



**REPORT
OF THE EXPERT PANEL
ON THE REACCREDITATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE (DOCTORAL)
PROGRAMME
KINESIOLOGY
FACULTY OF KINESIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB**

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INTRODUCTION

The Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) created this Report on the Re-accreditation of the University Postgraduate (Doctoral) Programme Kinesiology on the basis of the Self-Evaluation Report of the Programme, other documentation submitted and a visit to the Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb.

The Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE), a public body listed in EQAR (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education) and a full member of ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education), re-accredits higher education institutions (hereinafter: HEIs) and their study programmes in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette 45/09) and the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10). In this procedure parts of activities of higher education institutions and university postgraduate study programmes are re-accredited.

Expert Panel is appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to carry out independent evaluation of post-graduate university study programmes.

The Report contains the following elements:

- Short description of the study programme,
- The recommendation of the Expert Panel to the Agency's Accreditation Council,
- Recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure),
- A brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- A list of good practices found at the institution,
- Conclusions on compliance with the prescribed conditions of delivery of a study programme,
- Conclusions on compliance with the criteria for quality assessment.

Members of the Expert Panel:

- President of the Expert Panel, Prof. Mojca Doupona Topič, Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia;
- Dr. Joanne Hudson, Swansea University, United Kingdom;
- Dr. Joanna Bowtell, University of Exeter, United Kingdom;
- Mikko Huhtiniemi, doctoral candidate, M.Sc., Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences, University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

The higher education institution was visited by the following Expert Panel members:

- Dr. Joanne Hudson, Swansea University, United Kingdom;
- Dr. Joanna Bowtell, University of Exeter, United Kingdom;
- Prof. Mojca Doupona Topič, Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia;
- Mikko Huhtiniemi, doctoral candidate, M.Sc., Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences, University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

In the analysis of the documentation, site visit and writing of the report the Panel was supported by:

- Josip Hrgović, coordinator, ASHE,
- Alma Agović, assistant coordinator, ASHE,
- Ivana Rončević, interpreter at the site visit and translator of the Report, ASHE.

During the visit to the Institution the Expert Panel held meetings with the representatives of the following groups:

- Management,
- Study programme coordinators,
- Doctoral candidates,
- Teachers and supervisors,
- External stakeholders,
- Alumni.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, laboratories and the classrooms.

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Name of the study programme contained in the licence: Kinesiology

Institution delivering the programme: University of Zagreb – Faculty of Kinesiology (KIF)

Institution providing the programme: University of Zagreb – Faculty of Kinesiology (KIF)

Place of delivery: Zagreb

Scientific area and field: Social Sciences, Kinesiology

Number of doctoral candidates: Currently there are 79 active students

Number of HEI funded doctoral candidates: 7

Number of self-funded doctoral candidates and employer-funded doctoral candidates: 72

Number of inactive doctoral candidates: 73

Number of teachers: (employed by the HEI as well as the external associates): 64 teachers are provided by the curriculum and 53 of them teach students.

Number of supervisors: 44 potential mentors (approximately 70% is faculty) out of which

20 active mentors who supervise a total of 32 doctoral students and 22 inactive potential mentors.

Number of doctoral candidates to whom a supervisor was officially appointed: 32

Learning outcomes of the study programme:

After completion of the Doctoral study of Kinesiology, students will be able to:

- Extract the relevant scientific facts from the existing knowledge base using existing publications;
- Think critically about the published findings from their research areas, monitor and understand the latest knowledge and demonstrate critical thinking by analysing the relevant literature;
- Recognize scientific problems;
- Establish a scientific hypothesis that can be checked by appropriate methodology. Develop process research and construct an experimental plan to check the scientific hypotheses;
- Use statistical software packages and methods to evaluate the hypotheses proposed to process the collected data and the evaluation of the set hypotheses and interpret and display the results in an appropriate way;
- Use the modern technology in the diagnostic function (measurement) and evaluation of the indicators which are used to prove the hypotheses;
- Use modern knowledge and skills that are used in kinesiological research to design and implement basic, developmental and applied scientific research;
- Present, in written and oral form, their scientific work at conferences, congresses and other meetings;

- Introduce and describe their research in the form of a scientific paper acceptable for publication in scientific journals or other publications;
- Implement a successful transfer and application of scientific knowledge in the educational system, sports, recreation, sports and kinesitherapy;
- Conduct research responsibly and publish their research results for the purpose of social benefits with respect for ethical principles;
- Use in their research the existing scientific knowledge from the biomedical, social and humanistic anthropological disciplines and, what is particularly important, from the area of elective modules and elective courses that cover the area of analysis of motor activity, evaluation of participants' characteristics in kinesiological activities and analysis of the effects of program transformation processes in individual branches of kinesiology and related interdisciplinary fields;
- Organize a scientific research team.

Classes: 75 ECTS

Research: 105 ECTS

RECOMMENDATION BY THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

Upon the completion of the re-accreditation procedure and the examination of the materials submitted (Self-Evaluation Report etc.), the visit to the higher education institution and interviews with HEI members in accordance with the visit protocol, the Expert Panel renders its opinion in which it recommends to the Accreditation Council of the Agency the following:

issue a confirmation on compliance for performing parts of activities (renew the licence)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. The University should make available more scholarship funding for doctoral candidates, as the lack of funding limits the opportunity to study full time.
2. Increase funding for international mobility/collaboration for both staff and students, to support international profile raising.
3. Increase the number of submitted grant applications, particularly international funding opportunities such as European funds, facilitated by increased support for staff in bid writing.
4. Explore alternative sources of research income, for example, industry and business; seek to exploit existing relationships with partners to increase mutual benefit and opportunities for doctoral students to engage in research in externally funded contexts.
5. Productivity of the comprehensive laboratory facilities would be significantly improved by enhanced investment in technical staff support.
6. Doctoral candidates should be including data from 2-3 studies within their theses.
7. Monitor the impact derived from the introduction of the plagiarism software.

ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Graduates are well-equipped for work and at a level comparable with doctorate students from other programmes.
2. The programme and its graduates fill a need expressed by stakeholders.
3. Positive changes to the new programme highlighted include:
 - a. Removal of supervisor from the evaluation/defence committees;
 - b. Research focused from the outset of the programme including mentor allocation and activities and assessments that are instrumental in supporting their research programme.
4. Kinesiology journal, conference, international visitors and links with other faculties broaden and add to the quality of the student experience.
5. Students expressed a cohesive and positive identity.
6. Facilities are of a good standard, are available to all students for use, and, where appropriate collaborative use of equipment is available with other institutions.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1. Limited international opportunities for staff and students.
2. Part-time mode of study presents some challenges for mentors and students, and delays in publication of findings, which might be a factor in limiting the opportunity for publication in international journals.

3. Teaching demands placed on supervisors and lack of technical support in labs impacts negatively on supervisors' capacity to engage in research related activities.
4. There are only a low number of externally funded projects, therefore, there are relatively few opportunities for students to work on such projects.
5. There are a much smaller number of papers published in international journals (English language) compared to national journals (in Croatian language).
6. Limited opportunities to develop understanding of interpretive research and to gain experience in associated methodologies.
7. In some instances the completed theses were below international standards in terms of the number of research studies included (often just one research study compared to 3-4 internationally), however the change to the programme allowing an earlier start to the independent research should start to rectify this.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The early allocation of a research mentor allowed students to focus their activities and assessments in the taught modules on their specific project and tailor their taught programme to their needs.
2. The rigorous recruitment process included an interview for each candidate with preliminary discussions about research focus and mentor as an element of the interview. This ensures that students can be appropriately mentored and make an efficient start to their project.
3. Quality of supervision and supervisors' availability as highlighted by alumni and existing students.
4. The head of the PhD office provided an exemplary level of support for staff and students.
5. There were a number of projects that were performed in collaboration with industry, widening the potential scope of students' experience and creating employment potential post PhD.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS FOR THE DELIVERY OF A STUDY PROGRAMME

Minimal legal conditions:	
1. Higher education institution (HEI) is listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations in the scientific area of the programme, and has a positive reaccreditation decision on performing higher education activities and scientific activity.	YES
2. HEI delivers programmes in the two cycles leading to the doctoral programme, i.e., first two cycles in the same area and field/fields (for interdisciplinary programmes), and employs a sufficient number of teachers as defined by Article 6 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (OG 24/10).	YES
3. HEI employs a sufficient number of researchers, as defined by Article 7 of the the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (OG 83/2010).	YES
4. At least 50% of teaching as expressed in norm-hours is delivered by teachers employed at the HEI (full-time, elected into scientific-teaching titles).	YES
5. Student: teacher ratio at the HEI is below 30:1.	YES
6. HEI ensures that doctoral theses are public.	YES
7. HEI launches the procedure of revoking the academic title if it is determined that it has been attained contrary to the conditions stipulated for its attainment, by severe violation of the studying rules or based on a doctoral thesis (dissertation) that has proved to be a plagiarism or a forgery according to provisions of the statute or other enactments.	YES
Additional/ recommended conditions of the ASHE Accreditation Council for passing a positive opinion	
1. HEI (or HEIs in joint programmes) has at least five teachers appointed to scientific-teaching titles in the field, or fields relevant for the programme involved in its delivery.	YES
2. In the most recent reaccreditation, HEI had the standard Scientific and Professional Activity marked as at least "partly implemented" (3).	YES
3. The doctoral programme is aligned with the HEI's research strategy.	YES
4. The candidate : supervisor ratio at the HEI is not above 3:1.	YES
5. All supervisors meet the following conditions: a) PhD, elected into a scientific title, holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position and/or has at least two years of postdoctoral research experience; b) active researcher in the scientific area of the programme, as evidenced by	a) YES b) YES c) YES

<p>publications, participation in scientific conferences and/or projects in the past five years (table 2, Supervisors and candidates);</p> <p>c) confirms feasibility of the draft research plan upon admission of the candidate (or submission of the proposal);</p> <p>d) ensures the conditions (and funding) necessary to implement the candidate's research (in line with the draft research plan) as a research project leader, co-leader, participant, collaborator or in other ways;</p> <p>e) trained for the role before assuming it (through workshops, co-supervisions etc.);</p> <p>f) received a positive opinion of the HEI on previous supervisory work.</p>	<p>d) YES</p> <p>e) YES (in some instances)</p> <p>f) YES</p>
<p>6. All teachers meet the following conditions:</p> <p>a) holds a scientific or a scientific-teaching position;</p> <p>b) active researcher, recognized in the field relevant for the course (table 1, Teachers).</p>	<p>a) YES</p> <p>b) YES</p>
<p>7. The supervisor normally does not participate in the assessment committees.</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>8. The programme ensures that all candidates spend at least three years doing independent research (while studying, individually, within or outside courses), which includes writing the thesis, publishing, participating in international conferences, field work, attending courses relevant for research etc.</p>	<p>NO*</p>
<p>Comment: The Panel found that this is changing with the new programme (revisions that are planned), as revealed in interviews during the visit.</p>	
<p>9. For joint programmes and doctoral schools (at the university level): cooperation between HEIs is based on adequate contracts; joint programmes are delivered in cooperation with accredited HEIs; the HEI delivers the programme within a doctoral school in line with the regulations and ensures good coordination aimed at supporting the candidates; at least 80% of courses are delivered by teachers employed at HEIs within the consortium.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

	Quality assessment (“high level of quality” or “improvements are necessary”) and the explanation of the Expert Panel
1. RESOURCES: TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS, RESEARCH CAPACITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
<p>1.1. HEI is distinguished by its scientific/ artistic achievements in the discipline in which the doctoral study programme is delivered.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary Scientific research is an important component of the Faculty of Kinesiology activities since its foundation. The best indicators of scientific activity are published papers. The figures for the period of the last five years show 0.7 papers annually in WoS per researcher which represents an upward trend.</p> <p>The Faculty of Kinesiology has an average track record in attracting funds for research. Currently they have 6 research projects. They enjoy support from the EU programmes Erasmus + and their scientific activity is also demonstrated by the organization of an annual scientific conference »Kinesiology«. They also promote their scientific work by publishing the International Journal of Kinesiology, which is a WoS indexed journal.</p>
<p>1.2. The number and workload of teachers involved in the study programme ensure quality doctoral education.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The study programme is offered with the support of 53 teachers, about 75% of the teaching workload is delivered by the Faculty of Kinesiology teaching staff.</p> <p>The average teaching workload is shown to be in line with current national regulations, and therefore it satisfies the quantitative requirement. However, the panel discussion with the supervisors showed substantial extra load on some teachers, this teaching load may have a negative impact on teachers, as it may reduce their potential as mentors.</p>
<p>1.3. The teachers are highly qualified researchers who actively engage with the topics they teach,</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary Data about the scientific qualification of teachers are also reported. Overall, the Faculty of Kinesiology has the</p>

<p>providing a quality doctoral programme.</p>	<p>required number of scientific publications relevant to the field of the doctoral programme. However, as with the teaching load, the report shows a significant variance around the average values, which satisfy the overall basic requirement. There are differences between staff partly due to the varying professional and educational workload of teachers, but also because the field of kinesiology has several sub-disciplines with wide variation in the publication outlet statistics such that some staff have a high h-index and several dozen publications in journals indexed in WOS, as well as citations.</p>
<p>1.4. The number of supervisors and their qualifications provide for quality in producing the doctoral thesis.</p>	<p>High level of quality In general, the set of mentors (44 teachers) is qualified and satisfies the requirements for a successful PhD programme. The team of supervisors at the Faculty of Kinesiology can be specified in detail as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Candidate to supervisor ratio is shown to be under 3:1 which is adequate as prescribed. - All the supervisors satisfy the internal (University of Zagreb) requirements for acting in such capacity. - Supervisors' profile in terms of the number of publications, and in terms of research projects, are, on average, satisfactory. - Supervisors are also leaders, or members, of national or international research projects. - PhD candidates reported positively to the Panel about the nature of the collaborative and supportive relationship between supervisors and candidates.
<p>1.5. The HEI has developed methods of assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors.</p>	<p>High level of quality General regulations are determined to ensure the quality of study programmes and the scientific work both at the University level and at the level of the Faculty of Kinesiology. At the Faculty of Kinesiology, the assessment and monitoring of teachers is performed yearly following the completion of the taught elements of the programme, based on the proposals by the teachers. The teachers must be active in research work (the quality is measured by the number of publications in</p>

	<p>the last 5 years – at least 5 scientific papers in scientific journals, at least 3 of which were published in journals indexed in the Web of Science). This assessment could also be accompanied by standard evaluation procedures that ensure the quality of teaching (e.g. student satisfaction questionnaires).</p> <p>Overall, it can be concluded that assessing the qualifications and competencies of teachers and supervisors is assured at the Faculty of Kinesiology.</p>
<p>1.6. The HEI has access to high-quality resources for research, as required by the programme discipline.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The doctoral study is mainly carried out in the Faculty of Kinesiology facilities where students have access to all the resources and equipment. Specifically, the Self-Evaluation Report provides a list of 13 research laboratories that cover a variety of subjects and therefore provide opportunities to carry out research in a number of research areas. Candidates are able to use laboratories and the sports diagnostic centre in order to develop their doctoral theses and perform doctoral research work without charge.</p> <p>Computing equipment and network access are provided according to the standards of international research institutions. Moreover, the library provides the service both in terms of available hard copy collection of scientific resources (books, journals, reports, etc.) and in terms of access to digital resources, for example, Sport Discus.</p>
<p>2. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE PROGRAMME</p>	
<p>2.1. The HEI has established and accepted effective procedures for proposing, approving and delivering doctoral education. The procedures include identification of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social and economic needs.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The establishment of doctoral programmes is regulated by university-wide regulations. The proposal of a new doctoral programme requires the description of scientific, cultural, social and economic needs. The final foundation of a doctoral programme requires the decision of the Senate of the University of Zagreb, and the Kinesiology doctoral programme was proposed, approved and finally established according to these regulations. Discussions with external stakeholders and alumni made clear the scientific, cultural, social and</p>

	economic need for this programme.
2.2. The programme is aligned with the HEI research mission and vision, i.e. research strategy.	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The Kinesiology doctoral programme is well aligned with the Faculty strategy. Research activity topics – biomechanics and motor control are particularly well-represented and biomedical topics, sports psychology and social science less so. There is evidence of interdisciplinarity, which is consistent with the strategy.</p> <p>There is an emphasis on internationalisation within the strategy but at present this is not strongly evident on the ground. There is limited evidence of international exchange of students and staff, and relatively limited publication in international journals to raise the Faculty’s profile and enhance opportunities for international collaboration. At present the external grant capture is relatively limited in scope. Although, where funded projects are in place there is clear evidence that candidates are involved and directly benefit (e.g. children’s activity project), but at present relatively few students have this experience. A continued focus upon international partnerships can only help staff to achieve the goal of increased grant capture from European framework schemes. The Faculty is also pursuing commercial relationships with industry that involve shared intellectual property in product development e.g. Bodyrecog, which in the longer term may generate income to support projects.</p> <p>In the new doctoral programme approved in 2015, ~40% of the ECTS credits are derived from the first and second year content including seminars, workshops, presentations and exams, which are research oriented and focused towards each candidate’s proposal development. This load is still higher than in most European countries but candidates, especially those transferring to Kinesiology from other disciplines such as medicine, found this taught component useful.</p> <p>The Kinesiology strategy 2017-2022 sets out an ambitious mission and vision and strategic objectives</p>

	<p>including to increase productivity, increase grant applications, increase numbers of doctoral students on funded projects, improve capital infrastructure and enhance international profile. These are all consistent with the HEI research strategy but although there is a positive trajectory, there is some way to go in achieving these goals. Our listed disadvantages and recommendations highlight some of the key barriers that may slow or prevent progress in achieving these goals.</p>
<p>2.3. The HEI systematically monitors the success of the programmes through periodic reviews, and implements improvements.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The periodic review in 2012 resulted in the creation of a new doctoral programme with the first cohort recruited in 2015/16. A number of improvements have been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic area and mentor are agreed upon enrolment. • Proposal is developed and submitted by the end of the first year and must be finalised before the end of year 2. • Year 1 and 2 modules delivered at weekends, and using seminar and workshop formats with explicit linkage to the development of project specific and generic research skills e.g. scientific writing, publishing and evaluation. • Monitoring processes for capturing student and supervisor feedback are embedded including annual monitoring of the work of the student and mentor, and an anonymous student survey is completed annually. Changes to the programme, based upon candidates' feedback have been favourably received by candidates. • Candidates are aware of the possibility to submit via the Nordic model and current candidates in the early stages of their studies are positively disposed to this concept, but mentors seemed more sceptical of the feasibility of this approach within the available time. In the monograph format candidates must have at least one paper published in a WoS recognised journal. <p>There are a relatively large number of inactive</p>

	<p>candidates who were registered on the old programme, but data are limited as to the reasons for their inactivity. Systematic collection and analysis of such data would be helpful, although more stringent monitoring is in place for the new programme not least due to the early involvement of the mentor.</p>
<p>2.4. HEI continuously monitors supervisors' performance and has mechanisms for evaluating supervisors, and, if necessary, changing them and mediating between the supervisors and the candidates.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Mentors are appointed on the basis of a publication record, and there is no requirement for mentors to complete additional training. Some mentors indicated that they had attended a very useful mentoring workshop organised by the University but this has not been offered recently. For interdisciplinary projects multiple mentors are appointed but there is not a systematic approach of dual mentorship whereby more experienced mentors support more junior colleagues with PhD supervision. However, the direct feedback from current students and alumni who the Panel met during the site visit was overwhelmingly positive. Students recognised that staff are coping with extremely high teaching workloads alongside research activity and appreciate and value their mentors' commitment to their research.</p> <p>The quality of the supervision provided is mainly monitored through the annual monitoring reports completed by the candidates. The Head of the PhD programme then follows any problems identified on an individual basis. At present there is no formal process for preventing mentors with poor completion rates from accepting new candidates. More stringent monitoring of timely completion would help to ensure that the positive experience of the PhD candidates continues. The Faculty have recently introduced a small incentivisation for mentors upon successful PhD completion.</p> <p>The Panel heard directly of an example where a candidate successfully and by mutual agreement changed topic and mentor by direct negotiation. This was followed by implementation of the University</p>

	<p>regulation procedures for changing the thesis supervisor and/or thesis topic. In general, all issues raised either by doctoral candidates or mentors are handled by the Board for Doctoral Studies or mediated by the Head of the PhD programme.</p>
<p>2.5. HEI assures academic integrity and freedom.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary PhD candidates receive training on what construes plagiarism during year 1. However at present there is no formal monitoring of plagiarism. This is being rectified as plagiarism software has been purchased by the Head of the PhD programme and from next year will be adopted for all assessments, including the proposal and final thesis submission.</p>
<p>2.6. The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation.</p>	<p>High level of quality The process of developing and defending the thesis proposal is transparent and objective, and includes a public presentation. The procedures are defined in regulations and well supported by forms. Regulations and forms are available on the Web.</p>
<p>2.7. Thesis assessment results from a scientifically sound assessment of an independent committee.</p>	<p>High level of quality The procedures for the doctoral thesis defence are clearly described in the doctoral study curriculum. Doctoral theses can be submitted in the form of monographs or in the Scandinavian style as a collection of papers accompanied with a review chapter (cumulative dissertation). Currently 3 students are preparing their theses via this format. Mandatory prerequisites for the dissertation defence are that one publication must be published in a WoS indexed journal, and presentation of at least one conference paper.</p> <p>The defence committee is determined by a Faculty Selection Committee. The mentor is not permitted to be part of the defence committee and at least one member of the dissertation defence committee has to be external. For dissertations written and defended in English, it is common practice to invite experts from abroad into evaluation and defence committees.</p> <p>Unfortunately, most doctoral theses are still written in</p>

	Croatian (with the published works mainly written in English). This precludes the evaluation committee from being truly international, as only academics who can read Croatian are eligible as evaluators.
2.8. The HEI publishes all necessary information on the study programme, admissions, delivery and conditions for progression and completion, in accessible outlets and media.	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>All information regarding the curriculum, the admissions processes, registration, and the important administrative forms for candidates are provided on-line.</p> <p>Projects and doctoral theses public defences are published, while, in the case when a doctoral thesis is in the evaluation process, the title, mentors and broad summaries are published on the website and are also available in the Faculty's library.</p>
2.9. Funds collected for the needs of doctoral education are distributed transparently and in a way that ensures sustainability and further development of doctoral education (ensures that candidates' research is carried out and supported, so that doctoral education can be completed successfully).	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>Funds collected for the needs of doctoral education are allocated to the cost categories (1) teaching, (2) costs of research equipment and laboratories, (3) access to Sport Discus on-line database for journal articles, (4) provision of Statistica for students, (5) subsidy to attend conferences organised by the Faculty. However, there is a lack of clarity with regard to how the budgets are allocated.</p> <p>Candidates were very satisfied with their access to laboratory and equipment/facilities for carrying out their research. However, for self-funded candidates there is very limited access to competitive funds to support conference attendance and no support for publication costs. This can place a considerable additional financial burden upon candidates who are trying to contribute to the strategic goal of internationalisation and raising profile.</p>
2.10. Tuition fees are determined on the basis of transparent criteria (and real costs of studying).	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>This is the standard fee level for the University of Zagreb and similar to the market rate within the rest of Croatia.</p>
3. SUPPORT TO DOCTORAL CANDIDATES AND THEIR PROGRESSION	
3.1. The HEI establishes admission	High level of quality

<p>quotas with respect to its teaching and supervision capacities.</p>	<p>The Faculty of Kinesiology enrolls around 50 PhD students every two years. Mentor capacity is considered during the application process as students are expected to contact their potential supervisors prior to applying. Mentor competencies and student needs are also considered before starting the programme.</p> <p>The Faculty had a clear recommendation for mentors to not have more than three students. Based on the conversations with mentors and candidates, this guideline was mostly followed. Some mentors had four candidates, but their teaching responsibilities remained the same.</p> <p>Candidates were highly satisfied with their mentors and felt they had enough opportunities to work together.</p>
<p>3.2. The HEI establishes admission quotas on the basis of scientific/ artistic, cultural, social, economic and other needs.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The need for the doctoral programme is reasonably well defined and supported by stakeholders and candidates. In general, admission quotas were in line with the needs of society and a clear rationale was given for them.</p> <p>According to the SER, there are no unemployed doctors who graduated from the Faculty. However, the Panel would like to encourage the Faculty to directly track their alumni and their employment destinations.</p> <p>According to the discussions with staff and stakeholders it was evident that there is a clear need for the programme.</p> <p>Stakeholders gave support to the programme and felt that graduates added value to their businesses and organisations. In general, the doctoral programme was seen as necessary.</p>
<p>3.3. The HEI establishes the admission quotas taking into account the funding available to the candidates, that is, on the basis of the absorption potentials of research projects or other sources of funding.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>In the recently introduced programme, funding has been secured for only a small portion of candidates. Most of the candidates are self-funded, or partially funded through their own organisations.</p> <p>A small number of funded research projects were</p>

	<p>funded mostly from national sources. External research funding from public and private sectors is relatively minor.</p>
<p>3.4. The HEI should pay attention to the number of candidates admitted as to provide each with an advisor (a potential supervisor). From the point of admission to the end of doctoral education, efforts are invested so that each candidate has a sustainable research plan and is able to complete doctoral research successfully.</p>	<p>High level of quality During the application process candidates are required to specify a general idea for the research, and indicate a potential mentor. Also, according to the mentors and candidates, most candidates meet their potential mentor before applying. The Faculty has also introduced a system for assigning a mentor for every candidate at the beginning of the programme. Also, the Panel has heard an example of a situation where a supervisor was changed in good co-operation with the student and both the old and the new supervisor.</p> <p>Candidates must present their research proposal by the end of the 2nd year. According to the candidates, the study plan for the first year helps them to formulate their proposal.</p>
<p>3.5. The HEI ensures that interested, talented and highly motivated candidates are recruited internationally.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The Faculty has a clear application process which is advertised on their website and directly routed for potential candidates.</p> <p>No courses are given in English making it hard for non-Croatian speakers to attend.</p> <p>There are some international students but mostly from neighbouring countries due to the delivery language of the programme.</p> <p>According to the SER, in the case of international candidate, the doctoral programme is modified so that it contains less study modules and more mentor-based guidance. There have been five foreign students on the programme in the past five years.</p>
<p>3.6. The selection process is public and based on choosing the best applicants.</p>	<p>High level of quality The Faculty has a clear guideline for the selection of the candidates to the programme. The criteria are publicly available in the Croatian language, and the Panel heard during the site visit that they are clear to the candidates as well. Admission requirements are well-documented</p>

	<p>and clear and they are based on quantitative evaluation of the previous academic performance of candidates.</p> <p>During the selection, the Faculty interviews all candidates in order to define their area of interest as well as their potential and motivation for the programme. However, the Panel encourages the Faculty to try to widen the recruitment pool.</p>
<p>3.7. The HEI ensures that the selection procedure is transparent and in line with published criteria, and that there is a transparent complaints procedure.</p>	<p>High level of quality Criteria for selection as well as the selection process were clear and well defined.</p> <p>According to the SER, candidates have an opportunity to complain within 48 hours of the announcement of the enrolment decision. The complaints procedure is briefly described, although the Panel didn't hear of any examples during the site visit.</p>
<p>3.8. There is a possibility to recognize applicants' and candidates' prior learning.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The Faculty does not have any formal description or guidelines for recognising previous studies or learning.</p> <p>During the visit, the Panel heard that there are a lot of candidates from other disciplines, but it was unclear how their prior knowledge was taken into account.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Faculty introduces a formal procedure to recognise previous learning of the PhD candidates.</p>
<p>3.9. Candidates' rights and obligations are defined in relevant HEI regulations and a contract on studying that provides for a high level of supervisory and institutional support to the candidates.</p>	<p>High level of quality The Faculty has described the rights and obligations of the candidates, as well as the duties of the mentors, in the quality assurance manual of the Faculty and in the agreement of mutual rights and obligations between the candidate and the Faculty.</p> <p>Each candidate and mentor are obliged to produce an annual report on their progress. This report consists of both quantitative and qualitative assessment on students' study activities. Based on the reports from all candidates, the Board of Doctoral Studies submits an annual report to the Faculty Council.</p>

	<p>Students had an impressively positive view regarding their supervision. They also felt like they knew what was expected of them and were informed about their responsibilities during the programme.</p> <p>According to candidates, the relationship between mentor and candidate was the most important supporting factor for their progression. In case there was a problem in the mentor-candidate relationship, there was an opportunity to change the mentor and the process was clear. The Panel heard a positive example from candidates concerning the change of the mentor.</p>
<p>3.10. There are institutional support mechanisms for candidates' successful progression.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The triennial congress on Kinesiology and the Journal of Kinesiology are important for the Faculty and for the candidates, as they provide opportunities to include international lectures and visitors in the doctoral programme.</p> <p>Some of the candidates can use funds from projects to enhance their scientific activities. In the past five years, 20 doctoral candidates have received some kind of funding from projects, although it has primarily been allocated for activities other than paid work.</p> <p>Candidates indicated that they are given opportunities to apply for internal funding for attending national and international congresses.</p>
<p>4. PROGRAMME AND OUTCOMES</p>	
<p>4.1. The content and quality of the doctoral programme are aligned with internationally recognized standards.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary</p> <p>The programme team has recently restructured the programme and begun delivery of this restructured programme in 2015. The Panel obtained ample evidence that the programme is of a high quality and is, as required, research-oriented and focused on the candidate's independent work (it provides for at least three years of independent research experience, as regulated by the Croatian Qualifications Framework, CroQF).</p>

Candidates complete taught modules and assessments related to these, attend workshops, seminars and participate in academic debates, all of which are aimed at developing both the candidates as critical researchers, and, their own research programme.

The interdisciplinary nature of the area of study is emphasised as a part of the programme, and, the structure and nature of the programme activities lends itself well to fostering interdisciplinary research projects. A number of candidates complete interdisciplinary research that draws on cross-Faculty and external collaborations.

The Panel is satisfied that in general the programme demonstrates international comparability, for instance, in relation to programme objectives, admission criteria, admission procedures, programme duration, specialisations, comparability of supervision procedures, comparability of thesis formats and assessment committees. There are differences in the form of delivery of the programme with those delivered elsewhere (e.g., the UK) and in the format and assessment of the final thesis (e.g., fewer candidates present their thesis in the form of published articles). However, these differences do not detract from the comparability of the quality of the programme internationally. There were differences in the number of research studies produced by candidates (typically only one whereas internationally this is usually 3-4) and in the study mode (candidates here are registered as part-time whilst in other countries a large number are full-time students).

The programme had a clear and strong emphasis on supporting candidates through an individually based programme that is tailored to meet their individual needs. Opportunities to acquire generic (transferable) skills were evident but less so than research specific skills, for example, candidates were not given opportunities to develop project management skills. The

	<p>opportunities for international experience are limited in comparison with those at HEIs internationally.</p>
<p>4.2. Programme learning outcomes, as well as the learning outcomes of modules and subject units, are aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF. They clearly describe the competencies the candidates will develop during the doctoral programme, including the ethical requirements of doing research.</p>	<p>High level of quality</p> <p>The learning outcomes of the programme are aligned with level 8.2 of the CroQF. As noted above, taught elements of the programme are clearly directed towards developing candidates as critical scientists and towards the development of their own research. The level of expected outcomes from the programme is commensurate with those expected internationally.</p> <p>Processes for gaining ethical approval for research and for maintaining ethical standards of research are robust, with appropriate recourse to external ethical approval bodies as required (e.g., for research with children). Whilst not in the control of the Faculty, this can present delays to candidates gaining ethical approval which is somewhat undesirable.</p> <p>The Panel is confident that candidates are able to develop specific research competencies and competencies in research methodologies, although there is less opportunity to develop competence in interpretative research and research methodologies. This could be an area of the programme that would benefit from expansion and strengthening.</p> <p>Candidates are encouraged to conduct research that has real world relevance and social impact in collaboration with various external stakeholders (e.g., sports organisations, medical and pharmaceutical businesses).</p> <p>Candidates are able to develop writing and publishing skills and were indeed keen to do so but there remains a need to explore how to develop these further as most candidates complete their thesis in Croatian and face challenges publishing in international journals.</p> <p>Candidates were not required to teach or assess undergraduate or Masters level students.</p> <p>There remains scope to integrate more generic skills</p>

	development into the programme, as noted above.
<p>4.3. Programme learning outcomes are logically and clearly connected with teaching contents, as well as the contents included in supervision and research.</p>	<p>High level of quality Based on the new programme model of delivery and content, the Panel has rated this element as high level of quality. Candidates and alumni identified that, as discussed above, programme content (both taught elements and individual supervision elements) is clearly connected with the programme learning outcomes. Recent changes to the programme, experienced by the cohort which enrolled in 2015, identified that candidates are introduced to the research process and oriented to their area of specialism and their research process, including allocation of a supervisor, at the outset of their programme. This ensures that the candidate's programme is individually determined in relation to their prior experience and background, their developing needs as researchers, and, their area of research specialism. Candidates on this new programme also commented that they felt well prepared to carry out their thesis, more so than those who completed the previous programme. Of particular note, candidates from overseas who are not fluent in Croatian, are provided with an individualised programme that is based primarily on mentor led tutorial work. Whilst extremely supportive of candidates, the programme team is encouraged to ensure that this does not limit their opportunities to integrate with other students or developing their scientific writing in the English language.</p>
<p>4.4. The doctoral programme ensures the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies aligned with the level 8.2 of the CroQF.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The programme has robust methods of assessing the suitability and level of research at the stage of proposal submission. The processes involved are rigorous and allow for developmental feedback to be obtained by the candidate to ensure that issues affecting quality and level of research are identified early in the process. As commented above, the Panel as the quality and level of achieved learning outcomes is at level 8.2 of the CroQF. There are some considerations, as alluded to previously, that the Panel would like to offer to the programme team to reflect on in order to potentially enhance this</p>

	<p>quality criterion. Candidates might be encouraged to develop a more substantive body of work that is represented in a number of studies in their final thesis submission. Candidates currently present and publish their work in locally led journals and conferences but the Panel would ask the programme team to consider ways to support candidates to publish their work in more international journals and present their work at more international conferences. A number of barriers are evident to facilitating this, which the Panel acknowledges, and their expectation is that this is a long-term strategy goal that will be influenced by the achievement of recommended targets (see Recommendations) to increase grant capture and explore alternative mechanisms for funding that can contribute to finances needed for these activities, and, to increase international exchange opportunities for staff and students.</p>
<p>4.5. Teaching methods (and ECTS, if applicable) are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.</p>	<p>High level of quality As discussed above, the teaching methods are appropriate for level 8.2 of the CroQF and assure the achievement of clearly defined learning outcomes.</p>
<p>4.6. The programme enables acquisition of general (transferable) skills.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary The Panel observed less evidence that the programme provides specific opportunities for the acquisition of generic (transferable) skills, e.g. through workshops or other forms of support for development of business and managerial skills, presentation, project management skills, applying for funding etc. However, the new programme includes a specific course on scientific reading and writing, which is mandatory and is a valuable addition to the curriculum. The new programme also includes enhanced workshop and practical opportunities for candidates to develop applied skills that are relevant in the workplace.</p> <p>External stakeholders felt that programme graduates were well-equipped for the workplace, bringing in unique skills and knowledge that added an interdisciplinary element to their work, which was not</p>

	<p>the case with graduates from other programmes. Some enhancement of candidates' more generic work-based competencies is needed; programme team might consider ways to develop this aspect of candidates' profiles further throughout the programme. The Panel was not aware that the acquisition of these skills is assessed within the programme.</p>
<p>4.7. Teaching content is adapted to the needs of current and future research and candidates' training (individual course plans, generic skills etc.).</p>	<p>High level of quality Courses delivered are wholly flexible and adapted to individual academic needs and research plans (see comments above).</p>
<p>4.8. The programme ensures quality through international connections and teacher and candidate mobility.</p>	<p>Improvements are necessary Opportunities for international mobility are somewhat limited for staff and for candidates on the programme. There are some recognised factors outside the Faculty's control (e.g., candidate's personal circumstances) that impact their ability to pursue opportunities for international mobility, but this is significantly hindered by key factors that are, to some extent, under the control of the Faculty. There is a lack of funding to support the development of international mobility, collaboration and international recognition (e.g., attending international conferences, publishing in international journals, and, research sabbaticals spent at overseas institutions). Hence, enhanced funding for staff and candidates on the programme to enhance their international scholarly activity would be of substantial benefit. The part-time status of candidates compounds this issue as many work full-time as employees outside the Faculty and so find it difficult to organise vacation time to attend conferences that also does not impinge on their obligations to their employer. Candidates are made aware of upcoming conferences and internal funding competitions but discussions with candidates identified that applicants for University level funding to attend conferences were in a minority. Further support for candidates to apply for funding would, in some cases, be beneficial.</p> <p>International researchers are regularly invited to the Faculty to contribute to the doctoral programme and the</p>

programme recruits candidates from some overseas institutions. However, specific data on both were not provided to the Panel. Individual members of the Faculty engage in collaboration with researchers from overseas but it is not made clear how Doctoral candidates on the programme benefit from these collaborations directly.

A minority of candidates publish their work in English-language international journals and produce their theses in English.

The evidence accumulated suggests that a more strategic and systematic approach to internationalisation would be of benefit to both the Faculty members and would enhance candidates' experiences on, and outcomes gained from, the programme.

*** NOTE: RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL TO THE ASHE'S ACCREDITATION COUNCIL AND QUALITY LABEL**

The role of the Expert Panel in the re-accreditation of doctoral study programmes is manifold. The Expert Panel or part of the Expert Panel visiting a higher education institution drafts a report on the basis of a self-evaluation report, the accompanying relevant documentation, and a site visit to HEI. The draft report is adopted by all members of the Cluster Expert Panel, while the president of the Cluster Expert Panel is responsible for coordinating the assessment levels.

The report contains an assessment on whether a doctoral study programme delivered at a higher education institution complies with the prescribed laws and by-laws, as well as any additional/recommended requirements defined by the Agency's Accreditation Council, and whether a higher education institution can obtain a positive, i.e. satisfactory quality assessment according to the criteria set out in this document. Moreover, the Expert Panel must make recommendations for quality improvement.

Based on the assessment of all these elements, the Expert Panel may propose to the Accreditation Council of the Agency to issue either a confirmation on compliance, a letter of expectation for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should eliminate the identified deficiencies, or to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel has assessed that a doctoral study programme delivered by a higher education institution does not meet legal and other requirements or that the quality of a study programme is not ensured (i.e. that HEI does not meet additional requirements or recommendations made by the Accreditation Council, or has a very poor quality assessment), they should propose to the Accreditation Council to deny the license.

If the Expert Panel considers that the relevant laws and bylaws have been met by a higher education institution, but that certain elements mentioned above do not meet the quality requirements, while they consider that the identified shortcomings can be corrected within a time frame of three years, they should issue a letter of expectation.

If the Expert Panel considers that all legal and additional/recommended requirements have been met and the quality assessment is satisfactory, i.e. that a study programme fulfils the learning outcomes appropriately defined for that level and scientific area, they may propose the issuance of a certificate and have a HEI commit to quality improvement and reporting to the Agency during the follow-up period.

Finally, if the Expert Panel has, in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, proposed issuing the certificate of compliance and assessed that, in addition to meeting the minimum quality requirements – i.e. the qualification framework level - for a study programme, the programme should be identified as a doctoral programme of a 'high level of quality', the Expert Panel may propose to the Agency's Accreditation Council that such a doctoral study programme be awarded the 'high quality label'. Thus the Agency, with the consent of the Accreditation Council, grants a higher education institution the right to use the label for their academic and promotional purposes.

The 'high quality label' cannot be proposed or awarded to a programme or a higher education institution that does not comply with the requirements laid down by the laws and bylaws mentioned in this document, and any additional requirements recommended by the Accreditation Council. Moreover, the quality assessment awarded to a study programme should reflect a high level of quality inasmuch that at least half of the sub-criteria in each of the quality assessment criteria are assessed as being of high quality. The Accreditation Council of the Agency issues a final opinion on the label awarded. The content and form of the quality labels shall be prescribed by the Agency in a relevant general act.

The Accreditation Council of the Agency discusses the final report with all recommendations and suggestions, and issues their opinion on the report. Based on a prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation to the minister responsible for science and higher education, and upon receipt of the minister's final decision on the outcome of the procedure, awards the 'high quality label' to a higher education institution.