



Report on the re-accreditation of the Zagreb School of Economics and Management

Zagreb

13 April 2011

Composition of the expert panel

Pursuant to the Article 22 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education and the Article 30 Paragraph 1 Item 4 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, the Accreditation Council of the Agency for Science and Higher Education at its 12th session on January 11th 2011 passed the decision to appoint a panel of experts for the re-accreditation of the Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM), as follows:

1. **Dr. iur. Kerstin Berberich** (FH Joanneum, University of Applied Sciences, Graz) – chair
2. **Prof. Rainer Stachuletz** (Berlin School of Economic and Law; State Bank of Vietnam) – member
3. **dr. sc. Vlado Brkanić** (RRiF College of Financial Management) – member
4. **dr. sc. Ambroz Čivljak** (American College of Management and Technology Dubrovnik) – member
5. **Đeni Paskojević**, student (American College of Management and Technology Dubrovnik) - member

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INTRODUCTION

Short description of the evaluated institution

The Zagreb School of Economics and Management was founded in 2002. It was entered in the Register of Higher Education Institutions, pursuant to the Decision of the Ministry of Science and Technology issued on July 19th, 2002.

According to the accreditation decision, the core activities of the Zagreb School of Economics and Management are as follows:

- organizing and executing professional and professional specialist graduate study programmes in Economics and Management;
- organizing and executing continuous professional training programmes;
- holding professional conferences;
- providing consulting services for third parties
- publishing.

As from the academic year 2005/06, and pursuant to the accreditation issued on September 8th 2005, ZSEM has been implementing the following study programmes:

- a four-year professional undergraduate program in Economics and Management carrying 240 ECTS credits, and
- a one-year specialist graduate MBA program carrying 60 ECTS credits.
- Since May 24th 2010 ZSEM holds accreditation for the two year specialist graduate MBA programme carrying 120 ECTS. The programme is not active yet and is currently in the process of preparation.

The School operates at the following address: Jordanovac 110, Zagreb. Classes were initially held on the premises owned by the College of the Society of Jesus and the Faculty of Philosophy of the Society of Jesus. Further development and the enrolment of new generations of students increased the need for space, so the lease agreement with the above-mentioned owner was amended in order to increase the space available for the purposes. In 2008, a lease contract was signed with the Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, in order to secure premises for the specialist graduate MBA program.

Classes within this program are currently held on the parish premises. All classrooms, faculty offices, administrative offices and the Dean's office, the library and technical staff offices are located at the same address, in four different buildings and form an enclosed campus, with a yard and a parking lot.

The Accounting and Finance Department of ZSEM moved from these premises to another location in 2008 and has been operating since at the following address: Jandriceva 12, Zagreb.

The size of the faculty has been increasing in line with the requirements of the curriculum, and the organizational structure of the School has been expanded and new services set up, such as the Office for International Cooperation, the Career Centre, the Department for Marketing and Public Relations, and the Executive Education Department.

Description of the expert panel's work

The expert panel has, in line with the document *Procedure for Re-accreditation of Higher Education Institutions*, analysed the self-analysis document drafted by the Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM), and visited the institution on April, 13th 2011.

During the site-visit the members of the expert panel had separate meetings with the management, teachers, assistants, students, representatives of various committees and other staff and students, and did a tour of facilities (e.g. lecture rooms, libraries) in line with the previously defined Visit Protocol. These meetings gave the expert panel members a direct insight into the activities and work conditions at the Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM).

During the site-visit, the experts were also presented with additional sources of information:

Sources of additional information

- Statute
- Ordinance on Work Issues
- Ordinance on Job Systematization

- Ordinance on Business Secrets
- Ordinance on Archiving
- Ordinance on Entering School Premises
- Career Centre Statute
- Ordinance on Studying
- Ordinance on Studying for Students in the Category of Excellent Athletes
- Ordinance on Organizing and Teaching Professional Courses
- Ordinance on the Disciplinary Procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Ordinance on the Graduate Theses
- Ordinance on the Undergraduate Theses
- Ordinance on Work Placement and Internship
- Ordinance on Practical Teaching Activities

DETAILED ANALYSIS BASED ON STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR THE RE-ACCREDITATION

1. Institutional Management and Quality Assurance

- 1.1. The institution's mission and vision are: the mission of ZSEM is to transfer values, knowledge and skills that students need for long-term success in a globalized business world undergoing constant technological and market transformation. The vision of ZSEM is to become recognized as the leading school for Economics and Management in the Republic of Croatia and beyond. Their strategy is not well outlined in written form. The idea of becoming accredited by AACSB was there from the start and the institution entered into this process in 2008, the earliest time possible. Since then, the "strategy" is focused on that goal.
- 1.2. The organisational structure as well as processes are clearly laid down in a written form (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp3-5 (organization) and other documents (processes)). This is in line with the goal to get accredited by AACSB.
- 1.3. The four-year professional undergraduate study program in Economics and Management carries 240 ECTS and is aligned with Bologna. In addition, it offers one-year MBA programmes of 60 ECTS. The MBA programmes are designed for students who have completed a four-year economics program. Applicants who have completed other four-year programmes must listen to a mandatory "pre-semester" of subjects for non-economists in order to be able to follow the program without difficulty.

Applicants who have completed a three-year undergraduate programme may enrol in the graduate MBA programme if they have completed the fourth year of their undergraduate program at the ZSEM. They have to accomplish the 240 ECTS (normally, they will have 180 from a three-year economic programme elsewhere).

The offered MBA should not necessarily be a master aligned with the undergraduate programme. The MBA is not a MSc or MA.

Both programmes are aligned with the institution's mission, the Bologna reform and the Baseline of the Croatian Qualification Framework.

1.4. The institution has implemented effective systems of quality assurance and continuous quality improvement, with the goal that a culture of excellence will pervade all aspects of its internal operations and shape its standing with external stakeholders. This especially may be a result of the institution's effort towards being accredited by AACSB.

1.5. The institution has implemented formal mechanisms for monitoring and improvement of the quality of teaching.

This especially may be a result of the institution's effort to become accredited by AACSB (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report: teaching methods (teamwork, group and individual case study analyses and simulations), lecturers professionally and scientifically progress in accordance with the regulations currently in force at ZSEM, p 7-9; quality of teaching in workplaces outside, p29, sizes of student groups, p74; teaching materials, p77).

1.6. We hold that ZSEM has fully established formal rules for attaining the highest level of ethical conduct in education and research and transfers those values to students and staff.

The institution has close relations to the Society of Jesus (teachers/management, premises, library), which results in the focus on ethical values, and the ethical code is included in the ZSEM mission: the institution has a student and a faculty code of conduct as well as a disciplinary committee for students.

Further, special business ethics courses are included in the curricula of the study programmes and the ethical values are implemented in other courses, too. There is also scientific research and organized conferences on related topics at ZSEM (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp5-7).

2. Study Programmes

- 2.1. The quotas do not relate much to the needs of the society and the teaching space is quite narrow.

The professional undergraduate study program in Economics and Management has the planned enrolment quota of 280 students, and the MBA Programmes of 200 students. In 2010 there were 550+36=586 alumni and 53 unemployed alumni, which represents an unemployment rate of 9% (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp21, 67). Although the institution pays attention to teaching in small groups, especially against the background of the shortness of space, this does not necessarily reflect the needs of society and the institutional resources.

- 2.2. There are no formal regulations for review and recognition of prior learning and qualifications (cf. self-evaluation report, p54).
- 2.3. Student learning outcomes are stated at the level of a study programme (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p7) and its courses (defined in the syllabi) clearly describe knowledge and skills of the graduates. The institution has all the relevant documentation (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp22-26).
- 2.4. Teachers at a study programme ensure that the assessment of student learning, regardless of its modality, is aligned with stated learning outcomes, represents the full range of learning being assessed, and assesses learning at the level of rigor appropriate to the qualification (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp7-9,11, especially 12-16 (LoM)).
- 2.5. The panel realized that ECTS are allocated just formally: teachers as well as students are not aware of the factual background of the ECTS-measurement system (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p26).
- 2.6. As the institution continuously compares its performance with several institutions of higher education in the United States of America (Boyer School of Business at the John Carroll University) and Europe (University of Ljubljana) the content and quality of each study programme conform to internationally recognized standards, ensuring the international recognition of qualifications (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p16).
It lacks only Croatia-specific content. Also, student workload should be increased – the standards should be higher.
- 2.7. According to the self-evaluation report, the teachers select teaching strategies that are appropriate to the nature of the material being taught and responsive to various student learning styles. Selected teaching methods encourage students to be autonomous, responsible learners (the methods used include teamwork, group and individual case study analyses and simulations such as those used by the best-known world business schools (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p9)).

In one of the classes the expert panel visited, an external lecturer (a manager) was teaching: his performance was not on the level expected on a higher

education institution he taught fully ex-cathedra, without graphics or mathematics, and students were not even taking notes.

Supreme teaching methods were described, but the panel failed to see any at its site-visit.

- 2.8. Programme faculty made available appropriate amount of supplemental resources, including electronic databases and other sources, which aid knowledge acquisition: the library is connected through CARNET and has access to a number of domestic and international databases (e.g. EBSCO, SCOPUS, WILEY-BLACKWELL, SPRINGER and OXFORD, ZSEM subscribes to EMERALD; cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p146).

Famous standard textbooks are translated into Croatian; teachers are obliged to develop e-learning courses; there is a good WebCT system. However, the equipment as well as the opening hours of the library are not satisfying.

- 2.9. There are two compulsory internships in the undergraduate programme (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp27-28): an elaborated framework internship programme that is aligned with the curriculum and includes relevant elements. However, the expert panel realized from talking to students, that they were not impressed by the opportunities within their internships to apply and develop their knowledge.
- 2.10. It seems that there are no formal processes for the proposal of new study programmes defined and adopted.

There are procedures for monitoring innovation and improvement of existing study programmes (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp26-27). However, the expert panel realized that there is only poor innovation at the level of study programmes: they are mostly copied from international schools, Mathematics and Statistics - which are strong in Croatia - as well as ethics and philosophy, due to their connections to Jesuits, are added.

3. Students

- 3.1. According to the self-evaluation report as well as to the information the expert panel received during the on-site visit, the institution offers all relevant information via informational materials, relevant media channels and events (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp55-59).
- 3.2. ZSEM is open to all students who have completed their secondary education, regardless of the type of secondary school they attended. The selection process consists of a check of the candidates' knowledge of English and Mathematics, as well as their written and oral communication skills which are tested on the basis of a short written essay and interview (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp21-22). As the amount of applicants increased during the last years, the assumption can be made that the quality of students has also increased.

The admission criteria and procedures are publicly stated and consistently applied. It is not indicated, if they are regularly reviewed for their effectiveness in predicting students' success in a programme. It is not obvious, if a change of them had taken place in the last years.

- 3.3. The competencies of applicants evaluated to determine acceptance are English, Mathematics, written and oral communication skills. These criteria meet the demands and expectations in the future career of the graduates.
- 3.4. The institution offers student exchange programmes, summer school, travel, sports, PR Club, the Debate Club, Investment Club (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp60, 62-63). Students are quite satisfied with the extra curricula activities offered.
- 3.5. There is a student-counselling concept: a commission for Monitoring Students' Performance is tasked with continuous monitoring and analysis of student performance, with special focus on those students who have trouble performing well. It establishes an individual student counselling session schedule. Also there is a SPOT mentoring program for freshmen. The ZSEM Career Centre provides core activities like career planning, student self-assessment, vocational guidance and labour market demand analyses, employment, internships and cooperation with Career Business Club companies geared towards identifying internship or employment opportunities (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp16, 65-66).
- 3.6. There is a student assessment by the Commission for Monitoring Students' Performance with a clearly defined process and student self-assessment is also offered by the ZSEM Career Centre. As far as students' rights are concerned, there is a student ombudsperson, the heads of study can be contacted and there are anonymous surveys and evaluations (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp65-67). The expert panel did not learn anything more about formal feedback mechanisms and appeals.

- 3.7. The institution keeps only national statistics on the employability of its graduates. The institution also maintains contact with alumni, but this contact could be intensified and relevant information could be kept more current, especially as far as the current professional position is concerned (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp67-68, 70).
- 3.8. The expert panel was told, also by students, that students do participate in decision-making and have good cooperation with the management. There is, except the institution of the student ombudsman, no further information in the self-evaluation report.
- 3.9. Cf. above no. 3.1: according to the self-evaluation report as well as the information of the expert panel collected during the site visit, the institution offers all relevant information via information materials, relevant media channels and events (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp55-59).
- 3.10. Students can express their opinion and proposals for improvement. At ZSEM students are not informed about the implemented measures immediately. There is no formal feed-back process implemented.

4. Teaching staff

- 4.1. Number and qualifications of the teachers are in line with strategic goals of the institution and adequately cover core disciplines.

The total number of 42 permanently employed teachers (out of which 7 are college professors, 9 are senior lecturers, 17 are lecturers and 9 are assistants) enables quality of teaching activities, with professional staff constantly available to students. On the other hand, a large number of external associates (6 college professors, 7 senior lecturers, 21 lecturers, 2 assistants, 2 professors, 2 associate professors and 39 expert associates) provide ZSEM students with academic and professional experience gained at respectable institutions in the country and abroad.

The teacher/students ratio decreased from 1:36 in the academic year 2005/06 to 1:31 in the academic year 2009/10. Thus, according to a growing number of students the academic staff grew above proportion (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp71-74).

To sum up, the structure and the number of the teaching staff meet the needs of both study programmes and enables students to acquire certain values, knowledge and skills in the fields of economics and business administration. The expert panel thus holds that the number and the qualifications of the teaching staff are fully aligned with the mission of the institution and that the key disciplines are fully covered.

- 4.2. As already mentioned under 4.1., the teacher/students ratio decreased from 1:36 in the academic year 2005/06 to 1:31 in the academic year 2009/10. Thus, according to a growing number of students the academic staff grew above proportion (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp71-74, 84).

ZSEM continuously supports its faculty in all forms of their academic and pedagogical development (e.g. a faculty development plan has been implemented, cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp81, 84).

Thus, ZSEM has been systematically investing in staff development, regarding their teaching as well as research competences. It has a human resources development policy fully in place, devoting special attention to potential retirements (table 4.4) and the sustainability of the study programmes (charts 4.3. and 4.4.)

- 4.3. Looking at the data in Table 4.2., it can be observed that the majority of the teaching workload is carried by the full-time faculty, who also teach the majority of core courses, while part-time faculty mostly work in teams with full-time faculty members or teach elective courses (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp72-73).

Thus, ZSEM demonstrates the employment of sufficient numbers of full-time teachers at a study programme to ensure the quality and continuity of the learning. This was confirmed by the positive statements of the teachers and students who commented on these issues during the site visit.

- 4.4. Generally it is hard to define what the optimal ratio between students and full time teachers is. According to the Croatian legislation this ratio shouldn't be above 1:30. According to OECD data the average ratio in the world is 1:15. In the most developed countries this ratio is in average between 1:10 – 1:15. Best HEIs in the world keep this ratio under 1:10.

The teacher/students ratio has been calculated taking into account the regulations on the content of the licence for performing activities in the higher education system, conducting study programmes, and reaccreditation of higher education institutions (NN 45/09), Article 6, Paragraph 3, which states that the number of full-time students is to be multiplied by coefficient 1, and the number of part-time students by coefficient 0.5. Thus, the ratio nearly meets the Croatian definition of optimum.

- 4.5. As already mentioned in 4.2, ZSEM continuously supports its faculty in all forms of their academic and pedagogical development (e.g. a faculty development plan; cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp81, 84).

The faculty development plan outlines the academic and professional development of each faculty member in the following five years: it includes the titles to be gained as well as the number and the type of publications to be published in the following period. The implementation of the plan is reviewed each year and regularly discussed at the chair meetings. It also monitors the CVs of all teachers and external associates annually and regularly, especially regarding their qualifications, intellectual achievements and other activities which indicate their professional and scientific development.

Professionally qualified faculty members are those with important achievements in their fields. (They also must meet all the conditions for academic appointment set by the Science and Higher Education Act).

Administrative staff (a total of 22 people) is regularly sent to professional trainings, symposia and life-long learning programmes, and the ZSEM management (dean, director and vice deans) regularly attend management trainings (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp81, 143).

All of this indicates that ZSEM has fully developed guidelines which regulate the development of both teaching and administrative staff and provide training opportunities in line with the mission of the institution.

- 4.6. The expert panel learned a lot about the academic development of teachers at ZSEM (cf. also 4.5).

During the site-visit teachers told the expert panel about the support they get (acquiring the PH.D., visiting international conferences, etc.). All seemed to be very motivated and proud of working at ZSEM.

Discussions with teachers indicate that these procedures are implemented fairly, and there is a complaint procedure in place regarding the academic procedures. ZSEM teachers are systematically supported in their professional, academic and teaching development.

- 4.7. The discussions with the teaching staff clearly indicate their satisfaction with the work conditions, proving that the workload is fairly allocated, with clear distribution of tasks which include teaching, mentoring and consultations with students. Moderate teaching load (a 9-hour weekly norm), appropriate balance of workload among the permanently employed and teaching associates (according to the data presented in the table 4.2) and highly motivated staff enable successful implementation of the numerous teaching, research and student consultations activities (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp73-82).
- 4.8. On the basis of the self-evaluation report and particularly on the basis of the site-visit and discussions with the staff, the expert panel holds that ZSEM is fully devoted to fully engaging its staff in the teaching activities and preventing any external commitments which would present a threat to their work. The work contracts thus prevent the staff from external engagements unless this is approved by the management. External engagements without the consent of the institution are considered a serious breach of contract leading to its termination (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p71).

5. Scientific and Professional Activity

- 5.1. The institution has no formally adopted policies governing existing and planned research activities, which establish procedures for conducting research and setting research priorities aligned with its mission and strategic plan. Thus, ZSEM has no strategic plan regarding research: each teacher does research in the field he or she is interested in.

However, within the faculty development plan mentioned above (cf. no. 4.5), faculty members get defined the titles to be gained as well as the number and the type of publications to be published in the following period. The implementation of the plan is reviewed each year and regularly discussed at the chair meetings. As the faculty members doing research are part of the teaching staff, it is assumed that the topics on which research is done, relate to the mission of the institution (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp106-130 (conference participation); pp100-102 (research productivity)).

- 5.2. As already mentioned above (e.g. no. 4.5, 5.1), the institution has implemented the faculty development plan which is regarded to be an appropriate mechanism to ensure the efficient operation of its research activities. The staff is supported by providing sufficient time to do research and funding the participation in conferences.
- 5.3. Although the expert panel has not found a planned research agenda, it is evident that modern ways of doing research encompass cooperation with other scientific organisations and industry both within and beyond Croatia. And this is what ZSEM in principle is doing, too (cf. table 5.1. p93, pp93-98). However, international scientific and project cooperation should be intensified.
- 5.4. ZSEM has professional activities, e.g. some projects with Croatian companies, courses and training, scientific discussions, symposia and conferences. These activities are regarded as having a significant impact on the quality of work (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp91-92). Project results are often published and thus made available to the business community. The projects are in line with its mission, and evidence can be taken out of new projects set up with the same clients or in the same thematic field.

However, the expert panel suggests to better structure professional cooperation and projects by the staff.

6. International Cooperation and Mobility

- 6.1. Within the framework of international student exchange, students are offered the opportunity to go abroad for one or two semesters, as well as for shorter stays during the summer semester at partner institutions. Prior to departure, students are offered advice and support from the International Office, while the Heads of Study Years advise the students on the courses to take during the exchange program.

In the last three years, 122 ZSEM students participated in foreign exchange programmes at partner institutions (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p142, footnote). There are already outgoing students in the Erasmus programme.

In spite of the positive trend of increase in international activity, the institution itself sees room for improvement: ZSEM wants to increase student mobility to at least 10% of the total student body and plans several international undergraduate and graduate dual-degree programmes (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p132).

- 6.2. Faculty mobility in the last three years is shown in the Table 6.1 (cf. table 6.3, self-evaluation report, p141). Faculty members went abroad either as visiting lecturers at foreign HEIs, as presenters at international conferences, or as participants in the IESE development programmes. So far, five ZSEM faculty have participated in the Young Faculty Development Program at IESE Business School. Such visits provide faculty with insights into teaching methods of foreign institutions and opportunities to exchange their opinions and experiences with foreign colleagues, as well as to compare Croatian students with their foreign colleagues.

Cooperation between ZSEM and foreign business schools is also carried out through videoconferencing (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p138). One of the areas ZSEM wishes to improve on is also the international activity of its faculty (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p132). In the last three years there were 19 professional visits of staff to a foreign HE institution (cf. table 6.3, self-evaluation report, p142).

There is no recording of the kind and number of implementations of experiences gained abroad in the staff's activities.

- 6.3. ZSEM is a member of AACSB (The Association to Advance the Collegiate Schools of Business): ZSEM actively contributes to the development of quality of education in the field of economics and business administration, which is one of the goals of AACSB, e.g. by presenting papers or exchanging experience and best practices. This is the only international membership the institution has. ZSEM has no joint programmes at the moment, but holds further bilateral international contacts with other institutions (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp132-133).
- 6.4. The institution offers courses in English and refers to the ECTS-system, which are some academic preconditions for attracting students from abroad.

Within the international exchange programmes, the number of incoming foreign students choosing ZSEM as their host institution for undergraduate and graduate programmes, either as an exchange destination or for the full duration of the program, is also growing (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p132). In the last three years 277 students came to ZSEM as foreign exchange students (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p142, footnote). The expert panel was told that most of them came from other south-eastern European countries.

- 6.5. In the EU lifelong learning programmes ZSEM was awarded the Erasmus charter (HR ZAGREB06) in 2009 (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p133). There are already outgoing students in the Erasmus programme.

- 6.6. It was clearly mentioned throughout the site-visit and is stated in the self-evaluation report that ZSEM has developed a lot of inter-institutional cooperation through European projects, bilateral agreements, joint programmes, etc. (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp103-142).

7. Resources: Administration, Space, Equipment and Finances

- 7.1. The library is substandard regarding the titles available and amount of relevant literature and journals as well as the opening hours (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p151).

The computers could be more modern.

As far as space is concerned, the offices of the teachers are quite small (e.g. three in one at spare space; in these offices several teachers individually consult students at the same time). Also, some buildings and IT equipment in classrooms and in the library are quite old fashioned: the expert panel would not consider that as a comfortable learning area (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp147-149,152-155).

- 7.2. N/A

- 7.3. ZSEM provides the equipment and technical support to ensure that all aspects of the organization can make the most of current and varied technologies. At ZSEM a big proportion of IT refers to new teaching technologies. The institutions effort to get the AACSB certification supports this (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp141-147).

- 7.4. The institution has an “Ordinance on Monitoring, Controlling and Enhancing the Quality of Studying” since 2010 (quality management centre, board of quality) as well as the action plan for the establishment of the quality cycle for the period 2010–2015 (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp3, 8). Regular internal and external quality audits are (supposed to be) done and they are aligned with strategic planning and decision-making pertaining to the quality enhancement guidelines and procedures.

- 7.5. As already mentioned in no. 7.1 the expert panel regarded the library as substandard, especially concerning the quality and amount of relevant literature and journals and the opening hours.

- 7.6. As mentioned in no 4.4 the teacher/students ratio decreased from 1:36 in the academic year 2005/06 to 1:31 in the academic year 2009/10 and has nearly reached the definition of optimum according to Croatian legislation. This could be a result of the regulation and the competition with the state institutions, which prevent their own staff from teaching at private institutions. This ratio could be monitored in the quality cycles mentioned under 7.4.

The non-teaching staff at ZSEM numbers 22 employees, thus it can be calculated that the ratio of staff to faculty at ZSEM comes to approximately 1:6, while the ratio of ZSEM students to members of staff is approximately 1:59 (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, p143). This ratio could be monitored in the quality cycles mentioned in 7.4. There is no evidence that the institution cares as much about this number as it does in case of the teaching staff. However, regular strategic planning just started at ZSEM.

- 7.7. ZSEM earns all of its income on the market; its financial activities are in accordance with its financial plan, taking into account the stability of the school and future sustainable development. Its priorities are placed in the following order: investing in human resources, improvements in teaching methods, technology and infrastructure (cf. e.g. self-evaluation report, pp147-149,152-155).

The impression of the expert panel is that what lacks most is the investment in physical infrastructure (space, cafeteria, etc.).

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

Advantages

Overall, the most impressive feature of the school is the strong effort to become AACSB accredited, a project that exists since the founding of the school: As the AACSB accreditation is known worldwide, as the longest standing, most recognized form of specialized/professional accreditation an institution and its business programmes can earn, its standards challenge post-secondary educators to pursue excellence and continuous improvement throughout their business programmes.

This is reflected by the fact that most of the ZSEM investments are in human resources and teaching methods, as well as by the strong focus on scientific publishing of its fully-employed teachers.

This effort, too, has resulted in the school being one of the leading institutions in Croatia, which was realized by students from Croatia and other south-eastern neighbour countries as well as from national employers.

Disadvantages

Several points that may be improved in the near future were already mentioned in chapter 4.2., *Detailed analysis based on standards and criteria for the re-accreditation.*

From the point of view of the panel, the main weak point to mention is the quite narrow space and the physical infrastructure that is not state of the art, and a better cafeteria at the campus should be included.

Additionally, the equipment as well as the opening hours of the library are not satisfying (cf. no. 2.8 in chapter 4.2).

A two- year graduate MBA programme of 120 ECTS is supposed to start soon. Currently such a two year programme is missing, especially for attracting alumni from other national and international higher education institutions.

Further, it should be checked in the future, if the MBA aligned with the undergraduate programme is useful or if a MA programme would be a better fit.

Recommendations for improvement of quality

Referring to the point above, the expert panel proposes to invest more in the infrastructure, library (equipment, opening hours) and a cafeteria at the campus.

In addition, teachers as well as students could be more trained in the background of the ECTS-measurement system (cf. no.2.5 in chapter 4.2) and the student workload could be increased (one argument brought up by a student of the MBA programme).

Students can express their opinion and proposals for improvement. At ZSEM students are not informed about the implemented measures immediately. There is no formal and transparent feed-back process yet for reactions to students proposals for improvement and complaints, and this could be improved, e.g. with WebCT (cf. no. 3.10 in chapter 4.2).

The institution could reflect on the value of a planned research agenda, as this was not available at the site-visit of the panel (cf. no. 5.3 in chapter 4.2).

International cooperation and mobility of students, teaching-staff and non-teaching staff could be enhanced. Indeed, this is already one point on the list of ZSEM itself. The institution could reflect if a recording of the kind and number of implementations of experiences made abroad to the staff's activities is of value (cf. no. 6.1 und 6.2 in chapter 4.2).

Further, ZSEM could reflect if contact with alumni could be intensified and if relevant information could be kept more up to date (cf. no. 3.7 in chapter 4.2).

Additional documents

1. Visit protocol of Zagreb School of Economics and Management (ZSEM), Zagreb
2. Filled in form for the estimation of quality