



agency for science and higher education

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Following the provisions of Article 15 Paragraph 1 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (Official Gazette, 151/22) and the provisions of the Subparagraph 16 of Paragraph 1 of Article 32 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (Class: 003-05/13-01/0001; Reg.No.: 355-01-23-29), at its 2nd session on 11 May 2023 the Accreditation Council adopted the following

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF STUDIES

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1. INTRODUCTION

Considering the provisions of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (Official Gazette, 151/22; hereinafter: the Act), the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and good European and international practice in the field of quality assurance in higher education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) has prepared these Instructions for conducting the procedure of initial accreditation of studies (hereinafter: the Instructions) pursuant to Article 15, Paragraph 1 of the Act, and the provisions of Article 32, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph 16 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (Class: 003-05/13-01/0001; Reg.No.: 355-01-23-29), as well as the ESG Standard 2.3. The instructions are based on and aligned with the second part of the ESG (standards 2.1–2.7).

The Instructions contain (pre-)conditions for conducting the procedure in question, and specify in detail all the stages of the procedure itself.

The Instructions are intended for all higher education institutions (hereinafter: HEIs) planning to launch this procedure, as well as all the persons who are considered potential members of an expert panel, and for any other interested person; and they shall be considered the basis for a successful completion of the procedure of initial accreditation of studies, since they are based on a consensus of all relevant stakeholders involved in the drafting of these Instructions.

These Instructions are published on the Agency's website.

2. COMMON PROVISIONS

Initial accreditation of studies is a process of external evaluation of quality of studies, which is conducted in the event of:

1. founding a new study at a HEI;
2. alterations in the participants in the delivery of a joint study;
3. alterations in the venue of a study;
4. alterations in the language of a study;
5. alterations in the professional or academic title or degree obtained at the end of a study;
6. alterations in the manner of execution of a study;
7. alterations in more than one third of all learning outcomes obtained by completion of a module or a study.

In the procedure of initial accreditation of a study, the compliance of the study with national legal criteria, national and international standards, and trends towards quality improvement of the study and the study processes shall all be assessed by making recommendations for quality improvement.

Initial accreditation of studies shall apply to all types and levels of studies, regardless of whether the study is executed independently or in collaboration with another institution, in Croatian or in a foreign language, in a classical, *online*, or hybrid manner, either at the headquarters of the HEI or dislocated from the headquarters.

In the procedure of initial accreditation of studies, the **Quality Standards in the procedure of initial accreditation of studies** (hereinafter: the Quality Standards) shall be applied. The Quality Standards contain quality elements and indicators, which includes compliance with the requirements proscribed by the Act.

The Quality Standards were adopted by the Accreditation Council and published on the Agency's website.

The procedure of initial accreditation of studies shall take place in several steps:

1. submission of an application and documentation necessary to conduct the procedure of initial accreditation of studies;

2. conducting an external evaluation by an expert panel, including, inter alia, a visit to the HEI;
3. drawing up a report as a result of the external evaluation;
4. bringing a decision on the license;
5. designating and implementation of a follow-up procedure.

Croatian and English shall be used in the procedure of initial accreditation of studies.

Apart from the expert panel, a staff member of the Agency (hereinafter: the Coordinator) is involved in the initial accreditation of studies, as well as a translator.

All documents used in the procedure are public, and have been published by the Agency at its website.

The periods from 15 July to 31 August, and from 24 December to 6 January, shall not be counted against the deadlines specified in the Instructions.

3. LAUNCH OF THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF STUDIES

The HEI¹ initiates the procedure of initial accreditation of studies by submitting a **request for licence to perform a study** (hereinafter: the Request).

A HEI which has received a letter of expectations in the procedure of re-accreditation cannot apply for initial accreditation of a study before the deficiencies previously identified in the letter of expectations in the last re-accreditation have been remedied.

The Request shall be submitted to the Agency using the form set out in Annex 1 to these Instructions, in Croatian and English.

The Request form is public and published on the Agency's website.

The completed Request form is submitted electronically and must be signed either by a handwritten or electronic signature by the head of the HEI, and stamped with a seal. The head of a HEI guarantees that the information contained in the Request is true and accurate by signing it.

Together with the Request, the HEI shall provide the following documentation:

1. study programme proposal
2. opinion of competent body on compliance with the requirements stipulated for regulated professions
3. feasibility study justifying the need for a new study programme in the case of public higher education institution
4. employment contracts concluded with teaching staff
5. evidence of adequate premises and equipment for delivering study programmes
6. evidence of financial resources necessary to deliver the study programme.

The Request form contains notes stating which documents need to be submitted in English and which ones need to be submitted in Croatian only.

For initial accreditation of **a joint study of domestic HEIs, or a joint doctoral study of a HEI and a public scientific institute**, the HEI shall provide, in addition to the evidence

¹ Throughout this document, the term *HEI* refers to the applicant.

mentioned above, a contract concluded between domestic HEIs, or a HEI and a public scientific institute, governing the organisation, implementation, completion, venue, organizer, and method of issuing the final document of the contracted study, as well as the executor of the accreditation procedure for the joint study.

Since it is the responsibility of the HEI to prove compliance with each standard contained in the Quality Standards, the HEI shall additionally enclose supporting evidence. Such additional evidence shall be provided by attaching it to the request and/or delivering it to the expert panel members, so they would have sufficient information to adopt the report in accordance with the instructions/remarks contained in the form itself.

Upon receipt of the Request, the Agency shall verify that the application contains all the required information and documentation. The verification of the Request by the Agency is purely formal and does not involve assessment of compliance of a given analysis with the standard itself.

If the application is orderly, the Agency shall proceed with the process of initial accreditation of studies.

If the application does not contain all the necessary and specified data and/or documentation, or if the data does is insufficient for establishing if the proscribed criteria are met, or if the application is incomprehensible, the Agency shall electronically invite the HEI to remedy the deficiencies in the Request within a deadline set by the Agency. The period for remedying the deficiencies in the Request shall not exceed 15 days from the date of receipt of the Agency's instruction.

Prior to the appointment of the expert panel members, the Accreditation Council shall verify that the quantitative criteria laid down in the Act are met and, if the criteria are met, the initial accreditation procedure shall proceed with the selection and appointment of the expert panel members.

4. THE EXPERT PANEL

4.1. Composition of the expert panel

An expert panel consisting of **at least five members** shall participate in the initial accreditation of studies.

At least four expert panel members shall be appointed from among domestic and foreign teachers, at least one of whom shall be from the same scientific field as the proposed study.

One member of the expert panel shall be a student.

If the initial accreditation of a study is being conducted at a university, faculty, or art academy, the expert panel members shall be chosen from among the national and foreign teachers elected to a scientific or artistic academic rank.

If the initial accreditation of a study is being conducted at a university of applied sciences, the expert panel members shall be chosen from among domestic and foreign teachers elected to the position of professor of professional studies, or a tenured professor of professional studies, or among teachers elected to scientific and teaching academic ranks with experience in teaching at professional studies.

The student may not be the chair of the expert panel.

4.2. Conditions for the election of the expert panel members

The expert panel members from the ranks of teachers must also meet the following conditions:

- they must be recognised for excellence in teaching at their parent HEI, i.e. be recognised for excellence in scientific or artistic and professional activities, as well as internationally recognised
- they must be familiar with quality assurance in higher education.

The student in the expert panel must meet the following conditions:

- they must be recognised for excellence in studying (high grade average) at a study from the same area and field as the proposed study programme
- they must be a full-time student for a continuous period of time
- they must be familiar with quality assurance in higher education.

All expert panel members must:

- have a good command of English
- have good oral and written communication skills
- be able to work in a team environment.

4.3. Conflict of interest

A member of the expert panel is considered to have a conflict of interest if (one or more of the following):

1. they have signed an employment or other cooperation contract with the accredited HEI, or has had an employment or other cooperation contract with the accredited HEI in the last three years
2. they have by any means participated in publications and/or projects of the accredited HEI in the last three years
3. they have participated in governing, professional or advisory bodies of a validated HEI in the last three years
4. they have a personal connection to the dean, i.e. the persons performing managerial duties at the accredited HEI
5. they studied at the accredited HEI or have completed a course at the accredited HEI
6. they are in the court procedure against the accredited HEI.

A domestic teacher must not be employed by another HEI that executes the same study as the accredited HEI.

There is also a conflict of interest where the above relationships include close family members of the expert panel member (a spouse or non-marital partner, in-line relatives, siblings, or adoptive partners).

4.4. Procedure of election and appointment of the expert panel

When selecting potential candidates for expert panel members, the Agency shall use:

- the database of reviewers it maintains
- recommendations of other agencies responsible for quality assurance in higher education and science
- direct invitations addressed to potential candidates.

Potential candidates for expert panel members are required to declare whether they have a potential conflict of interest.

The expert panel shall be selected and appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council.

Upon appointment of the expert panel, the Agency shall deliver the decision appointing the expert panel to the accredited HEI which is entitled to apply for the exemption of an expert panel member within 7 days of receipt of the decision.

The Accreditation Council shall decide on the exemption of an expert panel member and shall, if it considers the request for exemption justified, appoint another expert panel member.

4.5. Rights and obligations of the members of the expert panel

All expert panel members in the procedure of initial accreditation of studies:

- must be independent in their work
- must not represent nor advocate the interests of their parent institution
- must not have a conflict of interest
- must guarantee the confidentiality of information they have learned or obtained in the procedure of initial accreditation of studies.

The appointed expert panel members shall sign a non-conflict of interest and confidentiality statement, ensuring that they are free from any conflict of interest and guaranteeing the confidentiality of information they have learned and/or obtained when conducting the procedure of initial accreditation of studies.

During the initial accreditation of studies, the expert panel members may not accept gifts from the accredited HEI or give gifts to that HEI.

All expert panel members shall be bound by all the protocols, procedures and deadlines set out and agreed.

The members of the expert panel shall be obliged to:

1. prior to the visit, consult the whole documentation provided by the Coordinator
2. on the basis of provided documentation and prior to the visit to the HEI, send the Coordinator a list of issues which the visit should focus on and, if necessary, compile a list of additional documentation they wish to receive during the visit to the HEI
3. participate in the training organised by the Agency
4. participate in the expert panel visit to the HEI
5. participate in all expert panel meetings
6. keep notes during interviews with HEI stakeholders
7. participate in writing of the report, including, inter alia, participation in evaluation for each quality standard or area, writing an analysis and suggesting recommendations for improvement
8. consider the consistency of the assessment they make and the analysis of each standard/area in the report
9. respond to the HEI's comments on the preliminary report and, if the expert panel decides so, participate in writing the final version of the report and/or explanation in case of disagreement with the statements made in the comments of the HEI
10. following the request of the Accreditation Council, participate in its session and provide the necessary clarifications
11. perform other tasks related to the procedure of initial accreditation of studies, in accordance with the division of tasks between the expert panel members.

The chair of the expert panel shall additionally be obliged to:

1. coordinate the work of all expert panel members
2. distribute the work between the expert panel members
3. moderate the meetings of the expert panel
4. moderate the exit meeting with the management of the HEI

5. in the report, ensure consistency of the assessments and analysis of the standards, i.e. areas
6. finalise the expert panel report and send it to the Agency (including both the preliminary and the final report)
7. moderate the meeting after receiving the comments of the HEI, to reply to the HEI's comments, to correct and/or update the final version of the report accordingly, and send it to the Agency; or to provide the Agency with an explanation of non-acceptance of the HEI's comments.

A member of the expert panel shall be entitled to an allowance for their work, in accordance with a general act of the Agency, and to a reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses, in accordance with the memorandum set out in Annex 5, which is an integral part of these Instructions.

5. THE EXPERT PANEL VISIT

The expert panel shall visit the HEI with the purpose of quality assessment.

A visit to a HEI, including all the necessary meetings and an examination of premises and equipment, is conducted by a **visit to the study venue** (“on site”).

Prior to the visit, the expert panel is obliged to undergo the training provided by the Agency.

5.1. The training

Prior to the visit to the HEI, the expert panel members shall examine all the documentation submitted to them by the Coordinator in the procedure of initial accreditation of studies.

Additionally, prior to the expert panel visit, the Agency will organise training for the expert panel members. **Training shall generally take place in a virtual environment,**

and it may be organised in premises designated by the Agency. During the training, the expert panel members will be informed of their tasks and duties, the procedure and purpose of the procedure of initial accreditation of studies, as well as the underlying national and European regulations for conducting the initial accreditation of studies. In preparation for the visit, the expert panel members shall identify the main issues to be considered during the visit and, if they deem it necessary, draw up a list of additional documents which they wish to obtain during the visit.

5.2. Organisation of the visit

The Agency shall announce the visit to the HEI at least 15 days before the visit. Following the announcement of the visit, the HEI shall appoint an employee to coordinate the entire procedure and notify the Agency as soon as possible. The Coordinator shall then arrange all other details related to the visit with the designated person.

The visit shall be organised according to a pre-established protocol determined by the expert panel members and the HEI. The protocol draft shall be submitted to the expert panel members and the HEI at least one week before the visit.

Meetings with the HEI's management, teachers, students, representatives of employers, businesspersons, and business associates and, where appropriate, with professional services and representatives of non-government organizations, and/or professional associations, shall be mandatory in the visit protocol. Meetings must not be recorded. The visit also includes a visit to the premises of the HEI (e.g., lecturers, libraries, laboratories, student administration offices, IT classrooms, worksites).

For the expert panel visit, the HEI shall:

- provide adequate space for all meetings foreseen by the protocol;
- ensure (wireless) internet access;
- provide a space to be used by the expert panel, the Coordinator and the translator for their meetings, breaks, personal belongings disposal (locked);
- to give the expert panel, the Coordinator, and the translator access to teaching activities, including, inter alia, access to classes, seminars, and practical teaching,

as well as to enable them to participate in a class when it comes to changes to a study;

- to give the expert panel, the Coordinator, and the translator access or otherwise ensure availability of examples of student papers, including the final theses of studies which are being modified when it comes to changes to the studies;
- facilitate meetings and interviews with staff and students at the choice of the expert panel, even if they are not predicted in the protocol;
- to provide the expert panel with documents governing its activities, inter alia, documents concerning staff, external collaborators and students (such as rules of procedure, agreements, copies of teachers' contracts for full time employment, and their registration for health and pension insurance, statements by external collaborators on participation in teaching and permissions of their home institutions to take part in teaching, copies of advancement decisions for full time teachers and freelancers, etc.), as well as provide access to the information systems used by the HEI in its work;
- to provide access to all premises and equipment of the HEI.

During the meetings, the expert panel members keep notes of their observations.

The visit to the HEI shall end with a meeting with the HEI's management, where the expert panel informs the participants of their observations during the evaluation. Time for discussion about these observations is not predicted at this meeting. Consequently, the expert panel **must not** provide the management of the HEI with their opinion on the outcome of the procedure in question.

6. THE REPORT

After the visit, the expert panel shall draw up a report about the evaluation of quality of the criteria laid down in the Quality Standards. All expert panel members shall participate in writing of the report. The report shall be drawn up based on the form set out in Annex 2 which is an integral part of these Instructions.

The report is written in English and translated into Croatian, and vice versa.

6.1. The manner of work on the final report

The expert panel shall base its report on materials provided by the HEI and on findings learned from the visit. **If the HEI provides additional evidence after the expert panel visit, it will not be considered by the expert panel.**

The expert panel members consensually agree on assessments of standards and areas, justifications/analysis of standards or areas and recommendations for improvement. If no consensus is reached, decisions shall be brought by a majority vote of all expert panel members.

If a member of the expert panel still disagrees with the assessments made for a given standard or area, or if they disagree with a particular part of the report, they may write a dissenting opinion. The dissenting opinion shall be reasoned, manually signed, and submitted to the Agency. A dissenting opinion shall form an integral part of the report.

Quality assessments of each standard and area are also integral parts of each report. The quality assessment shall determine the level of fulfilment of the Quality Standards as follows:

- *not fulfilled*
- *partially fulfilled*
- *fulfilled.*

The assessment *fulfilled* implies that the study fully complies with the standard, or does so to the greatest extent.

The assessment *partly fulfilled* implies that the study is compliant with some elements of the standard, while not with others. The assessment *partly fulfilled* may also be given if the standard is considered to have been fulfilled, but the way it is implemented is not effective enough and some improvements are proposed.

The assessment *not fulfilled* implies that the study does not fulfil the standard. A standard is deemed not to have been fulfilled if one of the criteria laid down by the Act is not fulfilled, or if the conditions laid down in another regulation applicable to that profession (for example, those related to regulated professions) are not fulfilled. Similarly, a standard is considered not to have been fulfilled if elements of the standard are not fulfilled to the greatest extent.

Based on the standards assessments, the expert panel shall evaluate each area and obey the following rules:

- if any of the standards within the area is assessed as *not fulfilled*, the area will be assessed as *not fulfilled* as well
- if none of the standards within the area is assessed as *not fulfilled* and most of the standards within the area were assessed as *partially fulfilled*, the area will be assessed as *partially fulfilled* as well
- if none of the standards within the area is assessed as *not fulfilled* and most of the standards within the area have been assessed as *fulfilled*, the area will be assessed as *fulfilled*, as well.

After the assessments, the expert panel shall also provide an analysis of each standard and area, and recommendations for improvement.

After the adoption of all assessments of standards and areas, and after providing the analyses and recommendations for improvements, the expert panel shall provide the Accreditation Council with a final recommendation on the outcome of the initial accreditation procedure of studies.

The outcome of the procedure carried out may be:

1. issuance of a licence to deliver the study programme
2. denial of the application for the issuance of a licence to deliver the study programme.

The expert panel shall issue a final recommendation to deny the application for the issuance of a licence to deliver the study programme if any of the areas has been assessed as *not fulfilled*.

If the expert panel considers that the shortcomings identified are of such a nature that they can be remedied by the HEI within 15 days, the expert panel shall not give a final recommendation on the outcome of the conducted procedure but shall make a proposal to the HEI to adjust and/or supplement the proposed study. The expert panel is obliged to justify such a proposal and provide clear and specific requirements, i.e. conditions to be met by the HEI in relation to the proposed adjustment and/or supplementation.

In this case, the Coordinator shall submit the report with a proposal for adjustment and/or supplementation to the HEI, which shall, within 15 days of date of receipt, submit the adjusted study programme proposal/study programme, in accordance with the stated requirements, i.e. the terms and conditions of the expert committee in Croatian and English, to the Agency.

Upon receipt of the adjusted study programme proposal/study programme, the expert panel shall continue its work on the report and shall, based on the adjusted study programme proposal/study programme, prepare a preliminary report, and make a final recommendation on the outcome of the conducted procedure.

The chair of the expert panel shall submit the preliminary report to the Agency within 15 days of the end of the visit, or, in the event of proposals for adjustment, within 15 days of receipt of the adjusted study programme proposal/study programme.

The updated report which is written in English is translated into Croatian, and vice versa. The Coordinator shall review the preliminary report and the level of compliance with the Quality Standards. If the Coordinator determines that the report needs to be adjusted, with obvious factual inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies between the assessments made and the analysis of a particular standard or area, they shall submit the preliminary report to all expert panel members for further elaboration by e-mail, accompanied by a justification. The expert panel members shall submit the corrected preliminary report no later than 7 days from the date of receipt of such a request.

The Agency shall submit the preliminary report in Croatian to the HEI, which shall be able to respond to it **within 8 days** of receipt of the preliminary report, if and only if it contains obvious factual inaccuracies and/or obvious errors in writing or figures. The comments shall be submitted to the Agency electronically, in Croatian and English, using the form given in Annex 3, which is an integral part of the Instructions. **The HEI's comments must not address the views and conclusions of the expert panel.**

If the HEI does not submit comments on the preliminary report within the stated deadline, it will be considered the final report.

If the HEI submits comments on the preliminary report, the HEI's comments shall be immediately submitted to the expert panel, which is obliged to consider it. If the expert panel considers the statements made in the comments to be justified, it shall amend the preliminary report accordingly, but if it considers that the comments are not justified, it shall state the reasons for the dismissing them.

The expert panel chair shall submit either the said justification or the amended preliminary report to the Agency no later than 7 days from the date of receipt of the comments of the HEI.

The preliminary report submitted by the expert panel chair shall be considered the final report and shall be submitted by the Coordinator to the HEI. The HEI shall no longer have the right to comment the final report.

The Agency shall submit the final report of the expert panel and the comments of the HEI, or the justification of the expert panel respectively, to the Accreditation Council.

7. DECISION MAKING

7.1. Reasoned proposal for the Accreditation Council

Based on the final report containing quality assessments, the Accreditation Council shall adopt a reasoned proposal to issue a licence to deliver the study programme at its next session.

The Accreditation Council may, if deemed necessary, ask the expert panel chair, or a member mandated by the chair, to attend the session and provide necessary clarifications.

A reasoned proposal for granting/denying a licence shall be adopted within three months of the date of submission of a duly completed Request and shall be submitted by the Agency to the HEI.

7.2. Objection by the HEI

Within 30 days of receipt of the reasoned proposal for granting/denying a licence, the HEI may object to the Agency's Complaints Committee against the reasoned proposal.

The objection shall be reasoned and accompanied by relevant evidence.

The Complaints Committee shall examine the merits of the objection and submit its observations on all the allegations within 15 days of their receipt.

If the HEI has expressed no objection against the reasoned proposal for granting/denying the licence, the reasoned proposal shall be forwarded to the Agency.

7.3. Decision of the Agency

Based on the reasoned proposal of the Accreditation Council and the observations of the Complaints Commission if an objection has been raised, the Agency shall decide on the licence by way of a decision to:

1. issue the licence
2. deny to issue the licence.

The decision shall be issued no later than 30 days from the date of receiving the reasoned proposal or the observations of the Complaints Committee, and it shall contain the information required by Article 21, Paragraph 2 of the Act and the Agency's Decision on the form and a more detailed content of the licence.

No appeal may be lodged against the Agency's decision, but administrative court proceedings may be initiated.

The Agency shall deliver the decision to the HEI.

The Agency shall also submit the decision to issue a licence to deliver the study programme to the Ministry of Science and Education, for inclusion in the Register of Study Programmes.

The HEI may start implementing the study upon enrolment in the Register of Study Programmes.

The licence to deliver the study programme may not be conferred upon other physical or legal persons.

8. FOLLOW-UP

The decision to issue the licence shall also determine the follow-up procedure on the implementation of the study to be carried out by the Follow-up Committee.

The Follow-up Committee shall monitor implementation of the study during the first cycle of the study.

The HEI shall adopt, at the latest within three months of receiving the licence, an action plan setting out the activities, deadlines, and indicators necessary to meet the recommendations of the expert panel. The action plan shall be submitted using the form set out in Annex 4 which is an integral part of these Instructions.

The Follow-up Committee shall analyse and evaluate the activities determined in the action plan and adopt an opinion, which shall be referred to the Accreditation Council.

The HEI shall report on achievement of the activities determined in the action plan after the completion of the first full study cycle.

9. THE PUBLIC

The final report, the comments of the HEI, and the decision to issue a licence or deny the application for a licence shall be public documents, which shall be published on the Agency's website.

10. FEEDBACK

Upon completion of the initial accreditation of studies, the Coordinator collects feedback from the HEI and the expert panel members through a questionnaire. Feedback is collected to improve the work of the Agency.

11. OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF STUDIES AND THEIR OBLIGATIONS IN THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF STUDIES

11.1. The Coordinator

The Coordinator is a person to whom the case undergoing the initial accreditation procedure has been assigned. The Coordinator shall, inter alia, provide administrative and professional support to the expert panel. However, the Coordinator is not a member of the expert panel.

The Coordinator is obliged to:

- check the regularity/completeness of the application and documentation received and, if necessary, ask the HEI to provide additional documents
- examine the relevant documentation related to the procedure of initial accreditation of studies
- find candidates for expert panel members
- to attend all meetings of the expert panel
- communicate with the expert panel members and the HEI
- provide the expert panel with all the documentation in the procedure of initial accreditation of studies, including, inter alia, that of the HEI (syllabus, copies of employment contracts for full-time employed teachers and their registration for health and retirement insurance, statements by external collaborators on participation in teaching and the permission of their parent institutions to take part in teaching, copies of the advancement of full-time employed teachers and external staff), and documents of the Agency (Instructions, Quality Standards, report forms)
- organise and educate the expert panel members
- draft a proposal for the visit protocol and organise the visit to the HEI
- to provide the expert panel with all the necessary instructions and clarifications regarding the procedure in question
- ensure that the report is written on a valid form for the final report

- verify the factual accuracy of the expert panel's report and the consistency of the assessments made with the analysis of each standard/area and recommendations for improvement, and inform the chair in case of inaccuracies;
- ensure that the report of the expert panel and any supporting documents are ready for the session of the Accreditation Council, and participate in the session of the Accreditation Council if necessary
- take part, if necessary, in a session of the Complaints Committee
- coordinate the follow-up procedure
- adhere to all the deadlines referred to in these Instructions, as well as take account of any other deadlines related to the procedure of initial accreditation of studies
- prepare all the necessary documents for publication on the Agency's website
- duly archive the entire case from the beginning until the end of the initial accreditation of studies procedure.

11.2. The translator

The translator translates the preliminary report or final report and, if necessary, interprets at the meetings during the visit to the HEI. The translator is not a member of the expert panel.

The translator is required to:

- translate the preliminary and final report from English into Croatian, or vice versa
- provide simultaneous/consecutive interpreting to the expert panel members during the visit to a HEI, if necessary
- if necessary, translate other documents resulting from the initial accreditation of studies.



President of the Accreditation Council

Prof. Mirjana Hruškar, PhD

ANNEXES

Annex 1a: Initial accreditation procedure application form - study programme (undergraduate, graduate, integrated, specialist and short-cycle programmes)

Annex 1b: Initial accreditation procedure application form - doctoral study programme

Annex 2a: Report form for the initial accreditation undergraduate, graduate, integrated, specialist and short-cycle programmes

Annex 2b: Report form for the initial accreditation of doctoral study programmes

Annex 3: Form for the comment of the higher education institution

Annex 4: Action plan form

Annex 5: Justification for reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses

ANNEX 5: Justification for reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses

The Agency shall reimburse the expert panel members for the following expenses:

- economy class tickets reserved and paid exclusively by the Agency (in agreement with the expert panel members) or economy-class train tickets, bus tickets or transport by a private car (a free parking space is provided in front of the Agency's building)
- hotel accommodation (half-board) during the procedure, reserved and paid exclusively by the Agency
- lunch during the visit, reserved and paid exclusively by the Agency
- public transport from home to the place of departure, i.e. from the place of arrival to the hotel, and return; where transport is possible, the expert panel members should use more convenient and affordable means of public transport.

The Agency shall only reimburse the costs for which the original invoices have been submitted. The expert panel members shall submit the original invoices to the Coordinator.

The Agency shall not cover the costs of:

- plane tickets purchased personally by the expert panel members
- additional hotel nights
- hotel minibar
- alcoholic beverages
- additional costs incurred during the procedure, which are not stated in the costs covered by the Agency (refreshments at car stops or gas stations, expenses in restaurants and cafes at airports, etc.).