Report
of the Expert Panel
on the REACCREDITATION
of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme
New Educational Paradigms
Juraj Dobrila University of Pula

Date of the visit:
April 29th 2019

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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 *New Educational Paradigms* on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report of the Programme, other documentation submitted and a visit to the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula.

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:
1. Dr. Lianghuo Fan, Head of Mathematics, Science and Health Education Research Centre, University of Southampton;
2. Dr. Carlinda Leite, Centre for Research and Intervention in Education, University of Porto;
3. Dr. Neven Ricijaš, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb;
4. Dr. Nihad Bunar, Department of Child and Youth Studies, Stockholm University;
5. Dr. Reinhold Stipsits, Universität Wien;
6. Dr. Maria Assumpta Aneas Alvarez, Faculty of Education, University of Barcelona;
7. Dr. Matthew John Schuelka, School of Education, University of Birmingham;
8. Dr. Rachel Katherine Shanks, School of Education, University of Aberdeen;
9. Dr. Lasse Lipponen, University of Helsinki.

The higher education institution was visited by the following Expert Panel members:
- Dr. Neven Ricijaš, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Zagreb;
- Dr. Matthew John Schuelka, School of Education, University of Birmingham.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report the Panel was supported by:
- Marina Matešić, coordinator, ASHE

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

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

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

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme: Postgraduate university doctoral study "New Educational Paradigms"
Institution providing the programme: Juraj Dobrila University of Pula
Institution delivering the programme: Faculty of Educational Sciences
Scientific area and field: Area of Social sciences, field of Pedagogy
Place of delivery: Faculty of Educational Sciences, Ronjgova 1, 52100 Pula
Number of doctoral candidates (all): One generation of candidates – totally 12 doctoral candidates
> **Number of HEI funded doctoral candidates**: 0
> **Number self-funded doctoral candidates and employer-funded doctoral candidates:** 12
> **Number of inactive doctoral candidates**: 0

Number of teachers at the doctoral study: (state the ones employed by the HEI as well as the external associates)**:** 13 employed and 5 external
Number of supervisors: 0 (8 study supervisors)

Learning outcomes of the programme:
LO 1. Analyse scientific facts in the area of educational research
1.1. create and critically evaluate new scientific facts and knowledge in the area of educational research
1.2. analyse, interpret, critically deliberate about new research problems in the area of educational sciences.
LO 2. Create correlations between areas and fields of science
2.1. creatively integrate knowledge from more areas and fields of science and critically evaluate the application of this knowledge in the educational practice
2.2. integrate knowledge from more areas and fields with the purpose of development and life-long learning of active participants in education.
LO 3. Do research in the area of education and interpret data in scientific papers
3.1. do scientific research to move the boundaries of existing knowledge in a given area and contribute to the creation of new knowledge and models of management in education
3.2. do individual research and consistently develop their own, professional and ethical identity
3.3. assume ethical and social responsibility for the conduct of the research success in the area of education
3.4. assume moral responsibility for the social usefulness of their own educational research results and possible social consequences
3.5. develop new ideas and processes, as well as the responsibility for the research conduction success, the social usefulness of its results, as well as the awareness of possible negative consequences
3.6. write scientific papers according to scientific and professional standards.
LO 4. Achieve communication and efficiency in the scientific-research and educational work
4.1. design and promote new communicational and cooperation models with various educational stakeholders

4.2. correlate scientific-research and educational (teaching) strategies

4.3. evaluate and improve the educational process with EU regulations

4.4. analyse, evaluate and create new methods and instruments, as well as new ways of communication with persons with different needs.

LO 5. Achieve advancement of educational curricula

5.1. create and evaluate certain educational sectors' developmental strategies

5.2. designate new educational strategies for certain levels of education

5.3. advance and evaluate educational curricula and technologies

5.4. evaluate educational policies and create new ones

5.5. analyse and evaluate the educational management

5.6. scientifically evaluate the contemporary process of managing the educational system

Programme outline
In coursework: 37 ECTS credits
In research: 143 ECTS credits

Conditions to enrol Year 2:
  – student has attended and listened 5 compulsory + 3 elective courses
  – supervisor assigned
  – conducted research activity/work on theses (total of 15 ECTS credits)
  – attained credits for a publication (total of 8 ECTS credits)
  – once a year the doctoral candidate has to give a report about his/her work to the constituent's Council.

Conditions to enrol Year 3:
  – individual work with the supervisor (total of 10 ECTS credits)
  – participation with presentation in scientific conferences: three national or one international conference, workshops (total of 30 ECTS credits)
  – work on the thesis (total of 10 ECTS credits)
  – preparation/public presentation of the doctoral disposition – synopsis (total of 10 ECTS credits)
  – once a year the doctoral candidate has to give a report about his/her work to the constituent's Council.

Conditions for attainment doctoral degree:
  – all courses passed (five mandatory +three elective) (total of 37 ECTS credits)
  – individual work with the supervisor (total of 10 ECTS)
  – participation with presentation in scientific conferences: three national or one international conference, workshops (total of 30 ECTS credits)
  – work on the thesis (total of 10 ECTS credits)
  – preparation/public presentation of the doctoral disposition – synopsis (total of 10 ECTS credits).

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:

Issue a letter of expectation for the period of three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvement. **In the defined period, HEI should not be allowed to enrol new generations of doctoral students.** All members of committees for assessing doctoral thesis/proposal and doctoral dissertations should be external members, outside of University of Pula.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Teachers (potential PhD supervisors) should improve their scientific activities in applying for, and conducting, competitive scientific projects in the field of social/educational sciences.
2. Teachers (potential PhD supervisors) should improve their publishing scientific activities, especially in stronger domestic and international scientific journals (for example: World of Science, Scopus).
3. Verification of thesis (proposal / research plan) should also be conducted and examined by University's Ethical Committee, and that procedure should be added in the Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs of the University of Pula.
4. Students' individual plans need to gather more information about research and research activities.
5. Within the selection process (See 3.6.), doctoral program should differ candidates' publications (point 5) by type and excellence, indexing and impact factors, and should prepare different categorizations and points (for example, different points for professional or scientific article, different points based on journal's impact factors etc.).
6. The programme needs more identity and coherence. We recommend that the programme offer some degree of specialisation or concentrations in different areas. This is fairly standard practice in Education PhD programmes (See 4.2 for more details).
7. Learning outcomes and curriculum mapping need to better align research skills and competencies as they build throughout the courses (See 4.3 for more details).

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Study program has clear and transparent legal and administrative procedures (Ordinance, Strategy, Action Plan, etc.).
2. Study program has transparent materials and procedures for thesis proposal/doctoral dissertations on their webpage.
3. Study program has good ratio between potential mentors and doctoral students (1:3).

4. Study program has good ratio in students' activities between lectures and individual scientific work. Around 80% of all ECTS credits is gained through individual scientific activities, publishing papers, preparing research proposal, conferences, etc.
5. Students indicated at the site-visit that they were very positive about the programme, and liked the tutors and the courses offered.
6. Students found the methodological workshops valuable.
7. The academic tutors, and programme director, seem to be very engaged in the programme and in making continuous improvements.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. HEI did not provide enough plausible evidence of its scientific achievements in the discipline/scientific filed of social/educational sciences (See. 1.1. for more details).
2. HEI did not provide enough evidence of scientific activities of their teachers/supervisors. Only 4 teachers are currently active on some scientific projects (See. 1.1., 1.4. for more details).
3. Scientific and mentoring qualifications of potential are questionable as there is not enough scientific activity, publishing in high quality publications relevant for the programme area and field. Publication in higher quality publications (WoS, Scopus) range from 0 to 6, with an average of 1.5 in a 5-year period, meaning that the year average of publications per author per year is 0.3.
4. Most teachers do not have enough/or at all experience in (co)supervising doctoral students in their process of conducting doctoral research and writing doctoral thesis/dissertations.
5. Student individual plans need to gather more information about research and research activities.
6. The 'PhD in Education' 'New Education Paradigms' title and programme itself is too generic and lacks a strong identity. Even though students liked the variety of classes, nonetheless the programme does not offer an appropriate level of in-depth study.
7. The curriculum mapping and learning outcomes of the programme do not do an adequate job in building key skills and competencies, particularly in research.
8. There does not seem to be a coherent or robust research ethics process.
9. There is significant concern that this programme is not research-intensive enough to warrant a PhD status.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. Doctoral program organized methodological workshop for PhD students.
2. Doctoral program is investing in necessary technology and equipment for PhD students (laptops and databases for scientific literature)

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 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.	**YES**
6. HEI ensures that doctoral theses are public.	**YES** (Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies) – Article 18.)
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** (Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies) – Article 21.)
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	**YES**

involved in its delivery.	
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	**YES**
3. The doctoral programme is aligned with the HEI's research strategy.	**YES** (in line with the University's Research Strategy 2016-2020)
4. The candidate : supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	**N/A** (no supervisors appointed)
5. All supervisors meet the following conditions: 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; 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); c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the candidate (or submission of the proposal); 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; e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-supervisions etc.); f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.	**NO – see comments below**

a) YES – all potential supervisors have PhD and are elected in scientific-teaching positions (from assistant professor to full professor)

b) NO – not all teachers/potential supervisors are active in the scientific area of the programme, there is a lack of high-quality publications and projects in the field in the past 5 years (See 1.1., 1.3., 1.4. for more details)

c) NO – research proposal is a part of the admission process to enrol doctoral program, but the quality and length of proposals are insufficient (suggested maximum of 750 characters with spaces).

d) NO – conditions and funding of the candidate's/student's research is not ensured

e) NO – planned workshop for supervisors (March 2019) was postponed; supervisors are not assigned yet and there is no information about co-supervisions for supervisors with less experience in mentoring/supervising doctoral students and doctoral dissertations

f) NO – based on available information (Self-analysis and CROSBI) only 5 out of 12 Faculty teachers have experience of supervising PhD students (note: every teacher only 1 dissertation). Therefore, information about previous supervisory work is Not Applicable for 7 teachers, and there is no information about the quality of previous supervisory work for 5 teachers.

6. All teachers meet the following conditions: a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position;	**NO – see comments**

b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course (table 1, Teachers).	**below**
a) YES **b) NO** – Re-accreditation Panel Members requested new and correct information about publications and scientific activities of doctoral program teachers in the past 5 years as Table 1 from the Self-analysis did not provide actual and correct information. Based on gained information, there is not enough plausible evidence that teachers are active researchers and recognized in the field relevant for the course. Scientific activity in the past 5 years is not evident for many teachers, especially with regards to competitive scientific projects and high-quality publications.	
7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.	**YES** (Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies) – Article 16. & 17.)
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.	**YES**

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

	Quality assessment ("high level of quality" or "improvements are necessary") and the explanation of the Expert Panel
1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
1.1 HEI is distinguished by its scientific/ artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.	**Improvements are necessary** Self-analysis report provided only information about the Head of the Doctoral Study Program and her Curriculum Vitae. Information about scientific publications and research projects of HEI teachers were asked to be delivered as additional documentation. Additional information revealed the following: ▪ out of 12 teachers/potential supervisors, 11 are active in social sciences, 1 in humanities ▪ some teachers/potential supervisors have only 1 article published in the past 5 years ▪ most of the teachers/potential supervisors did not publish papers in a high-quality journal (i.e. WoS, Scopus) – average for social sciences is 1.5 publications in the past 5-year period, which is 0.3 publications per year per teacher ▪ only 4 teachers are currently active on some scientific projects ▪ most of the publications (articles) are published in conference proceedings and/or editorial books ▪ gained information about scientific publications includes professional papers which are not scientific texts. To conclude: doctoral program teachers are not active researchers with clear scientific achievements as evident by received information. *Recommendations:* *To ensure proactive involvement of all teachers in competitive scientific projects and publishing in high-quality domestic and international scientific journals.*

1.2 The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.	**High level of quality** Around 70% of the doctoral program is delivered by HEI teachers, and their workload in average does not overcome 360 norm (standard) hours. Overall workload of teachers can ensure appropriate attention to doctoral students.
1.3 The teachers are highly qualified researchers who actively engage with the topics they teach, providing a quality doctoral programme.	**Improvements are necessary** Most teachers are active in writing/publishing, but the strength and scientific quality of these publications is questionable. HEI has Research Strategy (2016-2020), but is still missing concrete results in scientific work (publishing and scientific projects). *Recommendations:* *A metric-centred system, involving rewards for high-level publications, should be implemented.*
1.4 The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.	**Improvements are necessary** Ratio between potential supervisors and students can be below 3:1. Nevertheless, the quality of supervisors is questionable due to the following: ▪ most HEI teachers do not have experience in supervising doctoral students ▪ many HEI teachers do not have high-quality publications within the least 5 years (i.e. WoS and/or Scopus database) ▪ many HEI teachers are not currently active in international and/or national (competitive) scientific research project ▪ many HEI teachers do not have international publications within the last 5 years and/or publications published in English and/or internationally recognized (strong impact factor) scientific journals HEI obligatory form (Dr.sc.-03) will provide information

	about supervisor's competencies in terms of scientific publications in the last 5 years, database (WoS, Scopus), H-index, etc. Since available information on potential supervisor's publication and scientific activity is not at the satisfactory level, HEI should consider implementing obligation of co-supervisors. *Recommendation:* *HEI should include co-supervisions of doctoral theses with more experienced supervisors, preferably outside of the University of Pula.* *Committees for assessing doctoral thesis/research proposal and doctoral dissertations should consist only of external professors, outside of University of Pula and outside of the study program teachers.* *HEI should put attention to engaging high quality scientists in the field from other universities to be members of assessing committees.*
1.5 The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors.	**Improvements are necessary** HEI has developed formal procedures and forms to assess the qualifications of potential supervisors (Dr.sc.-03 Form), but their impact on confirming the supervisor is not clear. There are no minimum criteria of publications, impact etc. (as mention in the Form) for being a PhD supervisor. HEI has developed formal procedures and form to assess the quality of teacher (Dr.sc. – 12 Form) where doctoral students provide yearly report out his own work and the work of the supervisor. During the interview with the doctoral students, panel noticed that students were not informed (or had knowledge) that they would write reports about their own work and work of their supervisor. HEI has developed formal procedures and form to assess yearly progress of doctoral students (Dr.sc.-13 Form). Qualitative and quantitative criteria of research excellence is not mentioned or defined.

	Recommendation: *To provide more formal expectations of research outcomes both for teachers/supervisors and doctoral students. For example: (1) Before defending doctoral dissertation, student should have published (or have accepted for publishing) at least 1 scientific paper in journal cited in WoS or Scopus database. (2) Supervisors should publish at least 1 scientific paper in journal cited in WoS or Scopus database and 1 scientific paper in an international journal in English. (3) Minimum requirements for supervisors, in terms of their scientific excellence and activity should be noted and proscribed.*
1.6 The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.	**High level of quality** HEI has access to the relevant bases of important and renowned scientific journals, as well as books and other relevant publications. Faculty's library is well equipped. HEI has provided with statistical program for students (SPSS), as well as 3 computers available at the moment in the reading room. HEI plans to buy lap-tops for each doctoral student in order to ensure them with necessary technological equipment.
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.	**Improvements are necessary** HEI has conducted regular procedure from proposing, to approving and delivering this doctoral program (1. Proposal; 2. Study program elaborate; 3. Review; 4. Financial analysis; 5. Justification of financing). HEI has assessed social needs for postgraduate studies in the field of pedagogy and education within local communities/governments, economic and educational institutions. Results indicate needs for professionals with upgraded knowledge in education, management in education and impact on social policies.

	Identified needs reflect higher-professional competencies, and not scientific-research oriented competencies. Therefore, HEI has not elaborated needs for researchers and scientist in the field of education/pedagogy (with PhD diploma). Current vision and mission of the doctoral program emphasizes professional competencies, not scientific ones. In conclusion, current elaboration, as well as the syllabus of the doctoral program (see further chapters) is more in line with advanced and specializes master level programs. *Recommendation:* *HEI should more clearly communicate scientific and research aspect of learning outcomes and future profiles of students. This aspect should be communicated both to the students and other relevant governmental, economic, education institutions. Doctoral students are future scientists and researchers.*
2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.	**Improvements are necessary** The doctoral study "New Educational Paradigms" is in line with the Juraj Dobrila University Research Strategy 2016 – 2020. The Strategy thus emphasizes the need of an increase in scientific publishing and artistic activities, project activities (registration of national and international scientific-research projects), and the participation in programmes of scientific training and improvement of scientific-educational and administrative University personnel (into the mobility programmes of the European research space). This postgraduate doctoral study programme is also in line with the Faculty of Educational Sciences developmental strategy 2018 – 2020. which is directed towards new study programmes and the initiation of teaching activities at the doctoral level. Other aims are: ▪ employment of scientific-educational staff ▪ realisation of international projects which doctoral candidates can also take part in ▪ collaboration in international projects ▪ -collaboration with other universities in the country and abroad ▪ publishing papers in internationally recognised journals.

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	During the site-visit, Re-accreditation Panel did not receive plausible evidence of financial support to scientific work of doctoral teachers, their involvement in strong national or international research project, while the University of Pula still did not form an Office for Science. *Recommendations:* *Constitute Office for Science at the University level.* *HEI teachers should develop joined effort to deliver mentioned aims within Faculty's Strategy, especially in the area of scientific projects and papers.*
2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.	**Improvements are necessary** HEI has developed clear procedures and forms for assessing the program, teachers and doctoral students. Protocol is well proscribed in the Ordinance. At the moment, Re-accreditation Panel could not review the quality and impact of such documents and the first year of this doctoral program has not finished yet. Re-accreditation Panel took insight into students' individual plans, and has identified shortcomings in terms of content and clear expectations, goals and timeline. Beside courses and exams, current individual plan only focuses on scientific conferences. This does not ensure clear supervisor's vision of students' progress, as well as measurable outcomes in expected deadlines. Individual plans are not focused on scientific and research activities, nor are they elaborated in this context. Monitoring and analysis of research productivity of supervisors in the SER is elaborated through yearly reports, but results and effects of findings are not mentioned. Since Panel discovered insufficient scientific activity of teachers/potential supervisors, the purpose and outcomes of such analysis is not evident. *Recommendations:* *- HEI should make changes in the current Students' Individual Plan Form. This form should include more specified research activities and mentoring process within short time-frames (quarterly). For example: students'*

		literature review on specific tasks, conducting pilot research, data analysis, writing specific seminars on topics related to dissertation, etc.
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.	**Improvements are necessary** HEI has developed monitoring procedures and forms (mentioned earlier above, 2.3.). HEI provides for a possibility to change mentor (Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies) – Article 12.). Interviews with doctoral students revealed their satisfaction of current communication with teachers, their availability during their studying, as well as established relationship. In case of potential problems with mentors, they would contact the Head of the Program and/or the Dean. HEI regulated quality assurance of doctoral program (Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies) – Article 20.). Improvements should be made in concrete criteria of excellence, as provisions in the Ordinance are very broad and general, not mentioning procedures in cases of insufficient performance. Panel could not assess previous experiences, completion rates and ways in which HEI mediated between supervisor and students as this program started in September 2018. University's Strategy has only very broad statements with regards to awarding excellence and successful teachers. *Recommendations:* *HEI should develop more specific provisions of awarding successful teachers/supervisors and doctoral students, as well as quantitative minimum requirements for appointing supervisors (number of active research projects, number of relevant papers published in WoS and/or Scopus bases, specific achievements, etc.).*
2.5.	HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.	**High level of quality** HEI has procedures that assure academic integrity and

	freedom of research. HEI has bought PlagScan software to identify plagiarism.
2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.	**Improvements are necessary** HEI has developed clear procedures and forms for developing and defending thesis proposal and dissertation. All materials are also transparently available on the Faculty's web page (forms from Dr.sc-04 to Dr.sc.-11). Current procedure is missing evaluation from the independent Ethics Committee. This is an important aspect for every empirical research proposal, especially when conducted with humans. *Recommendation:* *University should form Ethics Committee and include their involvement as obligatory phase of assessing students research plan/thesis proposal in the Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies). HEI should develop specific forms for students' application of their research to the Ethics Committee.* *HEI should take into account that members of the Ethics Committee are independent from the people involved in the research study and/or research proposal.*
2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.	**Improvements are necessary** Above mentioned Ordinance and forms proscribe procedures for developing and defending doctoral thesis. At least one member of the defence committee has to be external (Ordinance on Postgraduate University Study Programs (doctoral studies) – Articles 16. & 17.). Panel could not assess theses/research proposals and/or dissertations as the students are still in their first year of the Program. Ordinance and study program impose insufficient expectations with regards to scientific productivity of doctoral students. Currently it is enough to have one paper published in any type of publication, and/or to have presentation at the conference. Such a criteria does not stimulate excellence and high scientific performance on a

		doctoral level.
		Recommendations:
		HEI should impose higher scientific expectations for their doctoral students imposing that one scientific paper should be published (or accepted for publishing) in a scientific journal cited in WoS and/or Scopus base.
		Due to previously elaborated insufficient scientific activity of doctoral program teachers (in terms of strong national/international research projects and publications), Panel recommends that defence committees (both for assessing thesis proposal and dissertation) should consist only from high quality external university teachers/scientist. With the term external, recommend teachers outside of University of Pula with supervising experience. This would ensure the quality of research proposal, high quality of dissertations as well as assessment/evaluation mechanisms of supervisors that do not have enough supervising experience.
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.	**High level of quality** HEI has published all necessary information and procedures on the Internet (Faculty's webpage).
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).	**Improvements are necessary** HEI has regulations on spending and distributing financial means obtained from tuition fees. Received attachment consisted of two documents: (1) the Decision of the Faculty of Educational Sciences Council on financing the scientific-research activities and (2) the Decision on the use of means for science. However, provided info on finances per teacher vary and range from 850,00 to 31.200,00 HRK without clear and transparent criteria of such distribution. It is also not evident how will these finances contribute to the quality of this doctoral program. There is no evidence that students' research and/or research results' dissemination costs will be covered by

	HEI's finances. *Recommendation:* *Ensure transparent criteria for distribution of finances for scientific work, with clear expected outcomes, as well as finances for students' scientific activities within their doctoral study.*
2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).	**Improvements are necessary** HEI SER mentions that tuition fees are determined by the Main Board for the Quality and the Board of Finances. They received the Elaborate of the study program containing financial analysis with defined criteria for the calculation of the tuition fee and real study expenses. SER mention that the proposal for the amount of the tuition fee was adopted by the Faculty Council and University Senate. Senate's Decision was attached in the document. Panel did not receive elaborated information about the tuition fee, nor is this elaboration available online. *Recommendation:* *HEI should transparently explain the amount of the tuition fee and make it available online.*
3. SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION	
3.1. The HEI establishes admission quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.	**High Level of Quality** The stated ratio of mentors to doctoral candidates is 3:1. This is acceptable, as long as the ratio is maintained. It appears that the HEI is maintaining this ratio through its admission quota. That being said, it does not seem that there is much additional capacity to continue to accept the same number of doctoral candidates annually. It is slightly ambiguous how supervisors are chosen beyond just those that are minimally qualified to be supervisors.

3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.	**Improvements are necessary** Both in the self-report and during the site visit, there was not a thorough and satisfactory answer to the case of whether this doctoral programme was market-tested and a need established. The general answer was that educational professionals were needed in the region, but there was not a case made that it had to be a research doctorate. Would not a more robust suite of Master's-level programme meet these needs? Why does it have to be a PhD? There needs to be more alignment between the needs of the market/community and what this programme offers. In Croatia, a PhD programme means a research-intensive programme that creates expertise through research skills. Is there enough room in the region to support enough employment of these types of graduates? *It is, therefore, recommended that a thorough and detailed market-analysis be performed. This analysis needs to include stakeholders from the community explicitly and needs to show that there is a specific need for a generic PhD in Education in the marketplace. This need has to go beyond simply the need for more education professionals and leaders, as this can be better accomplished through a Master's programme.*
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.	**Improvements are necessary** There is currently no funding available for doctoral students. There are some plans to look for funding, but nothing specific. In the self-report, it was mentioned that students can secure funds via Professor-projects, but nothing tangible was mentioned. It is recommended that a detailed plan to secure at least partial funding be put-forth and agreed to at the University level.
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	**High Level of Quality** All candidates are allocated a mentor that supports the development of their research plans.

	each candidate has a sustainable research plan and is able to complete doctoral research successfully.	
3.5.	The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.	**Improvements are necessary** While the candidates we interviewed were interested and highly motivated, nonetheless none were international and there was no plan in place to recruit internationally. It is also worth mentioning that a very small minority of the candidates were interested in a career in research, and most indicated a preference towards teaching and school leadership. *It is recommended that an international recruitment strategy be produced. It is also recommended that if the HEI wishes to offer a PhD that the emphasis for the candidates is on research and research expertise development.*
3.6.	The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.	**High Level of Quality** The selection of applicants is based on established and thorough criteria.
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.	**High Level of Quality** The HEI ensures that the selection is clear and that applicants have the right to complain.
3.8.	There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.	**High Level of Quality** The HEI has an established procedure to recognise prior learning based on clear criteria.
3.9.	Candidates' rights and obligations are defined in relevant HEI regulations and a contract on studying that provides for a high level of supervisory and institutional support to the candidates.	**High Level of Quality** The HEI has an effective ordinance on the doctoral programme which ensures a high level of institutional as well as supervisory support to the candidates. The ordinance describes candidates' rights and obligations in detail. Candidates are informed on all of their rights and obligations upon admission.

3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.	**Improvements are necessary** Recognising that this programme is very new, a more thorough and detailed plan needs to be produced to support candidates' progression. A programme/HEI will be considered to be of high quality if it offers comprehensive institutional support to the candidates in their research and career development, with support mechanisms elaborated in detail. *It is recommended that the HEI should provide the relevant ordinance articles in detail.*
4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES	
4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.	**Improvements are necessary** In the self-report, it was suggested that this programme is comparable to similar programmes in the UK and the USA. However, there is little evidence to support the aspiration of this programme to be aligned with internationally recognised standards. The content of the courses is very thin and varies widely. While students indicated that they liked the wide variety of topics, the doctoral programme offers little in terms of specialisation or in-depth study within a certain topic or discipline within education studies. The required courses are not ones that are expected within a generic Education PhD, and seem to be based rather on the availability of academic staff and their expertise. In other words, the courses on offer are more based on availability rather than on sound curricular and pedagogical choices. *It is recommended that a significant redesign of the programme be implemented, and one in which the programme does actually align itself to internationally recognised standards. In particular, it is recommended that the programme take up a Fields of Study/Concentrations. In the self-report, the example of Harvard GSE was given (https://www.gse.harvard.edu/doctorate/doctor-philosophy-education). If the programme were truly benchmarked against this programme, there would have been greater attention given to how Harvard set up their programme through concentrations (Culture, Institutions, and Society; Education Policy and Program Evaluation; and*

Human Development, Learning and Teaching). This gives the programme candidates a greater focus and sense of programme-identity. The title of the PhD concentration also helps greatly to signal to potential employers what was learned in the graduates' studies and what area their expertise is in.

At the very least, this programme needs to work further towards developing an identity. For example, most of the candidates we interviewed discussed an interest in education leadership and management. ***We strongly recommend that the PhD programme at this HEI take on at least a concentration, if not in its entirety, the topic of 'Leadership and Management in Education' (or similarly named).***

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.	**Improvements are necessary** It is unclear how the learning outcomes are actually used in practice during both coursework and the assessment of the thesis. More thought needs to be placed in thinking through how *each* course can demonstrate mastery of multiple learning outcomes, if not all of them (ideally). It is also unclear what makes the learning outcomes appropriate at level 8.2 that is significantly different from level 7 or lower. During the site-visit, a specific question was asked about how the doctoral courses were different from master's or undergraduate courses, and no answer was given. The learning outcomes themselves do not build up appropriately to the develop of actual research skills, but present a rather ambiguous set of attributes. There is no mention of research ethics in the learning outcomes, nor in the general course information. It is also unclear how research skills and competencies are being built through the coursework. *It is recommended that a learning outcome and curriculum map be made so that not only have the learning outcomes been thought-through systematically, but all faculty members will have a knowledge of the overall scheme for student learning. Each learning outcome should be clear in*

	how the student will demonstrate or deliver in order to achieve mastery of that outcome. A high-quality programme should have its learning outcomes well described (course objectives, intended outcomes, content, teaching and learning methods - including independent learning and research) so that it can assure and monitor the achievement of intended learning outcomes and candidates' obligations (assessment procedures), successful performance of teachers and supervisors and quality in general.
4.3. Programme learning outcomes are logically and clearly connected with teaching contents, as well as the contents included in supervision and research.	**Improvements are necessary** This follows on from 4.1 and 4.2 above. The coursework does not present a coherent programme identity and curricular cohesion. The learning outcomes do not align themselves within the coursework. It is unclear the pedagogy and learning methods in the courses and in how they build up skills and competency in research. *It is recommended that the learning outcomes be re-structured with the recommendations from 4.1 and 4.2 in mind.*
4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.	**Improvements are necessary** While it is a bit hard to fully assess this without completed students and theses, there does not appear to be a robust method for capturing and measuring student progress against outcomes. What was provided in the self-report was a basic list of what students have done. A review of student written assignments found that the standard of student work is fairly low, and the criteria for marking assignments is not at the doctoral level. *It is recommended that the curriculum and learning outcome map requested in 4.1–4.3 also includes an achievement and competency strategy embedded within. The means of success within the learning outcomes need to be 'point-at-able' and measurable. Students must know what they are working towards and how each piece will build up towards the whole.*
4.5. Teaching methods (and ECTS, if applicable) are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure achievement of	**Improvements are necessary** Teaching methods were difficult to assess, but through site

clearly defined learning outcomes.	interviews and syllabuses, it can be surmised that much of the teaching and learning in this programme is rather didactic. While students do get the opportunity to do some project-based worked and assessment, the criteria for these assignments are rather simple, basic, and do not represent doctoral-level criteria. It is not clear at all how coursework is building up doctoral-level research skills and competencies. (Again, this is where the complete curriculum map is necessary.) *It is recommended to use a specific pedagogical strategy in building advanced critical-thinking skills that are necessary for a PhD level. If something like Bloom's Taxonomy is to be used (as was mentioned in the site-visit), then the focus should be on higher-order skills of evaluation, analysis, and synthesis. This is best achieved through seminar discussion, written assignments with robust and advanced criteria, and project-based and applied research work.*
4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.	**Improvements are necessary** The self-report specifies a list of competencies. These are all very good, but it is unclear how these competencies are measured and delivered within the programme. Some methodological workshops were mentioned by the students and teaching staff. This is a good start, but more can be done. *In line with the previous recommendations, a more comprehensive curricular map needs to be provided that demonstrates where and how skills are developed throughout the entirety of the programme.*
4.7. Teaching content is adapted to the needs of current and future research and candidates' training (individual course plans, generic skills etc.).	**Improvements are necessary** *As recommended in 4.1, coursework is inadequate to address the needs of doctoral candidates to demonstrate expertise in a specific area or discipline. A multi-disciplinary approach is, of course, desired, but not at the expense of preventing candidates from gaining a deeper level of understanding in specific areas necessary to demonstrate expertise. In other words, this programme is a kilometre wide and a centimetre deep. Candidates should individualise based around concentrations or areas-of-study.*

4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.	**Improvements are necessary** There does not appear to be an internationalisation or mobility strategy associated with this programme or its academic staff beyond the general HEI strategy. There is not sufficient evidence that the HEI has significantly engaged with connections in the EU, or, indeed, internationally. There does not appear to be opportunities for staff and student mobility. *It is highly recommended that this programme bring in international/EU external advisors and examiners to support the increase in programme quality.*

* 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.