

CLASS: 602-04/23-02/95

FILE NUMBER: 355-01-01-23-01

Zagreb, 26 May 2023

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 8 Paragraph 3 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (the Official Gazette 151/22) and provisions of Article 32 Paragraph 1, Items 1 and 2 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (CLASS: 003-05/13-01/0001; FILE NUMBER: 355-01-23-29), at its 2<sup>nd</sup> session held on 11 May 2023 the Accreditation Council adopted the following

# QUALITY STANDARDS FOR EVALUATIONS IN THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF DOCTORAL STUDY PROGRAMMES

#### Article 1

- (1) The standards for external quality evaluation in the process of initial accreditation of study programmes include standards, elements and quality indicators and criteria for initial accreditation of research institutes, against which the level of their fulfilment is determined and a quality assessment is passed.
- (2) Quality standards are divided into units (four assessment areas) content-wise, and they include various aspects of study quality evaluation.
- (3) For the purposes of this document, the following expressions shall have the following meaning:

  Standard is a clearly defined level of quality of a particular aspect of quality of the higher education institution.

  Elements of the standards are considered when assessing the compliance of an aspect of quality of a higher education institution and a study programme against the standards.

The criterion for the initial accreditation of the study programme is related to Article 12 of the Quality Assurance Act (151/22), which must be



complied with during the initial accreditation of a higher education institution/study programme, and it is highlighted red in the text.

Indicators are used to assess the level of compliance of the standards.

Sources for checking the fulfilment of the standards – documents of the higher education institution, websites and other materials used in order to check and assess the level of fulfilment of the standards. The sources mentioned in this document are just examples that a higher education institution can use as guidelines in the preparation of study programme proposals, as well as help to the expert panel in assessing the level of fulfilment of the quality standards. Both the higher education institution and the expert panel can use other sources and information collected from the received application form and during the site visit to the higher education institution.

The level of fulfilment of the standard is a quantitative assessment passed by an expert panel and a qualitative assessment passed by an expert panel which includes recommendations for quality improvement.

(4) Gendered terms used in this document are used neutrally and refer equally to male and female gender.

#### Article 2

## I. Internal Quality Assurance

1.1	Planning and proposing of the doctoral study programme are based on
	strategy of scientific research spanning several years in the scientific
	d in which the study programme will be delivered and the higher
	ication institution development plan. It is connected to the national
	elopment and the labour market, and various stakeholders, including
	toral candidates, were involved in its development.
1	

Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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## Elements and indicators of the standard

Planning and proposing the doctoral study programme is aligned with the mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution.

Planning and proposing of the doctoral study programme is aligned with the strategy of scientific research of the higher education institution.

Planning and proposing of the doctoral study programme contributes to the national development of higher education and science.

Planning and proposing of the doctoral study programme is aligned with the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia for the period until 2030. Labour market analysis has been considered when proposing the doctoral study programme.

Various stakeholders, including doctoral candidates, were involved in the process of planning and proposing of the study programme.

In the course of proposing a new doctoral study programme, an opinion of the Croatian Employment Service on the compatibility of the study programme with the labour market, i.e. evidence that an application to issue an opinion was submitted to the Croatian Employment Service at least 30 days prior. The higher education institution was not issued a letter of expectation for performing higher education activity at the moment of submitting the application.

- Strategy of scientific research for a period of several years for the scientific field in which the study programme is delivered;
- Doctoral study programme proposal;
- Analysis of compatibility of the doctoral study programme with strategic goals of the higher education institution;
- Decision of the expert body (faculty council, university senate) on adopting the doctoral study programme proposal;
- Analysis of minimum institutional requirements for comparability of the doctoral study programme with similar accredited doctoral study programmes in the Republic of Croatia and EU Member States;
- Feasibility study justifying the delivery of the doctoral study programme (in the case of a public higher education institution);
- Analysis of alignment of the doctoral study programme with the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia;
- A decision to appoint a working group for planning and proposing the doctoral study programme;
- Conclusions, minutes of the meetings and similar documents proving stakeholder involvement in the procedure of proposing of the doctoral study programme;
- Examples of stakeholder involvement in the planning and proposing of the new doctoral study programme;
- Opinion of the Croatian Employment Service on the compatibility of the study programme with the labour market, i.e. evidence that an application to issue an opinion was

submitted to the Croatian Employment Service at least 30 days prior.	

stakeholders for the study programme enhancement.	1.2. The higher education institution has developed the procedure of monitoring doctoral study performance and its further development, including the analysis of the current situation and the use of feedback obtained from various stakeholders for the study programme enhancement.	Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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## The higher education institution has established the internal quality assurance and enhancement system.

The higher education institution has developed the procedure and mechanisms for monitoring the doctoral study programme performance and identified key performance indicators.

The higher education institution is planning to perform the analysis of the current situation for the purpose of development of the doctoral study programme.

The higher education institution has developed mechanisms for using feedback obtained from various stakeholders for the enhancement of the doctoral study programme.

The higher education institution has set up electronic records and data collections, and separate records on the success of evaluation of achieved learning outcomes of doctoral candidates and processes personal and other information gathered for the purpose of teaching delivery.

- Procedures and mechanisms for performance monitoring;
- Key performance indicators;
- Procedures for ongoing monitoring and enhancement of the doctoral study programme;
- Student surveys and other mechanisms for gathering feedback on the doctoral study programme performance;
- Records and data collections.

1.3 Admission quotas are determined based on teaching and	
supervision capacities, scientific and societal needs, and in	
accordance with the analysis of the labour market.	Not fulfill

lled

Partly fulfilled

**Fulfilled** 

## Elements and indicators of the standard

Admission quotas are based on teaching and supervision capacities of the higher education institution. Admission quotas are based on the national scientific and societal needs.

The higher education institution has aligned admission quotas with the labour market needs.

- Employment contracts for staff on scientific-teaching positions;
- Analysis of the alignment of quotas with societal needs;
- Opinion of the Croatian Employment Service on the compatibility of the programme with the labour market, i.e. evidence that an application to issue an opinion was submitted to the Croatian Employment Service at least 30 days prior;
- Number of research projects (with the business sector, higher education institutions and institutes), potential supervisors as a basis for part of the quota of prospective

1.4 The higher education institution has developed a clear plan	
for good international networking and mobility of teachers and	Not fu
doctoral candidates.	NOUL
	1

Not fulfilled

Partly fulfilled

**Fulfilled** 

#### Elements and indicators of the standard

# The doctoral study programme ensures doctoral candidate mobility in the national and European Higher Education Area.

The doctoral study programme fosters international networking and mobility of teachers and supervisors.

The doctoral study programme fosters international networking and mobility of doctoral candidates.

The doctoral study programme encourages the participation of teachers, supervisors and doctoral candidates in international projects.

The doctoral study programme encourages the publication of research papers in the internationally renowned publications.

The doctoral study programme ensures a mechanism for attracting international academic experts and doctoral candidates.

The thesis can be written in the English language.

- HEI's international cooperation agreements;
- Involvement of teachers/supervisors in the international research projects;
- Mechanisms for encouraging doctoral candidates to publish papers in the internationally recognized publications;
- Mechanisms for encouraging teachers/supervisors and doctoral candidates to actively participate in international conferences and symposia;
- Study programme, regulations.

1.5 The rights and obligations of doctoral candidates are regulated by relevant acts of the higher education institution and the study contract which provides institutional and supervisor support to doctoral candidates.	NY . C 10111 1	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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The rights and obligations of doctoral candidates are regulated by relevant acts of the higher education institution.

The rights and obligations of doctoral candidates are regulated by the relevant study contract which provides supervisor and institutional support.

- Acts regulating the rights and obligations of doctoral candidates;
- The design and programme of the doctoral studies;
- Study contracts.

1.6 The higher education institution pursues a strong policy o research integrity, ethics and professional conduct.	f Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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Activities have been planned as part of the doctoral study programme aimed at strengthening research integrity, especially activities aimed at raising awareness and prevention, detection and acting in case of breaches of research integrity.

There are plans within the doctoral study programme to monitor the quality of internal mechanisms for ensuring academic integrity in all scientific disciplines and activities, including research, innovations, expertise, support, etc.

- Code of Ethics of the higher education institution;
- Ethics Committee;
- Activities aimed at raising awareness on research integrity, ethics and professional conduct (workshops, lectures, courses, material, etc.);
- Internal mechanisms connected to academic integrity;
- Documentation regulating procedures in the case of unethical and unprofessional behaviour;
- Anti-plagiarism software;
- Examples of the sanctioning of unethical behaviour, if any.

## II Study programme

2.1 The content and quality of the study programme are aligned with the latest scientific achievements in the relevant discipline, professional standards and internationally recognized standards of quality of doctoral education.		Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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#### Elements and indicators of the standard

The content and quality of the study programme are aligned with level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

The study programme is aligned with the qualification standard entered in the Croatian Qualifications Framework Register.

The doctoral study programme lasts at least three years and leads to the acquisition of 180 ECTS credits (including the research component).

The content of the doctoral study programme is in keeping with the latest scientific findings and skills resulting from them.

The content of the doctoral study programme is aligned with professional standards and recent achievements in the respective field.

The content of the doctoral study programme is in keeping with the latest trends and best practices of similar international study programmes.

The higher education institution encourages creativity in the doctoral study programme design.

- The design and programme of the doctoral studies;
- Comparative analysis of the doctoral study programme with similar accredited doctoral study programmes in the Republic of Croatia and the European Union.

2.2. The higher education institution has a document constitute evidence of accredited graduate, i.e. integrated undergraduate a graduate studies delivered in the same scientific or artistic field at the name of the doctoral study programme is aligned with the cont of the doctoral study programme and the qualification gained upon completion.	nd nd ont Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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The higher education institution has accredited study programmes leading up to the doctoral study in the same scientific field.

The name of the doctoral study programme is aligned with the content of the doctoral study programme and the qualification obtained upon its completion.

- The document constituting evidence of an accredited undergraduate and graduate, i. e. integrated study programme delivered in the same scientific/artistic field in which the doctoral study programme will be delivered;
- Study programme proposal which, among other, comprises the name of the study programme, the scientific area and field in which the study programme will be delivered and the academic degree obtained upon completion of the study programme.

Qualifications Framework and are clearly linked to the learning outcomes of individual teaching content, supervisor and research activity.  Flements and indicators of the standard	ertly fulfilled Fulfilled
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The higher education institution has clearly defined learning outcomes of the doctoral study programme.

The higher education institution has proven alignment of the intended learning outcomes with the mission and strategic documents of the higher education institution.

The higher education institution has clearly defined learning outcomes of all content in the doctoral study programme.

Learning outcomes of teaching content, supervisors' and research activity are logically and clearly connected to the doctoral study programme learning outcomes.

The intended learning outcomes of the doctoral study programme also include the development of generic and profession-specific competences.

Intended learning outcomes of the doctoral study programme are aligned with the competences a doctoral candidate should gain by completing the doctoral study programme.

- Design and programme of the doctoral studies;
- List of learning outcomes;
- Alignment of programme learning outcomes with level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework;
- Mission and strategic goals of the higher education institution;
- Learning outcomes of particular teaching content/units leading to the achievement of the learning outcomes at the level of the doctoral study programme;
- Employer/HEI survey regarding competences required on the labour market.

2.4 Teaching and learning methods are compatible with level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework and ensure the achievement of clearly defined intended learning outcomes.	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
Elements and indicators of the state of the		

Learning and teaching methods are aligned with level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

Learning and teaching methods ensure achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.

The doctoral study programme is oriented to research and independent study of the doctoral candidates.

The planned teaching methods encourage student-centred learning (interactive and research-based learning, problem solving, creative and critical thinking, as well as autonomy and responsibility through individual and group projects, cooperative learning, problem-based learning, field work and other interactive methods). Planned modes of instruction are adapted to a diverse student population.

Mechanisms for the assessment and adjustment of the used modes of programme delivery and teaching methods used have been ensured.

- Doctoral study programme;
- Description of individual courses (introductory methodology courses and research, and independent research conducted by the doctoral candidate);
- Mechanisms for quality assurance of teaching delivery;
- Learning analytics.

2.5 The content of the doctoral study programme is adapted to the needs of research activity and training doctoral candidates for pursuing research activity (individual course plan, generic skills, etc.).	Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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The content of the doctoral study programme has been adapted to the needs of research activity and training doctoral candidates for pursuing research activity. The content of the doctoral study programme has been adjusted to the level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

The higher education institution envisions the acquisition of generic skills.

The higher education institution plans to include doctoral candidates in research project implementation.

The higher education institution plans to include the recognition and evaluation of the research activity performed by doctoral candidates during the course of study.

- Design and programme of the doctoral studies;
- Intended mechanisms for including doctoral candidates in the research projects implementation;
- Intended mechanisms for recognizing and assessing research activity performed by doctoral candidates over the course of studies.

## III. Teaching process and student support

3.1 Admission procedure is coherent and transparent, the criteria are aligned with international standards, the complaints procedure is in place and the admission procedure is based on the selection of the best, i.e. motivated and talented	Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
doctoral candidates.			

#### Elements and indicators of the standard

Admission criteria are clear and transparent.

Admission criteria are aligned with international standards.

The complaints procedure is in place as part of the selection procedure.

The selection procedure leads to the admission of the best doctoral candidates.

- Regulations on the Doctoral Study Programme;
- Criteria for admissions in the doctoral study programme;
- Defined procedures for adopting decisions on admission criteria;
- Defined procedures for recognizing the domestic (Croatian) and foreign higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning;
- Alignment of admission criteria with the level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

3.2 The higher education institution ensures the recognition of	
prior achievements of applicants and provides equal admission	
opportunities for all applicants.	No
opportunities for an applicants.	

Not fulfilled

Partly fulfilled

**Fulfilled** 

## Elements and indicators of the standard

The criteria for admission or continuation of studies are clearly defined.

The higher education institution has defined procedures for the recognition of prior learning.

The higher education institution has defined procedures for the recognition of prior achievements.

Mechanisms are in place which will enable equal admission opportunities for all doctoral candidates (including underrepresented groups).

- Admission criteria;
- Regulations governing admissions and progression of candidates in the doctoral study programme;
- Regulations governing the recognition of prior achievements of applicants;
- Procedures of recognition of foreign higher education qualifications.

3.3 Conditions for the progression on the study programme and completion of the study programme, the process of developing and defending the doctoral thesis are clear and transparent, and include a public presentation of the thesis proposal, and a public defence and publication of the doctoral thesis, as well as an independent committee for the thesis proposal and thesis assessment.	Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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The procedure of developing and defending the doctoral thesis is clear and transparent.

Public presentation of the thesis proposal is part of the study programme.

Public defence of the doctoral thesis is part of the study programme.

There are committees for the defence and assessment of the thesis proposal and doctoral thesis of which the thesis supervisor is not a member.

There are committees for the defence and assessment of the thesis proposal and the thesis in which at least one member is from an external institution.

The doctoral thesis will be publicly available 30 days prior to the defence.

The doctoral theses will be published in the repository of the higher education institution at least 30 days from the day of defence of the doctoral thesis.

- Regulations governing the thesis proposal submission, thesis defence and assessment;
- Design and programme of the doctoral studies;
- The number of dissertations from other doctoral studies of the higher education institution available in open access through the institutional repository of the higher education institution (in the previous five years);
- The share of dissertations available in open access through the institutional repository of the higher education institution in the total number of dissertations defended on the higher education institution in that period (in the last five years);
- The number of final and graduation theses of the higher education institution available in open access through the institutional repository of the higher education institution (in the past five years);
- The share of final and graduation theses of the higher education institution available in open access through the institutional repository of the higher education institution in the total number of final and graduation theses defended on the higher education institution (in the past five years).

3.4	All	the	nece	essai	ry	info	rmat	ion	on	the	doctor	ral	study
pro	gran	ıme,	as v	vell	as	the	crite	eria	for	adm	ission,	del	ivery,
pro	gres	sion	and	con	npl	etio	n of	the	stı	ıdy	prograi	mm	e are
pub	lishe	ed in	acces	ssibl	le o	utle	ts and	d me	dia.				

Not fulfilled

Partly fulfilled

**Fulfilled** 

## Elements and indicators of the standard

The higher education institution publishes all the necessary information regarding the doctoral study programme (admission criteria, the selection of candidates, the delivery of the doctoral study programme, the terms of the progress and completion of the programme).

- Higher education institution's website;
- Outlets in which calls for enrolment of candidates in the doctoral study programme are published.

## IV. Teaching and supervision resources and infrastructure

4.1 The higher education institution has ensured an adequate number of teachers and supervisors for the delivery of the study programme and facilitate the completion of the study programme.

Not fulfilled

Partly fulfilled

**Fulfilled** 

## Elements and indicators of the standard

The higher education institution has an adequate number of teachers employed on scientific-teaching i.e. artistic-teaching positions full time, and an adequate number of teachers appointed in the scientific area in which the doctoral study programme is being proposed (21 teachers at universities, at least three of which appointed in the scientific area, and at least seven teachers at faculties or academies of art, at least three of which appointed in the relevant scientific area).

The higher education institution employs teachers who deliver at least 50% of all forms of direct instruction full time and on an indefinite term basis. The ratio of the total number of students enrolled and teachers employed full time as well as teachers with nominal titles does not exceed 30:1 (when calculating the ratio, the number of working hours of teachers who are not employed full time is added up to meet the number of working hours required of a full-time teacher). The total annual teaching load of all teachers at the public higher education institution does not exceed 20% of the total annual teaching load as determined by the Collective Agreement for Science and Higher Education.

Total annual teaching load of an individual teacher does not exceed 20% of the total annual teaching load.

Teachers and supervisors have adequate qualifications for the delivery of the doctoral study programme in the scientific area and field in which the programme is proposed.

- Number of employment contracts of the scientific-teaching staff employed full time;
- Letter of intent to hire teachers with nominal titles;
- Information on the coverage of teaching delivered by own staff;
- Staff teaching load;
- Doctoral student-teacher ratio;
- Ratio of the number of available supervisors and admission quota;
- CROSBI CroRIS.

4.2 The higher education institution is distinguished by its research achievements in the scientific discipline in which the doctoral study programme is proposed.		Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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The higher education institution is a holder of projects and organizes scientific conferences that are recognized at the national and international level. Research activity of teachers/supervisors is recognized at the national and international level in the scientific area and field in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.

Teachers and supervisors are involved in the national and international research projects, and when possible, involve their doctoral candidates in the projects. External associates are recognized experts in their fields, have published adequate research or professional papers and have relevant work experience.

- List of published papers produced by teachers/supervisors;
- List of projects of the higher education institution;
- List of projects involving teachers/supervisors;
- List of projects in which the HEI plans to involve doctoral candidates;
- List of scientific conferences, etc. organized by the higher education institution;
- List of publications issued by the higher education institution;
- Participation of teachers and supervisors in committees and other bodies in the system of higher education and science;
- CROSBI CroRIS.

4.3. The doctoral study programme has mechanisms for assessing the qualifications and for the development of teacher and supervisor competences.		Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
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The higher education institution has established mechanisms for assessing and monitoring the qualifications of teachers and supervisors, which are based on research excellence.

The higher education institution plans to organize workshops and other forms of professional development of teachers and supervisors.

The higher education institution has established requirements and obligations of supervisors and has a procedure for monitoring supervisors' performance in place.

The higher education institution has mechanisms for monitoring the work of supervisors and doctoral candidates in place.

The higher education institution has established the procedure for changing a supervisor.

The higher education institution is planning to organize workshops or other forms of professional development of supervisors.

- Mechanisms for monitoring teachers' and supervisors' performance in place which are based on research excellence;
- The ratio of the number of teachers and the anticipated number of doctoral candidates;
- The ratio of the number of available supervisors and the anticipated number of doctoral candidates;
- HEI's criteria for appointing supervisors;
- Mechanisms for monitoring supervisors' work with doctoral students;
- Workshops or other forms of professional development for teachers and supervisors planned as part of the study programme.

4.4 The higher education institution has an adequate infrastructure for the delivery of the study programme.	Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
Elements and indicators of the standard			

## The higher education institution has ensured a minimum of 1 m2 of space per student.

The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure are appropriate for the delivery of the doctoral study programme and ensure achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The space, equipment and the entire infrastructure are appropriate for the research activity of the higher education institution.

The library, library equipment and access to relevant databases and/or other content enable the successful performance of research activity.

- Examination of resources of the higher education institution;
- Ratio of the total space taken up by classrooms, laboratories and other premises intended for teaching and the total number of students enrolled at the higher education
- Institutional repository of review papers final and graduation theses and doctoral dissertations, publications and research data in open access;
- Available literature in the library;
- Available digital literature (e-journals, e-books);
- Access to relevant databases;
- Information about the space (ownership documents, document proving the right to use the premises).

4.5 The higher education institution has sufficient funds to deliver the study programme, which are distributed transparently and so as to enhance doctoral education.	Not fulfilled	Partly fulfilled	Fulfilled
Elements and U. H. a. C.			

The higher education institution has access to financial resources necessary to deliver the study programme.

The public higher education institution has sufficient funds to deliver the study programme in the form of a concluded programme contract or projections of income from tuition fees or other sources.

Funds collected for the purposes of doctoral education are distributed transparently and so as to enhance doctoral education (they ensure the delivery of the study programme and support to the doctoral candidates' research so they could successfully complete the doctoral studies).

- Programme contract;
- Three-year plan of income and expenditures of the higher education institution;
- Regulations on the use of funds.

4.6 Tuition fees are determined based on transparent criteria
and actual costs of studying, and admission quotas are
determined considering the funding available to the doctoral
candidates, that is, considering absorption potentials of
research projects or other sources of funding.

Not fulfilled

Partly fulfilled

**Fulfilled** 

## Elements and indicators of the standard

The higher education institution has determined tuition fees based on transparent criteria and actual costs of studying. The higher education institution has established quotas considering the funding available to the doctoral candidates, that is, based on the absorption potentials of research projects or other sources of funding.

#### Sources for assessing the fulfilment of the standard

- Calculation of the estimated costs of the proposed doctoral study programme per doctoral candidate;
- Three-year plan of income and expenditures of the higher education institution;
- Analysis based on which admission quota is determined;
- Mechanisms for involving doctoral candidates in research projects;
- List of research projects in which doctoral candidates can/plan to be involved.

Article 3

Quality Standards shall be published on the website of the Agency and shall enter into force on the day of their publication.

resident of the Accreditation Council

Prof. Mirjana Hruškar, PhD