



agency for science and higher education croatia

ashe

**REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
IN THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF THE
UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAMME
THEOLOGICAL-RELIGIOUS STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB, CATHOLIC FACULTY OF THEOLOGY**

Date of accreditation:

29 April 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (the Agency) is an independent legal entity with public authority, registered in the court register, and a full member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

All study programmes delivered by public and private higher education institutions are subject to the procedure of initial accreditation of study programmes conducted by the Agency in accordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (Official Gazette 151/22) and by following the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and good international practice in quality assurance of science and higher education.

The Agency's Accreditation Council appointed an independent expert panel for the evaluation of the university graduate programme Theological-Religious Studies (dual degree programme) modules: Teaching Module; Pastoral-Catechetical Module; Church Cultural Goods; Christian Humanism and Economic Development; Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue delivered at the University of Zagreb Catholic Faculty of Theology.

Members of the Expert Panel (in the same order as in the Decision to appoint the expert panel):

- Prof. Marita Brčić Kuljiš, PhD, University of Split, Faculty of Humanities and Social Studies, Republic of Croatia,
- Prof. Marko Medved, PhD, University of Rijeka, Faculty of Medicine, Republic of Croatia,
- Prof. Markus Bockmuehl, PhD, University of Oxford, Faculty of Theology and Religion, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
- Assoc. prof. Benas Ulevičius, PhD, Vytautas Magnus University, Faculty of Catholic Theology Department of Religious Studies, Republic of Lithuania, chair,
- Roman Šimunović, student, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Republic of Croatia.

The Expert Panel held meetings with the following groups:

- Management,



- Head of the study programme,
- Full-time teaching staff that will participate in the delivery of the study programme,
- Students,
- Industry representatives, potential employers.

The Expert Panel visited the laboratories, the library, the student administration office and the classrooms.

The Expert Panel drafted this Report on the initial accreditation of the university graduate study programme Theological-Religious Studies (dual degree programme) modules: Teaching Module; Pastoral-Catechetical Module; Church Cultural Goods; Christian Humanism and Economic Development; Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue delivered at the University of Zagreb, Catholic Faculty of Theology based on the Proposal of the university graduate study programme Theological-Religious Studies (dual degree programme) modules: Teaching Module; Pastoral-Catechetical Module; Church Cultural Goods; Christian Humanism and Economic Development; Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue delivered at the University of Zagreb, Catholic Faculty of Theology, other relevant documents and the site visit.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Basic information about the study programme;
- Detailed analysis of each quality standard, recommendations for improvement and quality grade for each standard,
- Final recommendation of the Expert Panel,
- Appendices (quality grade summary by each assessment area and standard, and the site visit protocol).

In the analysis of the documents, site visit and the meetings held at the University of Zagreb, Catholic Faculty of Theology and writing of the Report, the Expert Panel was supported by:

- Marina Grubišić, coordinator, ASHE,
- Lida Lamza, interpreter, ASHE,
- Marija Omazić, translator of the report.



BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name, seat and PIN (Personal Identification Number) of higher education institution: University of Zagreb, Catholic Faculty of Theology, Vlaška 38, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, PIN: 32926585633

Title and type of study programme: university graduate programme Theological-Religious Studies (dual degree programme) modules: Teaching Module; Pastoral-Catechetical Module; Church Cultural Goods; Christian Humanism and Economic Development; Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue

CroQF/EQF/QF-EHEA level: Level 7.1.sv CroQF / EQF, Second cycle (QF-EHEA)

Scientific or artistic area and field of study programme: Humanities, Theology

ISCED FoET classification: 0221 – Religion and theology

Programme duration: 2 years (4 semesters)

Number of ECTS credits acquired on completion of study programme 120 ECTS

Academic or professional degree / qualification obtained upon the completion of the study programme: Master of Theology (univ. mag. theol.)

Language of delivery: Croatian

Place of delivery of the study programme (at the head office or outside the head office of the higher education institution): University of Zagreb, Catholic Faculty of Theology, Vlaška 38, Zagreb

Method of delivery of the study programme: in-person

Admissions quota (for full-time and part-time students): 40 full-time students

Academic year in which the study programme delivery is to commence: 2025/2026

In case of joint programmes delivered by Croatian higher education institutions, please include a list co-providers/partners: n/a





DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH STANDARD, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND QUALITY GRADE

I. Internal quality assurance

1.1. Clear justification for the introduction of the new study programme has been provided with regard to the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution, as well as economic and societal needs.

Analysis:

The proposed study programme aligns with the HEI's mission and strategy. The Programme addresses recommendations from the previous evaluation of the Faculty, in particular the expansion of interdisciplinary studies and inter-institutional collaboration in theology and religious studies.

Evidence demonstrates the need for highly qualified, broadly educated specialists in religious and theological fields within the Church and Croatian society. There are new job opportunities in Church organisations, including pastoral care, Caritas, and administrative and supervisory roles. Given the rapid social changes, various professional fields require individuals with current, in-depth understanding of ethical and socio-economic issues from a Catholic perspective. The programme consists of five modules for students. From the interviews, the Expert Panel concluded that the first module (the teaching module) is the most relevant and likely to attract the most students. This reflects the market demand for religious education teachers in schools. Meetings with external stakeholders emphasised the need for professionals educated in Christian cultural heritage and art (such as museum workers and qualified tourist guides). Well-educated members of church and society who understand the importance of ecumenical and interreligious dialogue are essential in the modern multicultural societies of Croatia and Southeast Europe. Therefore, the HEI's analysis of the need for the programme coincides with the opinion of the Croatian Employment Service that 'the proposed educational programme is aligned with labour market needs'.

The programme does not overlap with existing programmes in the region or in Croatia. It is an organic continuation of the existing undergraduate programme. This increases the likelihood of attracting the required number of candidates to the programme.



Interest in the field of study has generally been satisfactory. However, this interest has declined in recent years (partly for demographic reasons). The new dual degree programme, run in collaboration with the Catholic University of Croatia, could increase interest in the field thanks to its attractive features, the competencies it offers and its link to ecclesiastical and socio-cultural needs.

Candidates must meet the minimum requirements set by the HEI. The existing admission quotas will be used for the programme.

Recommendations:

No recommendations.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

1.2. The study programme has undergone an appropriate internal quality assurance process and has been formally approved by the higher education institution.

Analysis:

The HEI has published a publicly accessible quality assurance policy, and has all the necessary structures and tools in place to ensure the quality of the study and the scientific process.

Interviews with external stakeholders, teachers and students revealed that these groups had been informed about, consulted on, and involved in the development of the new programme to varying degrees.

After the Programme Preparation Commission had finalised the programme document, it underwent an internal quality assurance process. During this process, the document was approved by the Quality Assurance Commission, the Council of the Institute of Religious Studies and the Faculty Council.

Although the Initial Accreditation Procedure Application Form and the Feasibility Study provide a justification for the new programme, the Expert Panel saw little or no evidence of more detailed data collection (regarding potential enrolment, demographics and statistics of influencing factors) and deeper analysis that could be presented in tables and charts.



Recommendations:

Future decisions regarding the development and modification of the programme should be based on a more in-depth analysis of the relevant data.

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled

1.3. The higher education institution will collect, analyse and use relevant data for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the study programme in accordance with the published quality assurance policy.

Analysis:

The HEI is committed to delivering the programme and continuously improving the quality of studies based on European standards and guidelines, paying particular attention to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the Holy See's AVEPRO guidelines, national and university criteria, and quality standards, while actively promoting stakeholder involvement. This includes ensuring academic integrity and ethics, continuous monitoring and enhancing the quality of scientific and study processes, and supporting staff and students. It also includes maintaining and developing relationships with stakeholders.

The HEI has the necessary resources and policies in place for all these tasks, including a quality assurance policy, established rules and regulations, staff responsible for quality monitoring and assurance, tools and procedures for collecting feedback, and institutional and ecclesiastical support. The HEI has many years of experience in successfully using the available tools for quality monitoring and assurance in relation to other accredited programmes. A positive atmosphere at the faculty, good relationships between teachers and students, and the enthusiasm and involvement of stakeholders are also important factors for future quality assurance success.

All of this demonstrates that the Faculty is committed to maintaining and improving the quality of the study process in a supportive learning and research environment.

Recommendations:

No recommendations.



Quality grade:

fulfilled

1.4. The higher education institution informs the public about the study programmes it offers, as well as plans to offer new programmes, i.e. changes made to existing ones.

Analysis:

Although the new programme cannot be widely advertised until the end of the formal approval procedure, the HEI is discreetly promoting it as a possibility for future candidates to consider.

The HEI has a range of promotional tools and uses them effectively. The Faculty website is well designed, functional and updated (in both Croatian and English). The HEI has an active Facebook page. The Faculty uses leaflets and posters (both paper and digital) to promote its programmes and events. The Faculty organises annual Open Days.

An important addition to the conventional advertising methods for study programmes is the HEI's presence in Church life. This includes a dedicated webpage in English and Italian on website of the Zagreb Archdiocese (<https://www.zg-nadbiskupija.hr/catholic-faculty-of-theology-university-of-zagreb/7031>) as well as the presence of teachers and students in parishes, Catholic communities, and at Church events.

Recommendations:

In view of the demographic situation and the declining number of candidates, continuously explore new ways of promoting the study programmes to potential candidates.

Quality grade:

fulfilled



II. Study programme

2.1. The proposed study programme is compatible with the qualification standard in the Croatian Qualifications Framework Register. - (Table 1)

Analysis:

On 1 July 2024, the Faculty submitted the proposal for occupational standards to the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy for processing. The qualification standard is still under development and has not yet been confirmed in the Croatian Qualifications Framework Register.

Quality grade:

N/A

2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of the study programme are aligned with the competences a student should gain by completing the study programme, as well as with the CroQF and EQF level.

Analysis:

The intended learning outcomes of the study programme align with the Faculty's mission and strategic goals. However, their connection to the broader mission of the University of Zagreb remains unclear. This could be due to the fact that the programme will be delivered as a dual degree in partnership with the Catholic University of Croatia.

The proposed graduate programme builds on an existing accredited undergraduate programme in the same scientific field, ensuring appropriate vertical progression. This established undergraduate programme is also a dual degree partnership with the Catholic University of Croatia. The intended learning outcomes of the study programme correspond to level 7.1.sv of the Croatian Qualifications Framework (HKO).

Despite considerable differences in terms of content, learning outcomes, and competences across the five modules (Teaching; Pastoral-catechetical; Church cultural goods; Christian humanism and economic development; Ecumenism and interreligious dialogue), all graduates receive a uniform diploma title: Master of Theology and Religious Sciences. Module-specific competences and outcomes will appear only in the diploma



supplement, which means that just the general learning outcomes (LO1-LO10) will be recognized on the official diploma.

The general learning outcomes of the study programme as well as the specific learning outcomes of the individual modules are defined. However, there is some inconsistency in meeting the criteria when writing learning outcomes. The programme does not consistently apply Bloom's taxonomy when formulating learning outcomes. Non-measurable and non-standard verbs appear throughout the documentation, including 'critically and objectively evaluate,' 'understand,' 'design and promote,' and 'know' (the latter occurs 11 times). These should be replaced with precise, measurable action verbs.

The intended learning outcomes of the study programme partially reflect the competencies required for integration into the labour market. The study consists of 5 modules with different learning outcomes, ranging from teaching to artistic, managerial to economic. For example, the module on Christian humanism and economic development contains certain courses in economics and certainly provides specific competencies in the field of economics, but the question is whether the learning outcomes are appropriate to what is expected – "to know basic knowledge in economics and entrepreneurship important for understanding and successfully engaging in economic and administrative activities in a religious or humanitarian organization/association/community".

The intended learning outcomes at the graduate level differ from those at the undergraduate level.

Recommendations:

- Explain further the relationship between the academic title or the academic degree and the modules. As the academic title is Master of Theology and Religious Sciences, this means that the academic degree is based only on the general learning outcomes LO1-LO2.
- The learning outcomes of individual modules should be listed in the diploma supplement rather than the diploma itself, in line with national and Bologna standards. Including such module-specific outcomes in the diploma could lead to a misrepresentation of the academic degree awarded—which, in this case, is Master of Theology and Religious Sciences—by suggesting a narrower or overly specialized qualification. The diploma is meant to certify the general academic degree, whereas the supplement provides a detailed account of the programme structure and learning achievements.
- The list of learning outcomes should be revised to ensure that all verbs used are measurable and in accordance with established guidelines for formulating



learning outcomes based on Bloom's Taxonomy. Although various versions of the taxonomy exist, the programme should adopt a consistent and recognized standard—ideally the revised taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)—which emphasizes cognitive processes such as *Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyse, Evaluate, and Create*. Several learning outcomes currently use vague or non-measurable verbs such as “*know*” and “*understand*”, which do not clearly indicate the level of student achievement and are not suitable for outcome-based education.

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled

2.3. The intended course outcomes are aligned with the intended learning outcomes at the level of the study programme.

Analysis:

The HEI has defined the intended learning outcomes for all elements of the study programme. Some learning outcomes do not fully correspond to the course content and do not indicate what students should be able to do on successful completion of the study.

The first general learning outcome (LO1) lacks precision in its wording, and is inappropriately linked to a variety of courses ranging from Economics and Temporal Church Goods to Liturgical Iconology and Iconography, resulting in a mismatch between the outcome and the associated content.

More precise and operational verbs should be used to ensure that learning outcomes are aligned with measurable assessment criteria. For example, verbs like “*analyse*”, “*compare*”, “*construct*”, or “*evaluate*” provide clearer benchmarks for student performance than ambiguous terms like “*appreciate*” or “*be aware of*”. This is a widely accepted standard within the Bologna Process and Croatian higher education policy.

The competences of primary and secondary school teachers are not identical, so care should be taken to ensure that a sufficient number of ECTS are awarded for the above competencies and profession.



The intended learning outcomes of the study programme partially incorporate the development of generic competencies, which, however remain largely limited to the specific professional context of Theological-Religious Sciences.

Recommendations:

- The list of learning outcomes should include verbs that are measurable and should be corrected according to the instructions for writing learning outcomes (Bloom's Taxonomy).
- Ensure the appropriate number of ECTS credits for teacher training, as the competencies for primary and secondary school teachers are different.
- Introduce a wider scope of generic competences that are not related to the profession.
- Define the learning outcomes for professional specific competencies more precisely.

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled

2.4. The study programme content allows students to achieve all the intended learning outcomes.

Analysis:

The study programme provides profession-specific knowledge, partly through general learning outcomes and more through the learning outcomes of individual modules. The learning outcomes of the individual modules will be recorded in the diploma supplement. The study programme partially provides generic competences. The core disciplines necessary for acquiring professional competences are only partially represented across the curriculum. This fragmentation results from the programme's structure of five different modules, each developing highly specialized competences with limited integration. The HEI offers a sequence of courses and clearly defines the prerequisites for enrolling in each course.

The course content and the intended learning outcomes are appropriately aligned. The programme content ensures the vertical mobility of students within the national education area. The specialized modular and double-major structure of the programme limits students' horizontal mobility within the national higher education area.



Furthermore, the pathways for vertical and horizontal mobility within the European Higher Education Area remain underspecified and require clarification.

Recommendations:

- Ensuring vertical and horizontal mobility within the European education area is crucial.
- Involve the Office for international cooperation.
- Include additional generic competences in the study programme.

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled

2.5. ECTS distribution is aligned with the anticipated actual student workload.

Analysis:

ECTS credits are allocated in accordance with the rules and recommendations. For each study obligation, an appropriate number of ECTS credits is allocated in accordance with the student workload. The Faculty has appropriate mechanisms in place to harmonize ECTS with the actual student workload.

Recommendations:

No recommendations.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

2.6. Student/professional practice is an integral part of the study programme (if applicable).

Analysis:



Professional practice is an integral part of study programmes and is carried out outside the Faculty in cooperation with suitable employers and institutions. The professional practice has the corresponding number of ECTS. The opportunity to learn and acquire practical skills is provided. Mechanisms for the implementation of professional practice are in place.

Recommendations:

More professional practice opportunities for students abroad can be created by strengthening cooperation with the HEI International Office.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

2.7. If the completion of the study programme allows students access to a regulated profession, the programme is aligned with national and European regulations and the recommendations of national and international professional associations.

Analysis:

The qualification standard is currently being developed. Therefore, it has not yet been confirmed in the Register.

Quality grade:

N/A



III. Teaching process and student support

3.1. Admission requirements and criteria as well as the admissions procedure are clearly defined and transparent, and guarantee that students will possess the necessary prior knowledge.

Analysis:

The admission criteria for the programme are clearly defined and publicly accessible. The requirement for enrolment is the completion of a relevant undergraduate university study programme, such as Theology, Religious Studies, or related social sciences and humanities fields. This ensures that students enter the programme with the adequate basic knowledge and competences necessary for graduate level study. During meetings with the programme management and teaching staff, it was confirmed that the admissions process will follow established institutional rules and regulations, which ensures objective and equitable procedures.

Students are ranked based on their prior academic performance, and no additional entrance exam is foreseen. During interviews with students, it was confirmed that the enrolment procedures are transparent and communicated in a timely manner. The curriculum, study tracks, and requirements for progression and graduation are all made available to prospective applicants through the faculty's website and information sessions.

Recommendations:

No changes are necessary. The admission criteria are clear and the decision-making procedures concerning admissions are well defined.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

3.2. The planned teaching methods guarantee student-centred teaching and the achievement of all intended learning outcomes.

Analysis:

Although course syllabi reference diverse pedagogical approaches, they provide insufficient evidence of systematically implemented student-centred teaching methods. While the predominance of traditional lectures and seminars effectively imparts



theoretical knowledge, it fails more fully to embrace student-centred learning principles that would better support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The interviews with students revealed a high level of satisfaction with the responsiveness and availability of teaching staff, but students expressed a desire for more interactive and practical learning opportunities. For example, case-based learning, group projects, experiential exercises, and digital learning tools were cited as areas with potential for development. The programme management confirmed that interactive methods are encouraged but are currently still at the discretion of individual lecturers. Stakeholders highlighted the importance of equipping students with practical skills for their future careers (e.g. in schools, parishes, museums) which would benefit from more structured active learning components.

Recommendations:

- Teaching methods should be reviewed and redesigned to systematically incorporate student-centred learning approaches (e.g., collaborative learning, simulation, fieldwork).
- Institutional support for training in innovative pedagogy should be provided.
- Ensure that course plans explicitly link teaching methods with intended learning outcomes.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

3.3. The higher education institution has provided evidence that adequate support will be ensured for future students.

Analysis:

Programme documentation and interviews confirm that students will have access to a wide range of academic and personal support services, including mentoring, counselling, IT and library services, and administrative guidance. Interviews with students and faculty members confirmed the strong commitment to supporting student learning, particularly through the accessibility of academic staff and small-group work. The Faculty also offers Erasmus+ mobility opportunities and maintains agreements with other institutions, including the Catholic University of Croatia, which is important for the implementation of the dual degree programme.

Interviews with students revealed that they know little about the opportunities for international mobility. Students are primarily focused on completing their studies rather



than engaging in extracurricular activities such as study abroad programmes, suggesting that these valuable experiences need to be more actively promoted. The programme management acknowledged the need for more systematic promotion of student exchange opportunities and outgoing mobility.

Recommendations:

- Increase communication about international mobility and academic exchange opportunities.
- Consider appointing a dedicated mobility liaison to improve participation rates and guidance.
- Develop a visible, structured plan for student support services, including digital access and international counselling.

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled

3.4. Objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements are planned so as to ensure the achievement of all intended learning outcomes.

Analysis:

While the structure allows for different assessment formats, the alignment between the assessment criteria and the clearly measurable learning outcomes is not always obvious. Several learning outcomes are vaguely formulated (e.g., "to understand", "to know") without specific reference to measurable indicators based on Bloom's Taxonomy. This limits the clarity and objectivity of the assessment process, especially at the graduate level (EQF Level 7), where a precise demonstration of higher-order thinking skills is expected. According to the revised Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001), learning outcomes should include active, observable verbs such as *analyse, evaluate, apply, create*, which can be directly linked to assessment methods such as case studies, portfolios, or critical essays. The current wording does not reflect such alignment, and therefore risks reducing transparency in both formative and summative assessment.

Students expressed appreciation for the fairness and transparency of the assessment procedures and the availability of feedback. However, both students and teaching staff acknowledged that the learning outcomes at course level need to be more clearly articulated and the intended outcomes and assessment formats need to be more precisely



linked. The programme management noted that the process of refining outcome statements and aligning them with the assessment tools is ongoing.

Recommendations:

- Revise course-level learning outcomes using Bloom's Taxonomy to ensure clarity and measurability;
- Align assessment methods more precisely to defined learning outcomes in all modules;
- Introduce regular reviews of assessment practices and student performance data (pass rates, completion time).

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled



IV. Teaching resources and infrastructure

4.1 The higher education institution ensures adequate teaching capacities.

Analysis:

The Catholic Faculty of Theology at the University of Zagreb has 50 employees in scientific-teaching positions, 2 in artistic-teaching positions, 2 teachers, 2 artistic advisors, and 7 associates. The total annual teaching load of all teachers does not exceed 20% of the total annual standard teaching load and employed teachers deliver more than 90 % of all forms of direct teaching.

In this study programme, the Catholic Faculty of Theology of the University of Zagreb engages 20 external collaborators from various academic disciplines. These collaborators are appointed to appropriate scientific-teaching positions or as guest lecturers and are employed at external institutions. They bring practical skills that enable students to gain comprehensive access to the subject matter and the curriculum.

The total number of contact hours of direct instruction included in the study programme is 3,120.

As regards the number of teachers in relation to the number of students, the ratio of full-time equivalent teachers to the number of full-time equivalent students should not exceed 1:30. The database shows that the ratio at the Faculty is 1:5, which corresponds to 63 employees in this study programme, and 303 students (the total number of students enrolled in all study programmes). Hence, the Faculty fulfils the prescribed conditions and the ratio of teachers to students is appropriate and ensures a high quality of study.

From the interviews, the Expert Panel learnt that teaching competencies are improved by considering student evaluation results and by peer review assessments.

The Expert Panel found that the teacher workload varies greatly. The distribution of teaching responsibilities shows significant imbalance, with a single teacher responsible for all courses in a semester in some modules. This pattern indicates a lack of qualified instructors in certain specialized areas. Specifically, two professors teach five subjects each, and several others teach four subjects, which raises potential quality and sustainability concerns.

The interviews with the teachers revealed that not all modules were given equal emphasis, with the focus being on the teaching module. The Expert Panel did not see any external collaborators who would be engaged in, for example, the Christian Humanism and Economic Development module. The Expert Panel did not find that equal attention was given to all 5 modules. While the first module shows that the Faculty shows the most



interest and effort by teachers, the Expert Panel could not see the same level of attention from the teachers for the module on Christian Humanism and Economic Development we did not see the same level of attention from teachers.

Faculty members gave minimal responses when the Expert Panel inquired about opportunities they had to develop teaching skills specifically needed for the new programme and courses.

In summary, the Expert Panel finds that the teaching capacity of the Faculty is only partially adequate. The sub-optimal practice of assigning all courses within a semester to a single teacher, which is particularly evident in certain modules, indicates insufficient specialised teaching expertise in certain subject areas. The ratio of students to full-time teachers ensures a high quality of study. The teachers' workload ensures an appropriate distribution of teaching, scientific activities, professional and personal development and administrative duties.

Recommendations:

- The new programme with new courses needs to improve the teaching qualities of teachers. It seems that the necessary resources are available to enhance the teaching competencies, but the majority of the teaching staff has not taken advantage of this opportunity.
- In cases where only one professor teaches all subjects in the semester, this may indicate a lack of staff.

Quality grade:

partially fulfilled

4.2. The qualifications and professional experience of external associates are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Analysis:

The Faculty engages an average of 20 external associates from various academic disciplines to carry out study programmes. These associates are appointed to appropriate scientific-teaching positions, have nominal teaching titles or work at external institutions.



They bring practical skills that enable students to access the subject matter and curriculum in a comprehensive manner.

In the interviews, the external associates highlighted their involvement in the development of the study programme. These professionals represent diverse fields corresponding to the five modules, though their contributions were particularly evident in relation to the Teaching module (1st module). The Expert Panel observed an uneven involvement of external associates in the programme: while the Teaching module (1st) and Church cultural goods module (3rd) benefited from extensive external expertise, the Christian humanism and economic development module (4th) showed noticeably less external involvement. This discrepancy suggests that inconsistent attention was paid to securing appropriate specialist input in all five modules.

Recommendations:

To align with strategic goals such as becoming the regional leader in Theological-Religious studies, the Faculty should develop additional competitive criteria for promoting teachers to higher academic ranks.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

4.3. The premises, equipment and entire infrastructure (classrooms, laboratories, library, etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme and ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Analysis:

The entire infrastructure is suitable for the delivery of the study programme, as teaching takes place in the form of lectures, seminars, and practical exercises. The Faculty premises are divided into lecture halls and smaller classrooms for seminars and exercises. The lecture halls are equipped with modern facilities to facilitate the delivery of the study programme. The Expert Panel visited both infrastructure locations where the Faculty's activities take place – KBF (Vlaška 38) and the Library (Voćarska 106).

The ratio of students to classrooms, laboratories and other premises is 1:9.62 m². The ratio of students to the number of computers is 12:1. The number of classrooms is 16 (610.97m²).

There are 18 teachers' offices (234.63 m²).

The library area is divided into a reading room and a library, where staff instruct students on how to access available content (the total area of the library premises is 704 m²; the



total area of the reading room – 104 m²). See section 4.4 for more information about the library.

Recommendations:

Since the study programme is delivered at two distant locations, the Faculty should ensure that classroom scheduling accommodates student travel needs and provides appropriate access to facilities at both locations.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

4.4. The library premises and resources, as well as access to additional services ensure the availability of literature and library services for the delivery of the study programme.

Analysis:

This study programme will use the Library of the Faculty of Catholic Theology. The library aims to become the central theological library in the Republic of Croatia. It seems that it has already become so, not only because of the number of books (the total number of volumes is 129,803), but also because of the many literary legacies of famous Croatian theologians. The library has a rich offer of Croatian and world theological periodicals from all areas of theological science.

The library area is divided into a reading room and a library, where the staff instructs students on the access to available content (total area of the library premises – 704 m²; total area of the reading room – 104 m²).

The Expert Panel asked if the library's distance from both the Faculty and the Catholic University of Croatia (located in different parts of the city) posed a challenge for access. The librarian gave a satisfactory answer, stating that the physical separation has not hindered undergraduate students so far. The library has effectively solved this problem by scanning the materials and delivering them electronically, so that students no longer have to travel to the library.

Recommendations:



The Expert Panel recommends accelerating the digitisation of library materials to better support students studying at two campuses who need resources from a third, distant library location.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

4.5. The higher education institution ensures the availability of the necessary financial resources to organise the activities and quality delivery of the proposed study programme.

Analysis:

The HEI's financial sustainability is evidenced by the closing balance sheet for three consecutive years: €380,053.62 (first year), €819,283.91 (second year), and €449,740.40 (third year). These figures relate to the institution as a whole, as it is not possible to provide itemised financial data for individual study programmes.

Recommendations:

It appears that the necessary resources are available to enhance the teaching competencies, but the majority of teaching staff have not taken full advantage of this opportunity.

Quality grade:

fulfilled

FINAL RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXPERT PANEL MEMBERS:

a. **ISSUE A LICENSE, rationale**

b. **DENY THE REQUEST FOR ISSUING A LICENSE, rationale:**



ANNEXES

1. Quality grade summary – tables

<i>Quality grade by assessment area</i>			
<i>Assessment area</i>	Not fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Fulfilled
<i>I. Internal quality assurance</i>			X
<i>II. Study programme</i>		X	
<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>		X	
<i>IV. Teaching resources and infrastructure</i>			X



<i>Quality grade by standard</i>			
<i>I. Internal quality assurance</i>	Not fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Fulfilled
1.1. Clear justification for the introduction of the new study programme has been provided with regard to the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution, as well as economic and societal needs.			X
1.2. The study programme has undergone an appropriate internal quality assurance process and has been formally approved by the higher education institution.		X	
1.3. The higher education institution will collect, analyse and use relevant data for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the study programme in accordance with the published quality assurance policy.			X
1.4. The higher education institution informs the public about the study programmes it offers, as well as plans to offer new programmes, i.e. changes made to existing ones.			X



<i>Quality grade by standard</i>			
<i>II. Study programme</i>	Not fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Fulfilled
2.1. The proposed study programme is compatible with the qualification standard in the Croatian Qualifications Framework Register.			N/A
2.2. The intended learning outcomes at the level of the study programme are aligned with the competences a student should gain by completing the study programme, as well as with the CroQF and EQF level.		X	
2.3. The intended course outcomes are aligned with the intended learning outcomes at the level of the study programme.		X	
2.4. The study programme content allows students to achieve all the intended learning outcomes.		X	
2.5. ECTS distribution is aligned with the anticipated actual student workload.			X
2.6. Student/professional practice is an integral part of the study programme (if applicable).			X
2.7. If the completion of the study programme allows students access to a regulated profession, the programme is aligned with national and European regulations and the recommendations of national and international professional associations.			N/A



<i>Quality grade by standard</i>			
<i>III. Teaching process and student support</i>	Not fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Fulfilled
3.1. Admission requirements and criteria as well as the admissions procedure are clearly defined and transparent, and guarantee that students will possess the necessary prior knowledge.			X
3.2. The planned teaching methods guarantee student-centred teaching and the achievement of all intended learning outcomes.			X
3.3. The higher education institution has provided evidence that adequate support will be ensured for future students.		X	
3.4. Objective and consistent evaluation and assessment of student achievements are planned so as to ensure the achievement of all intended learning outcomes.		X	



<i>Quality grade by standard</i>			
<i>IV. Teaching resources and infrastructure</i>	Not fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Fulfilled
4.1. The higher education institution has ensured adequate teaching capacities to deliver the study programme and achieve the intended learning outcomes.		X	
4.2. The qualifications and professional experience of external associates are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.			X
4.3. The premises, equipment and entire infrastructure (classrooms, laboratories, library, etc.) are appropriate for the delivery of the study programme and ensure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.			X
4.4. The library premises and resources, as well as access to additional services ensure the availability of literature and library services for the delivery of the study programme.			X
4.5. The higher education institution ensures the availability of the necessary financial resources to organise the activities and quality delivery of the proposed study programme.			X



2. Site-Visit Protocol

Ponedjeljak, 28. travnja 2025.		Monday, 28 April 2025
10:00 – 13:00	Interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva (priprema za posjet)	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel (preparation for the site-visit)
13:00 – 14:00	Ručak	Lunch

Utorak 29. travnja 2025.		Tuesday 29 April 2025
9:00 – 9:45	Sastanak s Upravom visokog učilišta (<i>bez prezentacije</i>)	Meeting with the Management of HEI (<i>no presentation</i>)
9:45 – 10:45	Sastanak s voditeljem studijskog programa	Meeting with the head of the study programme
10:45 – 11:00	<i>Pauza i interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Break and internal meeting of the Panel members</i>
11:00 – 11:45	Sastanak s nastavnicima koji će biti angažirani na studijskom programu (<i>u stalnom radnom odnosu i vanjski suradnici – bez prisustva uprave</i>)	Meeting with teachers (<i>employed full time and external – without management of HEI</i>)
11:45 – 12:00	Pauza	Break
12:00 – 12:45	Sastanak sa studentima sveučilišnog prijediplomskog studijskog programa Teološko-religijske znanosti (dvopredmetni)	Meeting with students from university undergraduate study programme of Theological-Religious studies (dual degree programme)
12:45 – 14:00	<i>Radni ručak Stručnog povjerenstva</i>	<i>Working lunch of Panel members</i>
14:00 – 15:00	Obilazak visokog učilišta (<i>knjižnica, nastavni kabineti, informatičke učionice, ured za studente, predavaonice</i>)	Tour of the HEI (<i>library, teaching offices, computer classrooms, office for students, classrooms</i>)



15:00 - 15:45	Sastanak s vanjskim dionicima (<i>predstavnicima strukovnih i profesionalnih udruženja, poslovna zajednica, poslodavci, stručnjaci iz prakse, organizacijama civilnog društva</i>)	Meeting with external stakeholders (<i>representatives of professional organisations, business sector/industry sector, professional experts, non-governmental organisations, external lecturers</i>)
15:45 - 16:00	<i>Organizacija dodatnog sastanka o otvorenim pitanjima, prema potrebi</i>	<i>Organisation of additional meeting on open questions, if needed</i>
16:00 - 16:30	Interni sastanak članova Stručnog povjerenstva (<i>priprema za završni sastanak</i>)	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel members (<i>preparation for the exit meeting</i>)
16:30- 16:45	Završni sastanak s Upravom visokog učilišta	Exit meeting with the Management of HEI

	Srijeda, 30. travnja 2025.	Wednesday, 30 April 2025
9:00 - 12:00	Interni sastanak Stručnog povjerenstva (izrada nacrta završnog izvješća)	Internal meeting of the Expert Panel (drafting the final report)
12:00 - 13:00	Ručak	Lunch