with regard to possibility of appealing assessment
- Make strategic plan for improvement of mentoring and other help to students by teachers

4. Teacher

4.1 Continue the positive developments of the last years in all departments of the University
4.2 Implement an effective policy of growth based on transparency and clear communication by involving all bodies of university
4.3 Continue the positive beginnings, examples and developments of your university and take examples and inspiring ideas from comparable institutions
4.4 It should be up to the vice-rector of the university responsible for research to implement a full program which provides the researchers with information, certain skills, studies of research methods and theory and creates above all a kind of 'climate of research' in the University. A day of research (at least once a year) and regular meetings are necessary to create an inspiring spirit of a research community within the university as a base for interdisciplinarity and internationalization.
4.5 It is vital to protect satisfaction regarding workload (where this exists) and to nourish high engagement in the job. Procedures should be in place to allow workload to be handled flexibly if there is a need (for example to finish a project, a dissertation etc.) and circumstances allow it.

5. Research, scientific and professional activity

- Put in place a more consistent approach to research planning and monitoring of research activity in each dept. and sub-dept.
- practical performance indicators should be explicitly indicated and applied throughout the 5-year period of the strategic plan
- ensure individual (sub-)departments were appropriately active in publication of research.
- Staff might be encouraged to publish in English and other international languages, and funding might be made available for the translation of material, in order to build the reputation of staff and institution at an international level.
- greater ambition to publish in international visible venues should be incentivised
- knowledge exchange and transfer activities need to be developed and more consciously articulated.

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- Develop and implement an explicit institutional strategy for internationalization.
- Promote an oriented selection of international programmes and projects to be primarily targeted. Select and follow step by step to join specific programmes
- Establish connections with structured research organizations (e.g., the Utrecht Network)
- Assume multilingualism as a theoretical core subject, in order to empower the academic interest of foreign academic institutions (e.g. those from Canada, or US, or Japan) which are now focusing on this topic as a large field of academic research.

7. Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

- Accelerate activities regarding opening of new campus and renovation of current building
- Implement e-library policy to all university constituents
- Pursue Digitisation of resources for teaching
- Broaden IT infrastructure and employ more IT support staff
- Adopt a deliberate policy to improve the Website with regard to content and translation of that content. Link this policy to the empowerment of students, and better communication within the institution more generally; link it also to the policy on internationalization

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

Institutional management and quality assurance

1.1

The institution has developed a strategic plan with activities, deadline, those responsible for delivery and a monitoring mechanism. (TT. 17; Hm., 22). T**e**acher training and Italian have made references to their connections with social stakeholders (entrepreneurship, local council, tourism association or schools) in the design of study programmes. Ho**w**ever, we lacked empirical information about indicators of realisation.

1.2.

Three departments have presented their organigrams. But there are doubts about the effectiveness of structures. All are sections of small size with a limited number of teachers with full time dedication and top level qualifications so there is the phenomenon of multifunctionality (each teacher having to fulfil more than two or three functions). We perceived an isolated and poor coordinated relationship between the three departments that share the building, resources and structures.

1.3.

The rector has expressed the vision of the University of Pula. In the self assessments of the three departments it seems clear that there is coherence between the strategic goals of the department and the university. There are references to the maintenance of the Istrian culture and the desire to open the University to the world (new activities, like tourism and internationalization of the university)

1.4.

Some of the study programs are in this direction. But perhaps have to incorporate some elements of modernization in provision and methodologies. In this sense, changes are required in the programme of Teacher Training (so far, there has only been introduced a new professional programme for 'free time animator' and computer science that could usefully overlap with the Department of tourism).

The rector has spoken about a project for developing health studies, but programmes such as psycho-pedagogy, intercultural communication or social education that would better differentiate the provision of Pula University could also be set up.
As for the Humanities Department: Perhaps it could programme a degree in cultural management or cultural tourism in tandem with the Department of tourism.

1.5.

There is a system of Quality assurance in Pula University that extends its structure along the three departments. There are written a lot of documents related to the quality but we have observed a lack of understanding of the meaning of 'quality'. This has been understood from different perspectives by the 5 members present in the meetings. We also perceived a lack of commitment by the management to the use of information gathered by the quality system as a tool of shared improvement. This system seems to be functioning only as a vertical and top-down imposition.
The data collected by the quality system isn't communicated to the different agents (teachers, support and administrative personnel and students) as formative feedback. We have seen descriptive data but not enough analysis of this data.

1.6.

About the improvement of the teaching quality, the only strategy quoted with specific activities, deadline, responsible and monitoring mechanism has been the survey of student satisfaction and this isn't the best indicator. There is mention of the monitoring of studying results, the evaluation of learning, and the use of IT services (like **M**oodle), but there isn't a systematic process to evaluate the innovation, the training and the research about the teaching (didactic, new technologies, etc.).

1.7.

About the improvement of research quality. The only strategy quoted with specific activities, deadline, responsibilities and monitoring mechanism has been the encouragement of making and implementing of multidisciplinary programmes and researches. But both teaching and research are included in programs with specific objectives and economic and material resources in the three departments.

1.8

There are references to ethical code and behaviour in the three self reports. But there are serious questions about their empirical application. There are problems relating to the access to the information of the quality surveys and the conflict about the **I**talian programme of the Humanities department creates some suspicion about transparency and ethical professionalism.

Study programmes

2.1.

In general, HEI has not yet fully implemented effective procedures for monitoring and for improving the quality of study programmes. We presume this process is in the starting phase. There are three Quality Committees, each part of its University constituent, and one General committee for quality under the University Rector's Office. The general impression is thus as follows: the committees are not well coordinated and there is a lack of communication between them; the General committee for quality has tried to implement some procedures (e.g. panels, workshops, presentations, transparent systems of surveys and obtaining feedback from the student's surveys) for self-evaluating and self-improving of all levels of quality in the university constituents but, unfortunately, has not yet succeeded; new Quality Committees members were elected only recently and the representative for the General committee for quality hopes that future communication will be much better. The procedures used for monitoring development, innovation and improvements of existing study programmes are transparent and available on the General committee for quality web-site. In theory, these procedures include students and stakeholders from both private and public sectors, and civil society organisations. So, hopefully, all these sectors will be implemented in the quality improvement on all of the university entities.

2.2.

Taking into account the needs of society, proposed enrolment quotas may need revision. There is a significant problem with the employment of the students at the Department of Humanities, especially regarding existing similar programmes in most of the Croatian universities and especially in regional neighbourhood universities, like the University of Rijeka. Department for studies in the Italian language and the Teacher training department have direct contact with all previous students, also via Alumni projects, fulfilling the needs of the labour market.

Department of History is also in accordance with market demands. Sub-departments for Croatian language and literature, Sub-department of Roman and Classical philology and Sub-department for Italian language and literature may be lacking in this way, perhaps not taking into account enough the needs of society and labour market.

2.3.

The enrolment quotas are in line with the institutional resources for quality teaching and pass rate analysis. The Sub-Department of Croatian language and literature, the Sub-department of Italian language and literature, the Sub-department of History, the Sub-department of Roman and Classical philology, and the Teacher Training Department are relatively satisfied with the enrolment quotas. They believe they are applicable to the labour market demands. Department for studies in the Italian language thinks that the enrolment quotas are pretty unfair because the competition is very high, regarding similar studies at the same university (in the Dept. of Humanities) and in neighbouring regional universities, e.g. University of Rijeka.

2.4.

Defined learning outcomes clearly describe the knowledge and skills students obtain upon the completion of study programme; they were modified in cooperation with the various pedagogical committees, in accordance with the humanistic and social studies domains. Some of the teaching staff suggest that many of these outcomes are not fully in accordance with the field of Humanities and Social studies, being focused on 'skills' rather than 'knowledge'.

2.5.

Teachers of a study programme ensure that the assessment of student learning is in line with the defined learning outcomes, that the full range of learning is being assessed, and that the assessment is appropriate to the qualification level. This is monitored by the three Quality committees and by implementing different research strategies in the curriculum. The Department of History is especially well organised in this way.

2.6.

Allocation of ECTS doesn’t reflect a realistic estimate of student workload. This is applicable for all the Departments and evident from the programmes and syllabus. Obligatory and elective research sources and scientific papers required for each course/subject should be defined more

clearly, with more precise correspondence to the students' obligations. There is an evident incoherence on the vertical level, inside the programmes of the particular Sub-departments and Departments, as well as on the horizontal level, in the same semester of the study between different Sub-department and Departments. We presume that this makes horizontal mobility more difficult and incoherent.

2.7.

The content and quality of each study programme doesn't always conform to internationally recognized standards, and isn't always based on the latest scientific discoveries and research innovations, both in methodological and thematic senses. This seems to be especially evident for the programmes of the Sub-department for Croatian language and literature and Sub-department for Italian language and literature at the Department of humanities. Furthermore, it is evident that some departments (Croatian language and literature, Roman and Classical philology) do not implement much of their own research activity in undergraduate or graduate programmes. Lack of research projects undertaken by these departments is also evident. The Department of History, on the other hand, has fully implemented research activities in the curriculum.

2.8.

Teachers use teaching methods that are appropriate for subject matter and different ways of learning, and try to encourage independent student learning. This is done by encouraging students to go on student conferences, participate in some conferences together with their mentors, and inclusion in publication activities, even being awarded ECTS for this. However it was felt that the Teacher Training Department needed to review and update its sometimes old-fashioned methodologies.

2.9.

Appropriate supplemental resources, including domestic and international electronic journal databases, scientific literature and other sources that aid in acquisition of knowledge, have recently been made available by the teachers and the university staff. Access to JSTOR and other databases (SCOPUS) could be mentioned as a big advantage. The general impression is that the students are also well informed about the modes of accessing these databases.

2.10.

As appropriate to learning outcomes, students have many opportunities to reinforce and to apply their learning in the context of practical applications, for example through internships in different cultural institutions, museums, libraries, radio and television houses, or creating partnerships with different publishing houses, community service, or similar arrangements. A strong point is that they can get 4 ECTS points for these activities. The Department of History could be mentioned as a good example for this mode of appropriate implementation and realisation of learning outcomes.

NB:

There is an evident overlapping in the programme structure of the Department for studies in Italian language and the Sub-department for Italian language and literature in the Department of Humanities. Undergraduate and graduate programmes of both entities are practically the same. There is a certain number of professors teaching the same subjects (courses) on both of the constituents. Minimal differences are evident in the elective courses on offer. Furthermore, there are some minimal differences in the positioning of the subjects in the particular curriculums of the two departments. For example, in one programme a certain subject is taught in the third year of the undergraduate level and in the other programme in the first year, in one we can find it on the list of obligatory subjects and in the other on the list of elective ones, etc. Finally, the programme of the Sub-department of Italian language and literature on the Department of Humanities was not previously accredited and initially approved as an independent unit or at least the University has not been able to present us with the approval licence and documents. We can thus conclude that the programme of the Sub-department of Italian language and literature on Department of Humanities is intended to be very similar, if not equal to the programme of the Department for studies in the Italian language: we would say a neat copy, with few different professors teaching on each unit (most of the teaching staff is overlapping) and with a slightly different mission (first year in the Dept. Of Humanities programme is taught in Croatian). We recommend that the two sections (Dept. and sub-dept.) be merged but that a parallel first year programme be maintained so that students can study, initially, through Croatian as well as Italian.

Students

3. 1.

The competencies of applications evaluated upon admission are partly aligned with the demands and expectations of their future careers. HEI partly performs analyses of the admission criteria, taking into consideration students' academic success.
Advantages: Department of Teacher Training for its admission uses the motivational interview. It consists of questions about students' motivation, interests in the subject, volunteering, interests in music or sport, grades in high school, State Matura and the first impression that they leave on the interview.
Recommendations for improvement: To develop a strategic plan in this area.

3. 2.

The institution mostly supports students in their extracurricular activities.
Features of good practice: The sub-department of history gives the chance for their students to earn 4 ECTS through extracurricular activities, such as work in archives, museums or institutes. Also, there is an excellent cooperation with ISHA Pula. The Department for Studies in Italian language organizes trips to Italy, drama group and Italian Culture Week. Students in the Teacher Training Department were not always satisfied with the provision of extra-curricular activities.

3. 3.

The institution partly offers counselling, mentorship and professional orientation services to ensure personal and professional development of the students.
Features of good practice: The professors help students to engage in conferences and to collaborate with other universities.
Disadvantages of the institution: There is no strategic plan for improvement.

3. 4.

Knowledge and learning assessment procedures and methods are mostly established and published. Various methods of knowledge assessment are used, including teachers' feedback aimed at improving student learning, but students do not consistently have possibility to appeal against a decision concerning their assessment.
Recommendations for improvement: To improve communication between students and professors in this particular aspect.

3. 5.

HEI partly (informally) maintains contacts with its former students and collects statistical data on their employment.

Advantages of the institution: Alumni – the association of the graduate students is in the making process. The professors mostly stay in contact with their former students.

3. 6.

The institution regularly informs the public about its study programmes, learning outcomes, qualifications and employment opportunities.

Features of good practice: The Department of Educational sciences informs the public through the "Open door" day, flyers, TV shows, visits to the high schools and contact with graduates.

3. 7.

Students mostly can express their opinions and give suggestions for improvement; they can also partly influence the decision-making and problem-solving processes on issues that concern them.

Features of good practice: Students can express their opinion and give suggestions for improvement through students' surveys, mail address, mailbox, mentors. On the students' initiative, The Department for Studies in Italian language founded two new elective courses.

3. 8.

Students don't receive feedback on the measures that have been taken on the basis of their opinions and suggestions for improvement of the quality of studying, as well as the measures that have been taken in order to solve problems that affect them.

Features of good practice (as 3.7, above): On the students' initiative, The Department for Studies in Italian language, founded two new elective courses.

Teachers

4.1

According to the Self-Evaluation Report of the Department of Educational Sciences (ES), of Humanities (HU) and of Studies in the Italian Language (IL) these units employ a sufficient number of qualified teaching staff in accordance with the Ordinance. The provided overview of

the Departments and the meetings emphasize positive developments in the last years, for example:

- In the Department of Humanities the number of external associates was reduced from 27 to ten. Through the cooperation with external associates colleagues feel supported, enriched by new contacts and potential candidates for new employment. Some staff members underline positively the average age of the full professors of 53.7 years, of the assistant professor 38.4, of the assistants 34.6 and of junior researchers 34.3. Like the heads of sub-departments of ES they are proud to be a young department.
- In the Department of Studies in the Italian Language the number of part-time teachers is equal to the number of full-time teachers in teaching and research positions. As many courses are taught in Italian, the presence of part-time native speaker teachers from various Italian universities contributes to the quality of the studies. The department has an age span from 34 to 60, and sees itself as an excellent place for junior researchers and scientists.
- In the Department of Teacher Training up to 50% of the teaching provision is covered by external associate specialists which is often combined with the problem of demotivation considering the little money they get, of not having the quality of teaching and of causing organizational problems especially for students while not being flexible enough for the structured time table which means lessons in the evening etc..

4.2

Whether the institution explicitly carries out a policy of growth and development of human resources, especially in account potential retirements and sustainability of study programmes and research activities cannot be answered clearly.

The situation may be just illustrated by examples:

- In the case of retirement of a member of the teaching staff the department tries to hold the vacant position in the department while the rector's decision is pending and final.
- Every 5th year the staff members can apply for promotion by showing publication work, the projects, the students' evaluation, the mentoring of students.

4.3

The institution takes into account the number of full-time teachers, maintaining the optimal ratio between students and full-time teachers.

In the Department of Teacher Training the ratio in the Integrated undergraduate and graduate university study programme is 1: 16 (scientific teacher : students), for the Integrated undergraduate and graduate university study programme 1: 8 (cf. p 8). In the Department of Studies in the Italian Language teacher/student ratio has been ranging from 1:11 to 1:18,2, a relatively low ration due to more individualized teaching.
Considering that the ratio according to the Ordinance must not be more than 1 to 30, the ratio of the number of enrolled students is, as far as documents show up, implemented.

4.4

The institution shows differences in its efforts developing policies for scientific-teaching staff that ensure their professional development, as needed to advance the institution's mission.
It seems to be only the sub-department of History which seems to have elaborated systematically ways of fostering scientific teaching and research. Teaching assistants and junior researchers of other departments couldn't remember explicit efforts of fostering their professional development by their department.
Like in other universities there is an increase in technical equipment supporting teaching. But Pula seems to lack an ambitious aim to use technical tools in a elaborated sense which is not limited to using the digital media to just replace the old 'blackboard and chalk' by seeking genuine ways of different and encouraging independent student learning.
As for research the ambitious and motivated young colleagues need the professional assistance of the institution. So far the greater part of the young researchers seem to work alone, individualized, without a team and so invisible for the public of the university.

4.5

The workload should provide a fair and equal distribution of personal effort including different field of tasks like: teaching, research, mentorship, student consultations, administration tasks, participation in various bodies and committees in the department and university which is necessary for the functioning of the Institution.
The staff confirmed an increase of tasks due to the Bologna process: staff in the Teacher Training Department nevertheless they feel ready for all the challenges of the changes they have to face; staff in the Dept. of Studies in Italian and in some sub-departments of Humanities were, however, unhappy with increased teaching and admin load, which it was felt was taking away time for research (and indeed personal life).

4.6

Management assured us that the university has central vetting procedures in place to oversee external commitments,

Scientific and professional activity

5.1

The University's draft strategic programme of scientific/research activity covers a period of 5 years (2014-19), and departments and sub-departments have contributed to it, but not all individual department have their own strategic programmes and we saw written evidence of contribution to the draft, and an individual plan for the sub-department, only from the sub-department of History. Different departments and sub-departments seem to take individual approaches to planning research (for example, Italian in The Dept. Of Humanities had plans for individual members of the section), and a more consistent approach might be taken to this across the university and certainly across the departments. It was not clear that procedures for implementation and monitoring of the strategic plan had been consistently applied across departments and sub-departments in the previous 5-year period, though information on publishing was collated centrally, and these should explicitly be articulated in the new plan, and practical performance indicators should likewise explicitly be indicated and applied throughout the 5-year period. It was not clear that the plan and objectives were explicitly related to international priority areas (e.g. Horizon 2020, EU strategies), but perhaps this will become clearer in the drafting process, and regional and national areas of priority do seem to be taken account of.

5.2.

Cooperation with other academic institutions and scientific organisations was evidenced though collaboration did not seem to be evenly spread throughout the departments and sub-departments; in this, as in other areas, History seemed to be particularly dynamic. It was not clear that the strategic document had been created together with the stakeholders and partners from other organizations, nor did we see evidence of another type of external advisory board supporting the strategic planning and management of the institution (we understand that such

input is not mandatory). However, staff put the emphasis on how international personal connections were leading to more structural/institutional links, and that this process was being supported by the University's internationalization office, which was both proactive and supportive in the establishment of connections beyond Croatia. Many links with external partners (not necessarily other scientific institutions) were in place in the local and regional area, and teaching connections were also demonstrated to lead to research collaboration.

5.3.

In general, the institution seems to have an basically adequate number and the appropriate profile of researchers for the implementation of its strategic research agenda, though several sub-departments mentioned how national conditions and policies on appointment of new staff was inhibiting the achievement of an optimal number of staff. Junior members were, however, often in the process of getting PhDs. There was sometimes a sense that the research concerns of staff risked invisibility at international and perhaps even at national level because of the exclusively local or regional character of their interests. It is recognised that one of the strengths of the staff (and of the institution itself) is the expertise on aspects of the local, regional, national and surrounding areas, but all staff might be encouraged to find ways to demonstrate the relevance of this work beyond the immediate region (through the development of methodologies, comparative work, increased attendance at international conferences and so on).

5.4.

The ambition and publication of high-quality scientific papers varied across sections (departments and sub-departments). A small proportion of papers were published in journals indexed in international databases but the panel recognises that citation indices and bibliometrics are often not appropriate in the Humanities context, and with regard to certain disciplines in particular. Some sections demonstrated a reasonable profile in high level publication output but others seemed to be much less active - procedures should be in place to ensure individual sub-departments were appropriately active in publication of research. Many members of staff demonstrated their authority and expertise in appropriate publications and venues, though the problem of insularity and international invisibility already gestured at in 5.3 was present in publishing activity. The presence of two in-house journals was appropriate (the Teacher Training Department and other sub-departments might consider founding their own); their availability online will be appreciated by the international academic community. However,

a large proportion of the work emerged in Croatian journals and other venues and surprisingly little of it was available in other languages (apart from Italian). Staff might be encouraged to publish in English and other languages, and funding might be made available for the translation of material, in order to build the reputation of staff and institution at an international level.

5.5.

The University has adopted the criteria produced at a national level for the evaluation and promotion of staff. Each member of staff currently receives annual funding to enable travel and other research activity though there are plans to allocate funds according to research plans and activities. Leadership positions are allocated by votes (sometimes secret ballots, sometimes not) among staff.

5.6.

Results here were to be considered average. The panel was not completely persuaded that the institution published regularly and appropriately in numbers and scope at all levels of research staff or in all sections. There did not seem to be enough awareness of levels of Productivity and visibility in comparable European universities, and greater ambition to publish in international visible venues should be incentivised — even for disciplines perceived to have primarily or exclusively local or regional interest. Workload is plainly a factor here, and many staff, and also the self-evaluation reports, mentioned how teaching and admin loads impacted negatively on the ability to produce research.

5.7.

It is recognised that participation in international schemes can be difficult for a small institution because of the initial investment required; Pula necessarily limits and filters such participation but a clearer centralised strategy for the selection and encouragement of such initiatives might be articulated. There has been some participation in international projects in the last 5-year period, and more is in development. While information was provided mostly about projects that received funding, it should be stated that research projects need to be developed and undertaken also in the absence (or expectation) of funding, and international collaborations in particular need to be developed at a small scale and (as seems already to be happening) through personal connections that may, ultimately, lead to funding bids and larger project proposals. Several of the projects described in the self-evaluation reports were completed some time ago

and continuation or replacement obviously needs to be achieved. Though most staff seemed reasonably happy with this aspect (though it was mentioned as a negative in the self-evaluation of the Dept. for Studies in Italian), the panel was not satisfied that effective gathering and dissemination of information on project calls and funding opportunities was provided. Pula might look to models of good practice in comparable universities for how this is done.
The sub-department of History is to be congratulated on gaining funding for two projects in the national round, the results of which have just been announced.

5.8.

Pula Uni. at institutional level seems to support the transfer of knowledge towards targeted stakeholders, though actual initiation and maintaining of links seems to occur at an individual and (sub-)departmental level, rather than on an institutional level per se. We had reports of links particularly from staff in History, with particular reference to the ADRIFORT project developed in tandem with the Veneto region and which has informed practices and policies in cultural heritage institutions. Self-evaluation reports also made reference to the 'Successful Aging Strategies' project.
The impression, though, is that for an institution with such strong links with and expertise in the study of the local region, the aspect of knowledge exchange and transfer is underdeveloped, or at least under-articulated. It should be noted that, at an international level, this aspect of academic practice is increasingly being valued and evaluated. Given the unique opportunities for links with local institutions and communities, Pula Uni. might well be in a position to present itself as a leader in such activity, but it needs to be much more self-conscious in its recording and reporting.

5.9.

Does not seem to be relevant in this case.

5.10.

There is currently no doctoral programme in place in the Departments assessed. Two are planned (history and a joint educational science programme with Rijeka and possibly Zadar), but there is currently no timetable in place. Staff did not feel that the research culture was adversely affected by the absence of such a programme, and some argued that studying elsewhere for PhDs led to an enrichment of the local research culture, an increase in national

and international contacts and so on. There are obvious difficulties for a small institution in terms of setting up and sustaining a doctoral programme, but it does seem desirable in terms of prestige and international reputation, and for the development of research culture. The establishment of a doctoral programme is one sign of the maturity of a young institution, and an explicit timetable and set of steps towards the establishment of such a programme might usefully be put in place.

International cooperation and mobility

6.1.

Compared to the international standards of internationalization currently practiced in academic contexts that can be considered as similar to Pula University in dimensions and cultural features involved in the academic life, this institution presents a relatively good attractiveness for students from foreign academic programmes and universities. This feature appears to have been developed only in recent years, just after the general assessment of the academic programmes due to the compliance with the Bologna process. Therefore, it should be encouraged by a strategic plan of enhancement, which may include an increasing number of summer school programmes, a set of information provided worldwide on the net, and any other kind of promotional activities. General criteria for admission to study programmes appear to be clear and well-shaped, without any risk of discrimination for foreign students of any country. Similarly, the harmonization of previous learning of foreign students with the local study programme does not raise particular problems. This also because the foreign relationships activated with academic institutions are mainly focused to the countries belonging to the vicinity: Italy, Slovenia, Austria, Hungary, with some extensions to Germany, and Spain. The cooperation with institutions from these countries is definitely grounded on the basis of an efficient network of personal relationships, built individually by teaching and research staff. On the other hand it appears, at the time of the process of reaccreditation, to need a process of implementation in width and effectiveness, in order to increase the number of foreign incoming students as it appears from the self–evaluation data provided by Departments.

6.2.

University of Pula has recently signed several contracts fostering student mobility, and appears to be oriented to a strong implementation of this kind of mobility, with a good integration of foreign exchanges into research and teaching projects. Participation in Erasmus and Ceepus international programmes is fully guaranteed and operating. A dedicated office is always available to students, providing information on programmes available in Europe and supporting students in administrative issues. The opportunities to complete a part of the course programme abroad are positively perceived by outgoing students. However, some of those students expressed some complaint about the promptness of the publication of information upon the deadlines of international exchanges. On the other hand, students seem to be satisfied regarding the helpfulness of the assistance they received during their stay abroad and after their comeback to Pula, in the conversion of ECTS credits as well as in the treatment of the transcripts of records. Financial support of mobility mostly covers only a part of the expenses, and no preparatory visits or lectures of students from host institution seem to be provided at the moment, but they could be easily promoted together with a process to significantly increase incoming mobility. It is however clear that mobility is highly considered as an important feature in a student's career, even during a period of economic global crisis. Due to this reason, students involved in international cooperation are requested to organise international conferences in order to enhance the effectiveness of foreign relationships. Diploma Supplements with information upon the achievements of an international experience are provided to outgoing students. The percentage of students participating in outgoing mobility is relatively small at the time of this process of reaccreditation, but some Departments show a set of features to constantly increase the portion of students involved in study abroad programmes.

6.3.

Considering the situation of the Departments here examined, this Panel can state that a plan for stimulating the participation of teaching staff in international cooperation is strongly needed. This should be managed, however, while taking account of an overwhelming internal workload, which equally involves teaching assistants and junior researchers. These two last categories in academic staff seems to be strongly motivated to international cooperation, having in many cases completed in a good percentage a part of their Ph.D. abroad. A more institutional and strategic enhancement of the significant network of personal contacts established by teaching staff and junior researchers throughout the recent years is recommended. Besides this, the panel

invites the setting up of general criteria of evaluation of the international activity performed by a single teacher or researcher, in order to underline and award her/his ability to create new networks and make the research achievements of the whole institution more visible worldwide.

6.4.

All the Departments examined by the Panel are currently members of a good number of partnerships, agreements and projects devoted to international cooperation. However, it should be noticed that this specific way of networking does not appear, at the present time, sufficiently expanded and organized in order to ensure successful applications to EU programmes like Erasmus+ and other significant sources of funding. International publications are present and concretely grounded, but not systematically addressed towards a wide enhancement of the international impact of the research. Within this general frame, the production of essays and articles in English or in other languages besides Croatian and Italian is not encouraged enough, neither through specific funds for translation, nor through courses and/or workshops in academic writing in foreign languages. However, this challenge is being engaged by a good number of junior researchers, who are empowering the process of a wider internationalization, organizing international workshops and symposiums worldwide or participating in them, as well as producing articles and contributions in foreign languages and inviting foreign lecturers.

6.5.

As mentioned above, the institutions examined by the Panel have a moderate number of incoming foreign students at the moment. However, this number is potentially subject to growth, on condition that the institutions become more active in promoting themselves towards foreign students and incorporate such promotion in all of their international activities. Besides the natural and historical attractiveness of Pula as a place for study, cultural enrichment and leisure, these Departments should find a common strategy to empower their provision to foreign students, also on the basis of the regional features and characters of their context.

6.6.

The Departments subjected to this process of reaccreditation invited several times colleagues from foreign countries, and adequately monitored their outcomes on students' community. On

the basis of the positive feedback of these events, any kind of promotion and implementation of these good practices is strongly recommended by the Panel.

6.7.

As far as the Panel can deduce on the basis of the self-evaluation documents and by the meeting with the Rector, the Vice-Rectors, the Heads of Departments, Students, Teaching and Research Staff, and Administrative staff, the implementation of a strategy for internationalization might be currently defined as not above average, with strong perspectives of improvement in the next few years. Some of the institutions took part successfully, for example, in a Tempus project, and others declare their intentions to achieve participation in FP7 EU or similar programmes. Meanwhile, many bilateral agreements are in place, whereas the constitution of joint programmes with foreign partners appears not immediately possible. On the other hand, the University of Pula on the whole is part of local societies and projects based on territory of Istrian Region and the vicinity, with a strong impact on the local context.

Resources: administration, space, equipment and finances

7.1.

Regarding availability of learning resources for all the students enrolled in the programs of these three departments, we have to say that University only partly fulfils requirements since the total number of available classrooms barely satisfies real needs. Still, all the classrooms are just about adequately equipped with LCD projectors and computers (PC or notebooks), but this equipment needs to be upgraded and standardised. On the other hand, the situation if we assess office space of teachers is inadequate, since 3 or more of them have to share the same offices, which results in tight consultations schedule, so students and teachers mostly cannot have consultations in a proper office within the University. There are some similarities regarding library space too. Namely, though there exists a central University library, it is not placed in the same building where students of these three departments have lectures. Therefore, these departments have their separate library place at the ground floor of the building where lectures are held. Bearing in mind the scarcity of funds, this library is reasonably well equipped with the literature necessary for successful study (mandatory and optional literature for all the study programmes)

but it lacks a proper reading room, i.e. we find that existing facilities are not fully satisfying. However, with the opening of additional facilities in the new campus, planned for the next five years, these problems hopefully will be resolved. It is strongly recommended that the current humanities building be renovated. Otherwise, we have to note that the University, via Ministry of science, provides access to bibliographical online databases like Scopus and WoS which certainly helps in research and teaching process. Moreover, in order to foster research in the fields of social sciences and humanities, the University has recently purchased full access to JSOR database. In this respect, it would also be necessary to extend e-library policy, that is currently in the early implementation phase at the Faculty of economy and tourism, to all the University constituents.

7.2.

According to the data provided in the self-evaluations of these three departments and direct questions to the employees regarding their satisfaction of services provided by non-teaching personnel, we asses that present ratio of employed teaching and non-teaching staff is mostly satisfactory. The only suggestion that we find necessary to note is that it would be good if the University could provide better IT support, i.e. possible employment of more IT engineers that could help not only regarding resolving IT problems in scope of hardware and software, but also maybe initiate some activities in the field of digital and e-humanities.

7.3.

Since the management of the administrative (non-teaching) personnel is centralized, due to the organizational structure of an integrated university, we were not able to fully assess this matter during evaluation of these three departments. Still, according to the info stated in the self-evaluation reports and mentioned during the talks with employees we could get impression that non-teaching personnel have numerous possibilities regarding their professional development through attending various workshops, and even acquire additional education participating in Erasmus program. Still, it seems that the University policy regarding who will participate in such activities is not quite transparent.

7.4.

Laboratory provision is currently absent: given the rise of digital and e-humanities and the strength internationally of other standard methodologies in teaching (e.g. Montessori, not taught

at Pula) and the increasing use of IT and media resources more generally, this is likely to become a more and more urgent problem. Provision should be made in future budgets for the setting up of, at least, an audio visual lab (and film library appropriate for various disciplines) and a 'natural science' lab for teacher training (i.e. to train teachers in the facilitation of hands-on experience with materials for children). In general, and linked to our point elsewhere in this report about the need to modernise methodologies in Teacher training, more didactic resources need to be provided for the Teacher Training Department. All of these will need IT and general maintenance support.

7.5.

As is already stated in 7.1., usage of modern equipment in the process of teaching is partly implemented in these three departments. Namely, almost each classroom has computers and LCD projectors but some of them are really outdated and they need to be replaced and standardised, bearing in mind, of course, the financial possibility to do so (but it needs to be made a priority). Similarly, in the classroom for practical work in educational sciences the present computer system (1 server and several clients) is really outdated and needs to be replaced as soon as possible since quality of teaching in such courses deeply depends on the functionality of the applied software that cannot run smoothly on these machines.

7.6.

As stated in 7.1., central and departmental libraries are mostly well equipped with the necessary literature. However, there is an evident lack of storage and reading space, which will be, as we are promised, resolved with moving the libraries to the new campus during the next five years. Additionally, we have to stress once more that, although University provides access to important bibliographical databases, it is really important that e-library policy is extended to all the University constituents.

7.7.

Though all the study programs depend on state financial support, the share of University income gained on the market is not negligible and rises up to approx. 40% of the entire income. Structure of this income acquired on market mostly comes from student fees, and in less percentage from other sources described in the self-evaluations. From the examined information it seems that all the study programmes, if student enrolment ratio remains more or less the

same, reflect financial sustainability. Procedures of division of acquired income and other funds are transparent and constituted in a way that the University has the possibility of providing financial help to the departments (study programmes) which temporary suffer reduced enrolment ratio.

7.8.

The University has a policy that each constituent has some freedom regarding the division of acquired financial resources. Therefore each department has a certain amount of money (approx. 700 € per teacher) to support teaching and research activities of the employed teachers, without making differences between FTE and young researchers / assistants.