



**Report
of the Expert Panel
on the REACCREDITATION
of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme
Management**

**Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
Faculty of Economics in Osijek**

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INTRODUCTION

The Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) created this Report on the Re-accreditation of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme *Management* on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report of the Programme, other documentation submitted and a visit to the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Economics in Osijek.

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

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

The Report contains the following elements:

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

Members of the Expert Panel:

- President of the Expert Panel: Prof. Peter Mason, London Metropolitan University, United Kingdom;
- Prof. Aleksandra Mrčela Kanjuo, vice rector of the doctoral school, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia;
- Prof. Rainer Niemann, Karl-Franzens-Universität Graz, Austria;
- Prof. Anand Murugesan, Central European University, Hungary;
- Prof. Peter-Wim Zuidhof, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands;
- Prof. Wendy Sigle, London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom;
- Doc. dr. Maja Turnšek-Hančič, University of Maribor, Slovenia;
- Prof. Julius Horvath, Central European University Business School, Hungary;
- Prof. Adele Ladkin, Bournemouth University, United Kingdom;
- Ieva Krumina, doctoral candidate, Latvian University of Agriculture, Latvia;
- Hrvoje Stojić, doctoral candidate, University Pompeu Fabra, Spain;

- Jeremiás Máté Balogh, doctoral candidate, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary;
- Kanad Bagchi, doctoral candidate, Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Germany.

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

- Prof. Anand Murugesan, Central European University, Hungary;
- Prof. Peter-Wim Zuidhof, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands;
- Jeremiás Máté Balogh, doctoral candidate, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary;
- Kanad Bagchi, doctoral candidate, Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Germany.

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

- Josip Hrgović, coordinator, ASHE,
- Alma Agović, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Goran Briški, interpreter at the site visit, ASHE,
- Lida Lamza, translator of the Report, ASHE.

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

- Management,
- Study programme coordinators,
- Doctoral candidates,
- Teachers and supervisors,
- External stakeholders,
- Alumni,

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

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme contained in the licence: Management

Institution providing the programme: Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

Education provider(s): Faculty of Economics, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek

Place of delivery: Osijek

Scientific area and field: Social Sciences, Economics

Number of doctoral candidates: 264

Number of doctoral candidates with funding (assistants employed at this or other HEI or institute): 37

Number of doctoral candidates who pay for their studies themselves and those whose employers pay for their study: 227

Number of inactive doctoral candidates (did not enrol in a study year but still have the right to study): 56

Number of doctoral candidates with officially appointed supervisors: 31

Number of teachers: 19

Number of supervisors: 19

Number of potential supervisors: 48

Learning outcomes of the study programme:

Learning outcomes of the doctoral study programme and their operationalisation through general and specific competencies (knowledge, skills, independence and responsibility) are as follows:

1. Critically analyse, categorise, evaluate and establish the specificities of management in different areas of human activity, including the analysis of the environment and the relevant factors of managerial action;
2. Formulate research problems and areas of research, identify and analyse the causes and consequences, the reasons and motives for solving specific research problems;
3. Set goals and hypotheses and choose to check the available theories, models and methods and apply methodological apparatus appropriate to the nature of the research problem;
4. Design and plan the research process, develop and present a project idea and offer (propose) a solution to the research problem;
5. Evaluate and assess theories, methods and procedures, as well as the research results and their contribution to solving problems and creating new value in the academic community and beyond;
6. Evaluate the usefulness and predict future usability and applicability of acquired knowledge to the same or similar types of problems in the area of social sciences, the field of economics and management, as well as inter-disciplinarity in research and related results;
7. Create and evaluate new and complex research ideas;
8. Present the results of their research by publishing research papers in national and international publications and by presenting their research papers at internationally recognised conferences;
9. Transfer and apply acquired knowledge in the academic community and, wherever possible, in the socio-economic environment;

10. Apply the ethical principles in research and take responsibility for social usefulness of research results as well as for potential social impacts.

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

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

Issue a letter of expectation for the period up to 2 (two) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements.

Joint recommendations for all of the evaluated study programmes in the cluster of social sciences and the field of economics:

1. Research proposal should accompany applications of candidates and should be part of the assessment process when choosing the best candidates for enrolment.
2. Supervisor should be appointed at the start of programme.
3. Transparency of doctoral students' funding should be improved.
4. Justification of fee level should be improved.
5. There should be an equal treatment of part time and full time (fully funded) students.
6. All doctoral students should have at least 3 years of independent research in full capacity. With current teaching content taking large portion of the programmes, programmes should be prolonged to last possibly 4 or 5 year, with first (classroom) part as a Masters (Research) level.
7. Systematic internationalisation of curriculum, faculty and students (incl. student experience) should be a priority.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. The level of publication in international journals should be improved. In addition to the financial incentives currently in place for publication, the program should encourage its Faculty members by weighting international peer-reviewed journal publications proportionally higher than regional publications, as there are negligible international publications of repute at the moment.
2. The program should provide further opportunities for international mobility of research staff and students as part of a wider internationalisation strategy. Currently international exposure is limited due to time and lack of investment, which could be partly addressed by making steps to attract international faculty and good candidates within and outside Croatia. The program should encourage international conference participation of its faculty furthermore.
3. As part of the internationalisation strategy, it is recommended that the orientation of the Faculty could also begin addressing more general issues (besides local issues), including inviting more foreign guest lectures, conducting more courses in English and encouraging students to write and publish in English.
4. A note of caution that a significant number of supervisors (8 out of 19) are not employees of the Faculty of Economics. This can lead to fluctuations and abrupt changes in supervisory roles that may negatively affect supervisory quality and student completion rates. Although,

the Panel recognizes the strengths of having external supervisors for the Management program (it may build strong links to real business and management challenges), the Panel also would like the program to ensure that sudden changes in advisory capacity be minimized.

5. Students should be provided with a supervisor at the beginning of the program.
6. The Panel recommends that more formal meetings be organized for individuals to present progress on their research for feedback from peers and faculty. As many students travel to Osijek for study in the program, such formal meetings provide an opportunity for collegiality, exchange of ideas, learning from their peers and improve their presentation skills.
7. The Panel recommends that the selection procedure evaluates students on a research proposal along with other application documents. A considered research proposal is informative in demonstrating the critical faculties of the candidate and his/her orientation towards research.

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. The program is well integrated in the local requirements of the region.
2. The Faculty and the Department have strong linkages with several stakeholders in Osijek and Slavonia region. It was clear that the program plays a vital role in the local economy (via its graduates and also research projects).
3. The program provides adequate room for individual learning goals and research interests with its distribution of ECTS credits between mandatory and elective courses.
4. The flexibility of doctoral study program has been much appreciated by working professional who were also enrolled in the management program.
5. The annual conference provides a good opportunity for current students to connect with different stakeholders and also alumni of the program.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Many students travel to Osijek from different parts of the region or the country, a few days a week. This is an impediment in creating a culture of peer-learning which has been essential component in doctoral programs.
2. Following from the first point, it is difficult to organize regular formal and informal workshops among students and Faculty members as students spend only a brief time over the week/month in the school due to other engagements. This makes it hard to receive regular feedback on academic progress from their peers.
3. Although the program has strong linkages with the regional and local economy, on the flip side it can be a disadvantage for students who would like to focus on more general issues (rather than local).
4. The programme is relatively high priced for students and the programme should make further efforts to secure additional outside funding for the programme to enable external students to participate in the programme against a lower cost.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Active cooperation of the program and its faculty with local (Osijek and Slavonia region) public and private sector is admirable and can be a model for many regional universities.

2. The program recognizes the importance of research and publications and has instituted financial incentives currently to encourage publishing.
3. The instructors collectively produce publications (424 papers in the last 5 years) that evidence for active involvement in research and collaboration with students.
4. A small share of the teaching content is made up of mandatory courses (20 of the 180 ECTS), therefore the students have adequate room to tailor the program according to their individual interests. The PhD program plan suggests that it prioritizes so that individual students can shape their PhD study, according to their constraints and also provides adequate opportunities for one-on-one interaction with supervisors and other Faculty members.

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

Minimal legal conditions:	YES/NO notes
1. Higher education institution (HEI) is listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations in the scientific area of the programme, and has a positive reaccreditation decision on performing higher education activities and scientific activity.	YES
2. HEI delivers programmes in the two cycles leading to the doctoral programme, i.e., first two cycles in the same area and field/fields (for interdisciplinary programmes), and employs a sufficient number of teachers as defined by Article 6 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10).	YES
3. HEI employs a sufficient number of researchers, as defined by Article 7 of the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (OG 83/2010).	YES
4. At least 50% of teaching as expressed in norm-hours is delivered by teachers employed at the HEI (full-time, elected into scientific-teaching titles).	YES
5. Student: teacher ratio at the HEI is below 30:1.	NO (It is just over at 1: 30.29)
6. HEI ensures that doctoral theses are public.	YES
7. HEI launches the procedure of revoking the academic title if it is determined that it has been attained contrary to the conditions stipulated for its attainment, by severe violation of the studying rules or based on a doctoral thesis (dissertation) that has proved to be a plagiarism or a forgery according to provisions of the statute or other enactments.	YES
Additional/ recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council for passing a positive opinion	YES/NO notes
1. HEI (or HEIs in joint programmes) has at least five teachers appointed to scientific-teaching titles in the field, or fields relevant for the programme involved in its delivery.	YES
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	NO (but the HEI has attained full accreditation in the follow-up)
3. The doctoral programme is aligned with the HEI's research strategy.	YES
4. The candidate: supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	* YES , for officially appointed supervisions.

	NO , for overall number of PhD student to no. potential supervisor (264:48). There are also 57 doctoral students on the other PhD programme.
<p>5. All supervisors meet the following conditions:</p> <p>a) PhD, elected into a scientific title, holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position and/or has at least two years of postdoctoral research experience;</p> <p>b) active researcher in the scientific area of the programme, as evidenced by publications, participation in scientific conferences and/or projects in the past five years (table 2, Supervisors and candidates);</p> <p>c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the candidate (or submission of the proposal);</p> <p>d) ensures the conditions (and funding) necessary to implement the candidate's research (in line with the draft research plan) as a research project leader, co-leader, participant, collaborator or in other ways;</p> <p>e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-supervisions etc.);</p> <p>f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.</p>	<p>A) NO*</p> <p>B) NO*</p> <p>C) YES</p> <p>D) NO*</p> <p>E) YES</p> <p>F) NO</p>
<p>*some supervisors are retired (SER states 3 supervisors that are retired, but 4 more have 0 norm hours – which possibly means they are retired), i.e. they do not work at academic posts anymore, some do not seem to have research outputs (e.g. Novak, Crnković); only few supervisors have projects (according to the SER only two projects in the moment), and almost half of them are external to the Faculty.</p>	
<p>6. All teachers meet the following conditions:</p> <p>a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position;</p> <p>b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course.</p>	<p>a) YES</p> <p>b) NO*</p>
<p>*Few teachers do not seem to have research activity in the past 5 years (Babić, Novak).</p>	
<p>7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.</p>	NO
<p>8. The programme ensures that all candidates spend at least three years doing independent research (while studying, individually, within or outside courses), which includes writing the thesis, publishing, participating in international conferences, field work, attending courses relevant for research etc.</p>	YES
<p>9. For joint programmes and doctoral schools (at the university level)</p>	n/a

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

<p>1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>	
<p>1.1. HEI is distinguished by its scientific/ artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The 47 full-time faculty members have reportedly published 424 papers over 5 years with a notable increase in the last 3 years. However, relatively few of these publications are in top journals.</p> <p>Besides the annual international management conference organized by the program, the Faculty members collaborate on 14 national research projects and a few international projects over the last five years. Of notable mention is the active cooperation of the program and its faculty with local (Osijek and Slavonia region) public and private sector.</p> <p>However, the Panel recommends, in addition to the financial incentives currently in place for publication, that the program should encourage its Faculty members by weighting international peer-reviewed journal publications proportionally higher than regional publications as there are negligible international publications of repute at the moment. This is intended to improve the quality of output.</p>
<p>1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Full-time faculty members teach all of the core courses and 12 of the 13 electives. Given that 19 instructors deliver all the required teaching, the workload of the teachers involved is able to provide quality doctoral education. However, a significant number of teachers work well above the norm (300 hours), and some are even above 700 hours. The Panel recommends that staff working in the program do not have workloads above the norm.</p>

<p>1.3. The teachers are highly qualified researchers who actively engage with the topics they teach, providing a quality doctoral programme.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The instructors collectively produce publications (424 papers in the last 5 years) which evidence for active involvement in research The program also adopts the teaching and professional development plan for each calendar year to improve teaching methods. The program covers part of scientific conference participation fees and expenses for employees. However, a number of faculty have no research outputs, only two staff are involved in projects and generally research output is not as good as it could be. The Panel recommends greater participation of staff in research and projects. The Panel also suggests that the Faculty should actively seek to recruit international staff and encourage international conference participation.</p>
<p>1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary Of the 48 researchers who meet the criteria for appointment as supervisors, 11 have been appointed as supervisors (in addition to 8 researchers who are not employees of the Faculty of Economics but teach part-time) – which evidences for the selectivity of appointing doctoral supervisors. A total of 25 papers have been published by the 18 doctoral students who have graduated in the last 5 years – which signals the role of the supervisors. However there are a large number of doctoral students and relatively few qualified and experienced supervisors, so that some supervisors have a large number of students. Additionally, a significant number of supervisors (8 out of 19) are not employees of the Faculty of Economics. This can lead to fluctuations and abrupt changes in supervisory roles which may negatively affect supervisory quality and student completion rates. The Panel suggests that the HEI should improve this situation as soon as possible.</p>
<p>1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The Program has laid down criteria to verify qualifications and competencies of teachers and actively monitors the competencies of teachers and supervisors by their publication record. However, not all faculty meet the criteria so the methods of assessing qualifications and competencies do not appear to work in practice. The Panel recommends that the Faculty reviews its processes for assessing competencies and qualifications regarding</p>

	the ability to supervise and teach on the programme.
1.6. The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The lecture halls and IT room are reportedly well equipped with teaching and learning systems. The program provides general purpose software packages and statistical tools such as SPSS, Matlab and Statistica are available on its computers. The library has recently made significant improvements (45,000 items currently). The Panel recommends that the program should consider purchasing STATA, as it is a standard statistical/econometric package used by many economics departments, and should organize training sessions for faculty members and some graduate students for its adoption.</p>
2. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME	
2.1. The HEI has established and accepted effective procedures for proposing, approving and delivering doctoral education. The procedures include identification of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social and economic needs.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The Management programme was established in 2007. The institution and the Faculty of Economics have clear procedures for establishing a programme which have been followed when the programme was established. The programme trains students for independent, academic research at universities, research institutes, and business. It has made use of similar programmes at other international institutions when designing this programme. From its inception the programme has witnessed a stable demand from students, most of which are external candidates (i.e. not employed at the institution).</p>
2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The Management programme is clearly aligned with the research strategy of the Faculty of Economics (2017-2020 Strategic Research Programme, specific objective 2: Assure high quality of postgraduate doctoral studies), the research strategy of the J.J. Strossmayer University of Osijek, and the national research strategy. The programme clearly builds on the general research profile of the Faculty of Economics, which has a strong focus on management.</p>
2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The programme conducts an annual review of the programme in the form of a status report on student success, teaching, finances and research output of</p>

	<p>supervisors. The status report is input for adjustments in the programme.</p> <p>The Programme has a sufficient grasp of the study progress of its students and keeps track of the research output of researchers and its students.</p>
<p>2.4. HEI continuously monitors supervisors' performance and has mechanisms for evaluating supervisors, and, if necessary, changing them and mediating between the supervisors and the candidates.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Head and Deputy Head of the programme reviews the performance of supervisors annually. This review is based on consultations with students. Research output of supervisors is monitored on an annual basis.</p> <p>The programme maintains an overview of the research performance of PhD candidates and their completion rates.</p> <p>There are clear procedures for assigning supervisors and mediation in case of problems. Requests for change of supervisors have not been reported.</p> <p>However, the monitoring system has failed to deal with the current situation in which there is a significant imbalance, with some supervisors having very large numbers of students. Additionally, as noted above, some supervisors have low research output and few are involved in projects. The Panel recommends that the HEI considers ways to improve the application of the monitoring system.</p>
<p>2.5. HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The Institution and faculty has a set of clear regulations and procedures covering the issue of integrity and freedom of research.</p> <p>As an example of good practice, all entering students join an introductory session on research ethics and plagiarism.</p> <p>There is attention to plagiarism when submitting and defending the doctoral thesis. The Panel suggests that this should also be extended to all course work.</p> <p>All Faculty members have access to plagiarism detection software and are aware of its use and existence.</p> <p>The institution has procedures in place for addressing fraud and can retract a degree in case it has been proven to be based on fraudulent practices.</p>
<p>2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The institution and programme has clear procedures for defending the thesis proposal, the appointment of the committee and protocols for submitting dissertations. Every committee has an external member.</p>

<p>2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary Dissertations are assessed by an independent committee that has – by regulation - at least one member from outside the institution. In a number of cases this has been a member of an international partner university. The thesis advisor cannot be the chair of dissertation committee, but is a member. To ensure that the committee is truly independent the HEI should consider the role of the supervisor on this committee. Students receive credit for (international) publications and presentations at conferences. However, the Panel suggests that the number of international peer-review publications and international conference presentations could be improved.</p>
<p>2.8. The HEI publishes all necessary information on the study programme, admissions, delivery and conditions for progression and completion, in accessible outlets and media.</p>	<p>High level of quality Information about the programme is publicly available; some of which is also available in English. However, this could be improved to enhance the international profile of the programme.</p>
<p>2.9. Funds collected for the needs of doctoral education are distributed transparently and in a way that ensures sustainability and further development of doctoral education (ensures that candidates' research is carried out and supported, so that doctoral education can be completed successfully).</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The programme has a sustainable system of funding. The programme has provided general insights into how funds are allocated. However, the Panel recommends that the HEI continues to ensure that funds are distributed in a transparent manner. The programme is relatively high priced for students and the Panel recommends that the programme should make further efforts to secure additional outside funding, to enable external students to participate in the programme at a lower cost.</p>
<p>2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The programme explains how the tuition fee is determined and reflects the real costs of studying. However, the costs of organizing the Interdisciplinary Management Research Conference take up a high proportion in the total costs of the programme. As it is a requirement that the Faculty spends the majority of tuition fees' income on the programme itself, the Panel suggests that the Faculty needs to reassess its priorities here.</p>
<p>3. SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION</p>	
<p>3.1. The HEI establishes admission quotas</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p>

<p>with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.</p>	<p>The full time and part time ratio of professors is 70:30.</p> <p>The program seeks to attract students beyond Croatia; countries such as Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The University of Osijek have several recruiting centres in Zagreb, Split, Varaždin and Istria.</p> <p>Many students work in Zagreb, but study in Osijek (so commute regularly across the two cities). Despite the travel, the arrangement seems to be working largely OK.</p> <p>The students we met seemed to be generally satisfied with the quality of supervision.</p> <p>However, as noted above, there is an imbalance in the allocation of supervision time between supervisors. There is a large number of students and relatively few qualified and experienced supervisors. Additionally, approximately half the supervisors are external. The Panel recommends that Faculty takes steps to rectify this undesirable situation regarding supervisory capacity as soon as possible.</p>
<p>3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>In the last 5 years, 265 candidates enrolled in the PhD programme, while 75 students have earned a doctoral degree in Management. Most of the candidates gave up the program during the proposal's stage. The program seems to be taking steps in facilitating the students during this crucial stage of the PhD. However, as a high proportion of students 'gave up' during the proposal stage of the program, the Panel recommends that at application students are required to submit a research proposal, which becomes part of the selection criteria for admission to the program.</p> <p>Six assistants are employed at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek are enrolled in the Doctoral study programme in Management, while the rest pay for their studies themselves or are funded by their employers.</p> <p>The Regional Development Agency of Slavonia and Baranja has an office in Brussels, and usually hires PhDs in order to participate in EU projects and applying for EU funds.</p> <p>We infer that the University of Osijek seems to be playing a central role in providing suitable candidates to different sectors of the local economy. For example, one PhD student works as the head of the Finance Office at the city administration. Most of the students who undertook the programme had found employment, mostly in the public sector, while others had jobs they returned to</p>

	<p>(presumably with further responsibilities). The set admission quota is a maximum of 30 students per academic year appears to be appropriate as the rate of employability of researchers, engineers and specialists is relatively high. However, in relation to improving the quality of graduates, the Panel believes this quota is too high, given that the best EU universities have PhD programmes with 10-15 candidates only admitted annually.</p>
<p>3.3. The HEI establishes the admission quotas taking into account the funding available to the candidates, that is, on the basis of the absorption potentials of research projects or other sources of funding.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary A total of 14% of doctoral students receive funding from higher education institutions, while the rest are self-funded or employer sponsored. We infer that apart from the students who were employed at the Faculty, most of the students were self-funding their education. However, this appears not to be a significant issue for many students undertaking the programme, as they are working full-time elsewhere and hence funding is not their main source of concern. The SER notes that in the period 2008-2013, there were 14 projects at the Faculty of Economics in Osijek that were supported by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. Additionally, the Croatian Science Foundation funded two projects, one in 2014 and one in 2016, and currently these are the only two projects running. The Panel recommends that the Faculty makes greater efforts to secure more funded projects.</p>
<p>3.4. The HEI should pay attention to the number of candidates admitted as to provide each with an advisor (a potential supervisor). From the point of admission to the end of doctoral education, efforts are invested so that each candidate has a sustainable research plan and is able to complete doctoral research successfully.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The major issue is that students are not provided with a supervisor at the beginning of the programme. They are required to defend their research proposal only at the end of the second year, which means that for more than half the programme they are likely to lack a supervisor. The Panel recommends that students submit, prior to enrolment and with their application, a research proposal which will form part of the application process. However, In the second year, students must write and submit their proposal, and every student who has passed the proposal defence is then assigned a supervisor and co-supervisors. Courses of the PhD program support students in writing papers and the research proposals. The analysis of the progression of each individual doctoral candidate is conducted every year at the doctoral workshop that takes place within the framework of the</p>

	<p>Interdisciplinary Management Research Conference organized by the Faculty of Economics in Osijek.</p> <p>The condition for initiating the process of acceptance of the doctoral thesis proposal is the accumulation of 60 ECTS credits (within the specified 120 ECTS credits) the candidates have to earn by publishing the findings of their research.</p> <p>The doctoral candidate is obliged to make a public presentation of the doctoral thesis proposal in consultation with the supervisor, the co-supervisor and the Head of Doctoral Studies.</p> <p>The yearly doctoral workshop organized by the Faculty of Economics was much appreciated by all the students at interview. The students considered the workshop to be of immense help with respect to the evaluation of their research proposal and in establishing more direct links with their fellow PhD colleagues. The Panel recommends that more such workshops be organized within the Faculty such that students are continually evaluated on the progress of their thesis. Such workshops could be organized in smaller groups such that the interaction between the students and the supervisor is individual and fruitful. Moreover, smaller but more frequent workshops are likely to aid in the development of a sense of community among the students.</p>
<p>3.5. The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>At the regional and country level, the University of Osijek recruits students from everywhere. However, the number of student's recruited internationally/EU is not significant. The Panel recommends that the Faculty makes greater efforts to recruit more international students</p> <p>The level of publication in international journals (outside of university press and non-Slavic regions) is very low (PhD students mentioned only one English publication recently), and the Panel recommends that faculty targets the top journals in future.</p> <p>Most of the doctoral theses have been written only in Croatian. Therefore graduates have low possibilities to be hired internationally (only one thesis was available in English). The Panel recommends that theses should be written in English.</p> <p>There is no specific focus on recruiting international candidates. The visibility of the University is rather low as a result of several factors. Primary among them is the fact that there is no emphasis on publishing in English.</p>

	<p>It is recommended that the Faculty shifts its orientation towards greater internationalisation; it could also begin addressing more general issues (besides local issues), inviting more foreign guest lectures, conducting more courses in English and encouraging students to write and publish in English.</p>
<p>3.6. The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Many students of the program come from the business sector as the University (with reason as it is a management program) seem to be having a preference for such candidates.</p> <p>The expectations from applicants are available at the website of the doctoral program of Management: http://efos.management/en/postgraduate-application/.</p> <p>Students may enrol in the postgraduate doctoral study and postgraduate specialist study if they have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completed appropriate university study in four years in the field of social sciences: economics and law. • completed university studies that do not come within the scope of Social Sciences (field of economics and law) with the obligation of taking the differential exams • completed graduate studies in social sciences: economics and law. • completed graduate studies which do not within the scope of Social Sciences (field of economics and law) with the obligation of taking the differential exams. • completed appropriate training under the conditions provided by the regulations of the Faculty. <p>In addition, if the candidate's grade point average during his/her studies was less than 3.5, the Postgraduate Doctoral Studies Council requires recommendations of two university professors.</p> <p>Despite targeting specific groups for the programme, the Faculty does not appear to be trying to recruit the best candidates; rather it would seem to have a policy of selecting on the basis of 'quantity' rather than 'quality'. The Panel recommends the emphasis in future should be placed on quality.</p> <p>In addition the Panel recommends, as previously suggested, that candidates should submit a research proposal along with other application documents. A</p>

	considered research proposal is informative in demonstrating the critical faculties of the candidate and his/her orientation towards research.
3.7. The HEI ensures that the selection procedure is transparent and in line with published criteria, and that there is a transparent complaints procedure.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The selection procedure of new candidates seems to be transparent and in line with published criteria. We did not see any significant complaints.</p>
3.8. There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>According to the SER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior studies from social sciences (economics and law) are fully accepted for enrolments. • Candidates who completed university studies but do not come within the scope of Social Sciences (economics and law) are obliged to take differential exams. • For the completion of a postgraduate research programme in any scientific area and field, 60 ECTS credits shall be recognized; • For the completion of a postgraduate specialist study programme in any area and field, 30 ECTS credits shall be recognized. • 60 ECTS credits recognized equate to: four core exams in the first semester (year) - 16 ECTS credits; • professional training at another university or institute in the Republic of Croatia - 10 ECTS credits; • paper cited in secondary publications - category A 1 (co-author) - 20 ECTS credits; • participation in international research projects - 10 ECTS credits; • professional paper - 4 ECTS credits. • 30 ECTS credits recognized equate to: four core exams in the first semester (year) of the doctoral study - 16 ECTS credits; • professional training at another university or institute in the Republic of Croatia - 10 ECTS credits; • professional paper - 4 ECTS credits <p>These points seem to suggest that the program is taking into account candidates' prior training.</p>
3.9. Candidates' rights and obligations are defined in relevant HEI regulations and a contract on studying that provides for a	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Students sign a contract at the beginning of the programme. However, at this point they do not have</p>

<p>high level of supervisory and institutional support to the candidates.</p>	<p>supervisor. As we have recommended, students should be provided with a supervisor at the beginning of the programme. The signed contract would then be more meaningful.</p> <p>We did not received any complaints in relation to student's obligation and regulation of the contract. There was one case mentioned when a student had an issue with his supervisor that seemed to have been handled fairly by the program.</p> <p>The program has taken steps such that after retirement of a supervisor, the student ids enabled to continue in the supervision process.</p>
<p>3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We gathered from the SER that, in the past five years, 424 papers have been published, of which 68 have been published in journals indexed in WoS and Scopus databases and 356 (246 A1 and 110 A2) in publications indexed in other databases relevant for advancement into research rank. • Employees of the Faculty of Economics in Osijek appointed to associate ranks are entitled to a financial reward for the publication of scientific papers in the scientific area of social sciences, the scientific field of economics, in publications indexed in the Current Contents (CC), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) and Sciences Citation Index (SCI). • The success of supervision is indicated by a relatively high average number of publications by the doctoral candidates that result from the research conducted for the purpose of the doctoral thesis, which is visible in CROSBI and other databases (WoS, Scopus, EconLit), and these are papers with international double peer review. • The Faculty of Economics in Osijek provides support with doctoral research in that it enables access to indexed and citation databases (EBSCOhost, EconLit, DOAJ - Directory of Open Access Journals, Emerald Insight, DART - Europe E-theses Portal, Springer Journals, Cambridge Journals, JSTOR and others, as well as major citation databases - WOS and Scopus), and software (e.g. SPSS, STAT, Ephorus). • Furthermore, doctoral students who choose to participate in any of the three international conferences organized by the Faculty of Economics in

	<p>Osijek, i.e. Interdisciplinary Management Research, Economy of Eastern Croatia and Business Logistic and Modern Management, are exempt from paying the registration fee.</p> <p>However, without the support of a supervisor from the outset of the programme, it is not possible to state that there is full support throughout the course for students to successfully progress. Once again, the Panel recommends that a supervisor is appointed at the beginning of the programme.</p>
4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES	
4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The program attempts to align itself with programs in EU countries and the US with respect to the length of study, required ECTS and basic entry requirements (such as the required Master's degree).</p> <p>However, the supervisory procedures are not the same as those at the best universities in many other countries, particularly in relation to the lack of appointment of a supervisor at the beginning of the course. Again, the Panel recommends the appointment of a supervisor from the start of studies.</p>
4.2. Programme learning outcomes, as well as the learning outcomes of modules and subject units, are aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF. They clearly describe the competencies the candidates will develop during the doctoral programme, including the ethical requirements of doing research.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>Programme learning outcomes, as well as the learning outcomes of modules and subject units, are aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF, and were recently redefined (2015).</p> <p>The program has taken first steps to monitor plagiarism (purchasing software) and signing declarations.</p>
4.3. Programme learning outcomes are logically and clearly connected with teaching contents, as well as the contents included in supervision and research.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The program provides a matrix of learning outcomes linking individual courses with general, specific outcomes and overall objectives of the doctoral study.</p> <p>Programme learning outcomes are connected with the contents included in supervision and research.</p> <p>The program could incorporate some interdisciplinary courses (similar to the Entrepreneurship and Innovation program).</p>
4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.</p> <p>The program provided a sample of theses, candidate's</p>

	<p>publications, seminar papers and conferences. However, the Panel recommends that further emphasis needs to be placed on publishing in journals outside of the region.</p>
<p>4.5. Teaching methods (and ECTS, if applicable) are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Given the ratio of PhD candidates to teachers, the supervisors who are based in Osijek appear to provide adequate opportunities for one-on-one interaction. However this seems less likely to occur when considering approximately half the supervisors who are external to the Faculty. This potentially unequal treatment is not acceptable and the Faculty must ensure that it does not occur.</p> <p>During their study students are able to participate in research projects that are conducted by faculty members. The Panel recommends that more formal meetings be organized for individuals to present progress on their research for feedback from peers and faculty. As many students travel to Osijek for study in the program such formal meetings provide an opportunity for collegiality, exchange of ideas and learning from their peers.</p>
<p>4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>Several courses are reported to include modules that enable acquisition of general skills. Doctoral students are also regularly invited to take part in workshops organized by the University or other University units and informed via emails or the program website.</p> <p>The Panel strongly recommends that regular formal and informal workshops be organized to facilitate interaction among students, get feedback on their academic progress and also provide an opportunity to improve their presentation skills.</p>
<p>4.7. Teaching content is adapted to the needs of current and future research and candidates' training (individual course plans, generic skills etc.).</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>A small share of the teaching content are mandatory courses (20 of the 180 ECTS), therefore the students has adequate room to tailor the program according to their individual interest.</p> <p>The program requires that the student's choice of courses and the subject area in which papers have been published must be in accordance with their research plan.</p>
<p>4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The program has begun intensifying activities related to funding networking, such as Erasmus+ and COST.</p> <p>The program faculty participate in some international</p>

research projects.

Nevertheless, there is relatively little mobility of staff or students. The Panel recommends that the program should provide further opportunities for international mobility of research staff and students. Currently international exposure is limited and the Faculty needs to invest (financially) in more international mobility as part of a wider internationalisation strategy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The 'high quality label' cannot be proposed or awarded to a programme or a higher education institution that does not comply with the requirements laid down by the laws and bylaws mentioned

in this document, and any additional requirements recommended by the Accreditation Council. Moreover, the quality assessment awarded to a study programme should reflect a high level of quality inasmuch that at least half of the sub-criteria in each of the quality assessment criteria are assessed as being of high quality. The Accreditation Council of the Agency issues a final opinion on the label awarded. The content and form of the quality labels shall be prescribed by the Agency in a relevant general act.

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