

An abstract graphic design on the right side of the page. It features several small red squares scattered vertically. Below them, a series of thin, grey, curved lines flow downwards and to the right, creating a sense of movement and depth. The lines are of varying lengths and curves, some overlapping each other.

**RE-ACCREDITATION
OF THE FACULTY OF GRAPHIC ARTS UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB**

**Date of the site visit
28 - 29 March 2012**

July, 2012

COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERT PANEL

- Professor Stefan Brües, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Germany, chair
- Professor Ralf Weber, Technische Universität Dresden, Germany
- Professor Wolfgang Kühn, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Germany
- Professor Ivana Šverko, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy, Split, Croatia
- Mr Filip Kobzinek, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Geodesy, Split, Croatia

Expert panel was supported by:

- Irena Petrušić, coordinator, Agency for Science and Higher Education
- Vlatka Derenčinović, prof., interpreter at site visit and report translator, Agency for Science and Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

Short Description of the Evaluated Institution

The Faculty of Graphic Arts came into being by the development of the two-year Post-secondary Graphic Arts School, which was founded on the initiative of the former Yugoslavian Association of Graphic Companies. In 1959, the Post-secondary Graphic Arts School became a full member of the University of Zagreb in 1979.

In 1982, the Joint Graphic Technology Studies were founded for the education of graduates in graphics technology.

In 1990, the Faculty of Graphic Arts was founded, its core activity being the education of graphic engineers and graduates in graphic technology.

In AY 2004/2005, the last generation of students was enrolled in undergraduate university studies of graphic engineering which had two career tracks: Technical and Technological study track, and Graphic Products Design.

With the changes that have occurred in the European higher education area and requirements of the Bologna process, the Faculty of Graphic Arts has developed new teaching plans and curricula. In 2005, the Republic of Croatia Ministry of Science, Education and Sports issued to the Faculty the Accreditation to perform undergraduate university studies of Graphic Technology for the study tracks: Technical and Technological; and Graphic Products Design.

In the same year, the Faculty received the Accreditation to perform graduate university studies of Graphic Technology, with the study tracks mentioned above.

In 2007, the MSES issued the Accreditation to the Faculty to perform postgraduate doctoral studies of Graphics Engineering and Graphic Products Design.

In 2006, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports made a Decision on conducting one part of the procedure for the appointment to academic rank for the following scientific field: technical sciences; scientific field: graphic technology; scientific branch: graphic reproduction processes.

Mission of the Faculty of Graphic Arts, University of Zagreb is to realize lifelong education of staff in the area of graphic technology and design by a multidisciplinary approach to the development of teaching processes and study programme; and to transfer knowledge and results of research achieved in the area of graphic technology and communications into the public and private sector, particularly in cooperation with other higher education institutions from the region.

The Work of the Expert Panel

For its work the panel drew upon the self-evaluation report, prepared by the Faculty of Graphic Arts of the University of Zagreb. They carried out a site visit to the Faculty on 28 and 29 March and they saw the premises and physical resources. During the visit to the faculty the expert panel held meetings with the following groups:

- Faculty Management Board
- The Self-Evaluation Group and the QA Committee
- Heads of Departments
- Teaching Assistants
- Students
- The Vice-Dean for Curriculum and Student Affairs
- Heads of Study Programmes (undergraduate, graduate, professional and postgraduate)
- The Vice-Dean for International Affairs and the Vice-Dean for Science
- Leaders of research projects

They also examined the facilities and accommodation and the classrooms at the Faculty and visited a few classes, in one of which they held a brief question and answer session with the students.

DETAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION

1) Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

- 1.1 Systematic strategic planning and understanding current position of the institution is in early stage of implementation.
- 1.2 Currently the institution has relevant legal documents that set out formally its organisational structure. However, the organizational structures and processes are not effective.
- 1.4 The panel finds that each study programme offered by the institution is aligned with its mission.
- 1.5 Study programmes are mostly aligned with the Baseline of Croatian Qualification Framework on bachelor and master level.
- 1.6 The institution has formally implemented systems of quality assurance and continuous quality improvement for its education. ***It is recommended that the systems for quality assurance and continuous quality improvement for research and teaching outputs be strengthened and that the involvement of staff and students in all such systems be formalised and strengthened.***
- 1.7 The panel finds the institution is in early stage of implementation of formal mechanisms for the monitoring and improvement of the quality of its teaching. ***It is recommended that a formal system of regular feedback of quality monitoring, especially from the student survey, is instituted for staff and students on institutional level.***
- 1.8 The panel finds that the institution is in early stage of implementation of formal mechanisms for the monitoring and improvement of the quality of its teaching. ***The internal mechanisms for research quality should be established and effective in "real life".***
- 1.9. The institution has formal mechanisms for ethical behaviour ***but also should develop their own internal questionnaires on ethical activity within the institution.***
- 1.10 A the staff and the students are acquainted formally with the rules for ethical behaviour ***but the reality on everyday basis is different.***

2) Study programmes

- 2.1 The enrolment quotas are determined by the needs of the graphic industry and by employment opportunities.
- 2.2 The enrolment quotas are in line with the institutional resources for quality teaching and the analysis of pass rate.
- 2.3 Student learning outcomes at the level of a study programme are set by the teachers and are clearly communicated to the students.
- 2.4 The expert panel finds that teachers at a study programme ensure that the assessment of student learning, regardless of its modality, is only partly aligned with stated learning outcomes, represents the some part of range of learning being assessed, and assesses learning at the early stage of implementation of rigour appropriate to the qualification level.
- 2.5 Appropriate arrangements are in place to calculate the allocation of ECTS credits so that it reflects the work load of the students. The students generally understand the arrangements for the allocation of credits although they reported that there was some imbalance in the implementation of the associated workloads.
- 2.6 The content and quality of each study programme conforms to internationally recognised standards in a way that the qualifications can be internationally recognised.
- 2.7 The students' views about the appropriateness of the teaching strategies were mixed. In some cases the students indicated that the strategies and teaching material were not well matched. Notably, they complained of some out-dated material, lack of international case studies and lack of practically relevant exercises.
- 2.8 ***The panel finds that existing learning system should be improved.***
- 2.9 Students have some opportunities to experience practical applications on campus in the form of a practice in internships. However, the number of internships available is relatively limited.
- 2.10 The institution has defined formal processes for the proposal, approval and implementation of new study programmes but situation is different in real life.

3) Students

- 3.1 The information packages available to potential students clearly inform them about the level of the programmes, qualifications and academic titles as well as possibilities for further education and employment. Application for enrolment is made via the Croatian Agency for Science who publishes the Faculty's programmes and a call for enrolment is made in the press and on the Faculty web pages. The Faculty web pages and printed material provide information about the programmes, modules, courses of study and academic titles.
- 3.2 Based on the *State Matura*, the admissions criteria and procedures are publicly stated and consistently applied.
- 3.3 Given that acceptance is based on the *State Matura* there is no need for additional criteria to determine acceptance.
- 3.4 According the students' answers the institution only partly supports the students in a number of ways in their extra-curricular activities, including sport, cultural and other activities.
- 3.5 The institution offers counselling and mentorship to the students.
- 3.6 According the students' answers should more raise the level of the student standard.
- 3.7 The institution supports the work of the Student Council.
- 3.8 The institution publishes its methods and procedures for student assessment. The students, as they said, only partly understand the assessment arrangements.
- 3.9 Although the institution gains information about employment of graduates from connections with professional associations and surveys, the amount of information that the institution has about the employability of its graduates is relatively limited.
- 3.10 Institutional contact with its alumni is not systematic on institutional level. ***It is recommended that the institution strengthens its statistical information relating to employment and that it extends its contact with its alumni.***
- 3.11 With student membership of the deliberative committees of the institution, appropriate opportunities are provided for the students to participate in decision making processes and in the resolution of matters affecting their experience.
- 3.12 Information provided by the institution to the public about its study programmes, learning outcomes, qualifications and employment opportunities is well-developed
- 3.13 Opportunities are provided for the students to express their views and to suggest areas for improvement, including through the student membership of deliberative committees. However, according to their answers the students are not always well informed about the results of their comments or provided with feedback and don't feel that they can express

their problems in an open way. ***It is recommended that the institution gives more attention to ensuring that reports are made to the students so that they can understand the response to their comments.***

3.14 The students are not well informed about the measures implemented on the basis of their suggestions and opinions.

4) Teachers

4.1 Number of teachers is sufficient but the structure and the quality has to be improved.

4.2 The panel finds only few evidences that the institution carries out good policy for the growth and development of human resources.

4.3 The institution demonstrates the employment of sufficient members of full-time teachers at a study programme to ensure quality and continuity of teaching and learning. ***In terms of number the institution ensure enough number of teachers but has to improve quality of their work.***

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

4.5 The institution has formally implemented policies for teaching staff that ensure their development ***but should develop effective policies.***

4.6 The expert panel didn't find clear evidences on institutional procedures for teacher's advancement working in practice.

4.7 The expert panel haven't found the clear evidences whether the distribution is fair or not.

4.8 The institution has partly implemented assurance of teacher's commitments external to the institution as the procedures are not transparent as there are no tools for sanctioning.

5) Scientific and professional activity

5.1 The institution has some policies but not clear strategic programme of scientific research. ***The institution should implement such policies which are monitored, evaluated and reviewed via defined success indicators.***

- 5.2 In planning and implementing its research agenda, the institution mostly envisions and provides for cooperation with other scientific organizations and industry both within and beyond Croatia.
- 5.3 At all levels of the institution, research is partly acknowledged as a contributing component of its overall activity as may be evidenced by intellectual contribution to the institution and its reputation.
- 5.4 The research students indicated that they had some structural problems but when talking to young researchers they indicated that in some ways they are unsatisfied with situation on the institutions.
- 5.5 The panel finds some evidence that institution has developed but only partly implemented a policy for promoting research excellence.
- 5.7 The institution uses evidence of productivity of its research activities including publications and presentations at conferences.
- 5.8 The institution supports the professional activities of its researchers in line with its mission and it monitors most of these activities.

6) International cooperation and mobility

- 6.1 The institution has arrangements for acknowledging ECTS credits gained by incoming students but actually the mobility of students from other Croatian and international Higher Education Institutions is very limited. ***The institution is recommended to attract more regular foreign guest lecturers and offer some courses in English.***
- 6.2 The students have opportunities to take some proportion of their studies abroad.
- 6.3 The extent of international cooperation and mobility of teachers is on early stage of implementation. Teachers from the institution have attended other universities as guest lecturers. The summer schools also brought a large number of international scholars to the institute, fostering international dialogue between the teachers.
- 6.4 The institution is involved as a member of a range of international organisations associated with its areas of study.
- 6.5 The opportunities for attracting students from abroad at present are fairly limited because there are no programmes delivered in a language other than Croatian. The development of ECTS credits for all programmes will support future developments in attracting foreign

students. ***It is recommended that the institution takes steps to improve the resources offered to international students.***

6.6 The institution's involvement in the EU Life Long Learning (LLL) Programme is not yet developed. ***It is recommended that the institution explores opportunities for cooperation in the EU LLL programme.***

6.7 The institution in early stage of implementation of forms of international cooperation. ***The institution is recommended to develop and extend its international links.***

7) Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

7.1 The institution partly provides appropriate resources for all enrolled students sufficient to support their effective learning.

7.2 The institution is in early stage of implementation the rules of non-teaching staff and provide training opportunities

7.3 The laboratory equipment and usage protocols comply with recognized international standards.

7.5 The institution collects analyses and uses information about its activities although this could be available and used in a more systematic way to support programmes of improvement. Notably the system for feedback of information to students from the student satisfaction surveys is not well developed. ***It is recommended that information is obtained and used more systematically.***

7.6 Size, usability and availability of the library as well as the level of equipment only in the small part ensure adequate student supports in their learning and research.

7.7 As an aspect of its regular strategic planning cycle, the institution ensures that it has maintained an appropriate ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff.

7.8 Financial stability of the institution is partly harmonised with its mission and enables all students to graduate from their programmes.

7.9 The panel didn't get the clear image how the criterion that institution's own funds are used to improve the quality of teaching and scientific activity works in real life as there were a lot of complaints via secret e-mail address.

FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE EXPERT PANEL FOR THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

INPUT AND OBSERVATIONS

Prior to the visit of the expert panel a public email account for anonymous input was created and published on the faculty website as part of the reaccreditation process. The panel members received multiple emails with partly contradicting content. During the site visit and even via email some faculty members expressed concerns of pressure against themselves or other employees in case they would raise issues or discuss certain topics. The expert panel took some time on site in smaller groups and more private meetings.

Besides personal appreciations the major topics of complain were

- Lack of expertise of teachers in the field of digital media
- Employment police of the Faculty is influenced by private/family connections
- Management takes the Faculty “like a private company”
- The election process for the Faculty Council and the Management was manipulated
- The Faculty Management/department heads have obviously forced some attendants not to speak with the panel members during the site visit
- Small flexibility of study program (e.g. no part time programs) available
- Migration problems for “older” students due to the Bologna transition
- Cost of study is not transparent and subject of negotiation

During most meetings on site the faculty staff was untypically passive and not responsive. Questions raised by the panel members were sometimes not or slowly answered. During the entire day the panel expert had most meetings in a restricted atmosphere. This was especially true for the group of younger scientists and researchers. The first meeting with the Faculty Management was mainly responsive and characterized by prepared statements. When the Faculty Management was confronted with complaints and criticism at the end of the day some emotional statements came up indicating a very difficult management situation on site.

STRONG POINTS

The Faculty of Graphic Arts at the University of Zagreb prepared the Self-evaluation report well. Every question from the "Criteria on Assessing the Quality of higher education institutions" questionnaire was covered. The statistic material on resources, staff and students provided is sufficient and well structured. The transition process into the Bologna process is well documented.

The Faculty of Graphic Arts is obviously established within the Croatia Graphic Arts industry and has a good position in the printing and media research field within the Croatian research community. The Faculty staff is committed to the field of Graphic Arts and is trying to connect to the international Graphic Arts research. There are recent research publications on recognized international level.

WEAK POINTS

The organisational structure of the Faculty is hard to understand, obviously historically grown and seems not to be senseful. The Faculty currently provides 19 (!) departments. Most departments consist of less than three people. During the meeting with department management several head of departments were not present. A much leaner department structure (6 units or less) is strongly recommended.

Graphic Arts is moving more and more into the field of digital (paperless) publishing. The Faculty of Graphic Arts at the University of Zagreb is still more or less committed to the "traditional" industry. The transition to a real "media" rather than "printing" faculty requires more efforts, resources and internal restructuring.

While the department has developed an elaborate quality management system, this instrument remains an isolated statistical construction with little direct impact on improving the quality of teaching. This may be achieved by more involvement from teachers and students in the development of the quality management system. Participation of the students in this task should be mandatory and the questionnaires from the university should be custom tailored to the needs of the Graphic Arts Faculty.

The Faculty of Graphic Arts at the University of Zagreb should be forced to develop a long term strategy for the next 10 to 15 years taking into account the structural change in the media industry and considering opening up the program to international students. While there is a strong interest on the side of the Croatian students to study abroad, and most of them speak several foreign languages, there is very little incentive for students from other countries to study at Zagreb University. Thus, the Faculty might want to consider including and strengthening particular aspects in their profile which would be especially unique and thus attractive to students from outside Croatia.

Furthermore, the development of a long term strategic plan should take into consideration attrition of Faculty members through retirement as a chance to implement new internal organisation structures and subjects of the digital media world into the curriculum.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

After intensive discussion the Expert Panel had the strong feeling that the Faculty of Graphic Arts is in a difficult management situation. It seems that there are at least two fractions fighting more or less in an open manner. On the other side the faculty provides obviously a good potential of engaged people on all academic levels. It was a clear impression to the expert panel members that there is not enough internal energy to really push an urgently required reorganisation effort. The site visit at the Faculty generated an impression of pressure and undemocratic management culture.

After intensive discussion the Expert Panel recommends to establish an **external** faculty management board over a certain period of time, not less than 6 months. This external faculty manager should have the power to set up a new, efficient and lean organisational and management structure within the Faculty of Graphic Arts. It should decide the timeline of reorganisation and the appropriate time to hand over the power back to the newly established faculty management. The external management should keep the Agency for Science and Higher Education permanently informed. This decision was passed unanimously by the Expert Panel.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF QUALITY

1) Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance

- It is recommended that the systems for quality assurance and continuous quality improvement for research and teaching outputs be strengthened and that the involvement of staff and students in all such systems be formalised and strengthened.
- It is recommended that a formal system of regular feedback of quality monitoring, especially from the student survey, is instituted for staff and students on institutional level.
- The internal mechanisms for research quality should be established and effective in “real life”.
- The institution should develop their own internal questionnaires on ethical activity within the institution.

2) Study programmes

- The panel finds that existing learning system should be improved.

3) Students

- It is recommended that the institution strengthens its statistical information relating to employment and that it extends its contact with its alumni.
- It is recommended that the institution gives more attention to ensuring that reports are made to the students so that they can understand the response to their comments.

4) Teachers

- In terms of number the institution ensures enough teachers but has to improve quality of their work.
- The institution should develop effective policies for teachers’ advancement.

5) Scientific and professional activity

- The institution should implement such policies which are monitored, evaluated and reviewed via defined success indicators.

6) International cooperation and mobility

- The institution is recommended to attract more regular foreign guest lecturers and offer some courses in English.
- It is recommended that the institution takes steps to improve the resources offered to international students.
- It is recommended that the institution explores opportunities for cooperation in the EU Lifelong Learning Programme.
- The institution is recommended to develop and extend its international links.

7) Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance

- It is recommended that information is obtained and used more systematically for quality improvement of institution as a whole.