



**REPORT  
of the Expert Panel  
on the  
RE-ACCREDITATION OF  
Academy of Fine Arts  
University of Zagreb**

**Date of the site visit:  
May 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> 2015**

July 2015

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## INTRODUCTION

This report on the re-accreditation of the Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts was written by the Expert Panel appointed by the Agency for Science and Higher Education, on the basis of the self-evaluation of the institution and supporting documentation and a visit to the institution.

Re-accreditation procedure carried out by 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*), is obligatory once in five years for all higher education institutions working in the Republic of Croatia, in line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education.

The Expert Panel is appointed by the ASHE Accreditation Council, an independent expert body, to perform an independent peer-review-based evaluation of the institution and their study programmes.

The report contains:

- a brief analysis of the institutional advantages and disadvantages,
- a list of good practices found at the institution,
- recommendations for institutional improvement and measures to be implemented in the following period (and checked within a follow-up procedure), and
- detailed analysis of the compliance to the Standards and Criteria for Re-Accreditation

The members of the Expert Panel were:

- David Quin, Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Ireland, Panel chair
- Prof. Egle Ganda Bogdaniene, Vilnius Academy of Arts, Lithuania
- Prof. Branko Matulić, The Academy of Arts, University of Split, Croatia
- Prof. Božica Dea Matasić, The Academy of Arts, University J.J. Strossmayer Osijek, Croatia
- Vjekoslav Kiš, The Academy of Applied Arts, University of Rijeka, Croatia

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

- Davor Jurić, coordinator, ASHE
- Marina Grubišić, coordinator, ASHE
- Goran Briški, translator, ASHE

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

- The Management;
- The Working Group that compiled the Self-Evaluation;

- The students, i.e., a self-selected set of students present at the interview;
- The Vice-Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, programme co-ordinators and teachers;
- The Vice-Dean for International and Inter-University Cooperation; research projects' leaders;
- The Vice-Dean for Management
- Heads of Departments;
- Administrative staff;
- Teaching assistants and junior researchers.

The Expert Panel also had a tour of the library, IT rooms, student register desk, and the classrooms at the Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts, where they held a brief question and answer session with the students who were present.

Upon completion of re-accreditation procedure, the Accreditation Council renders its opinion on the basis of the Re-accreditation Report, an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution and the Report of Fulfilment of Quantitative Criteria which is acquired by the Agency's information system.

Once the Accreditation Council renders its opinion, the Agency issues an Accreditation Recommendation by which the Agency recommends to the Minister of Science, Education and Sports to:

1. **issue a confirmation on compliance** with the requirements for performing higher education activities or parts of activities (renew the licence),
2. **deny the license** for performing the higher education activities or parts of activities to the higher education institution, or
3. **issue a letter of recommendation** for the period up to three (3) years in which period the higher education institution should make the necessary improvements. The letter of recommendation may include suspension of student enrolment for the defined period.

The Accreditation Recommendation also includes an Assessment of Quality of the higher education institution as well as recommendations for quality development

## SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE EVALUATED INSTITUTION

NAME OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts

ADDRESS: Ilica 85, 10000 Zagreb

NAME OF THE HEAD OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: Assoc. Prof. Aleksandar Battista Ilić

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE: The Academy is organized into six departments, namely: Department of Painting, Department of Sculpture, Graphic Arts Department, Art Education Department, Department of Conservation and Restoration, and Department of Animation and New Media.

The following Chairs have been established at the Academy: Chair of Drawing and Painting, Chair of Graphic Arts, Chair of Sculpture, Chair of Restoration of Works of Art, Chair of Theoretical Courses, Chair of Visual Art Technology, and the Chair of Animation and New Media.

LIST OF STUDY PROGRAMMES:

### ***Undergraduate university study programmes:***

Painting: 4 years - 240 ECTS credits

Sculpture: 4 years - 240 ECTS credits (Specializations from 3rd year: Sculpture, Medallion Art and Small Plastic Art)

Graphic Arts: 4 years - 240 ECTS credits (Specializations from 3rd year: Graphic Arts, Applied Graphics)

Art Education: 3 years - 180 ECTS credits

Animation and New Media: 3 years - 180 ECTS credits

### ***Graduate university study programmes:***

Painting: 1 year - 60 ECTS credits

Sculpture: 1 year - 60 ECTS credits (Specializations: Sculpture, Medallion Art and Small Plastic Art)

Graphic Arts: 1 year - 60 ECTS credits (Specializations: Graphics, Applied Graphics)

Art Education; Specializations: Teaching: 2 years - 120 ECTS credits

Animation and New Media; Specializations: Animation, New Media: 2 years - 120 ECTS credits

***Integrated undergraduate and graduate university study programme:***

Conservation and Restoration of Works of Art; Specializations: Painting, Sculpture: 5 years - 300 ECTS credits

***Postgraduate specialist university study programmes:***

Graphic Arts: 2 years - 120 ECTS credits

Medallic Art and Small Plastic Art: 2 years - 120 ECTS credits

***Postgraduate (doctoral) university study programmes:***

Painting: 3 years - 180 ECTS credits

Sculpture: 3 years - 180 ECTS credits

Graphic Arts: 3 years - 180 ECTS credits

NUMBER OF STUDENTS (part-time/full-time/final-year): 402 - full time

NUMBER OF TEACHERS (full-time, external associates): 65 - full time, 26 - external associates

NUMBER OF SCIENTISTS (doctors of science, elected to grades, full-time): 63

TOTAL BUDGET (in kuna): 29,700,819 HRK

MSES FUNDING: 25,229,272 HRK (84.9%)

OWN FUNDING: 1,983,718 HRK (6.6%)

## SHORT DESCRIPTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION:

The Academy was founded in 1907; it is the oldest institution of higher education in the arts in the Republic of Croatia. This tradition is an advantage. The Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb has been the basis for the establishment of all other institutions in other cities of Croatia offering higher education in the field of Fine Arts. Through its 108 years of history the Academy has constantly been developing, establishing new departments and new study programmes and improving in quality.

Some of the significant events over the past 10 years were:

- The introduction of new study programmes of undergraduate and graduate studies under the Bologna system;
- Introduction of project teaching (before, only the class method of teaching was used);
- Considerable affirmation of artistic research and art research projects;
- Establishment of a postgraduate study — the first artistic doctoral study in the field of fine arts in Croatia;
- Starting a lifelong learning programme by establishing postgraduate specialist courses of Graphic Arts and Medallic Art and Small Plastic Art, and participation in the university programme of acquisition of pedagogical-psychological-didactic-methodological education;
- Enhancement of the Office for International and Inter-University Cooperation. A substantial increase in student and teacher mobility, especially the international mobility of students in collaboration with academies outside Croatia. It is one of the most active at the University (the Office was established in 1996, among the first at the University of Zagreb);
- Significant affirmation of cooperation with partner institutions in the region, Europe and the rest of the world;
- Significant improvement of the work of the art collection, the library and the IT service;
- Exhibition activity — a significant increase in exhibition activities of the Academy and cooperation with cultural and art institutions (associate institutions), such as the Museum of Contemporary Art (MSU) and the Croatian Association of Artists (HDLU);
- Affirmation of cooperation with the business community in the form of projects, competitions and prizes for the best students, and the definition of the creative industries sector as a basis for employment and self-employment of graduates;
- Significant affirmation of cooperation of all three art academies of the University of Zagreb on projects of cultural and social importance for the City of Zagreb and the Republic of Croatia;
- Agreement on, and the use of, the additional 800 m<sup>2</sup> of space in the Slava Raškaj Centre for Training and Education at Ilica 83 for all study programmes and the Academy Library;
- Creating a major project to build the Academy Campus, with the complete documentation, for the purpose of uniting the activities of the Academy at a single location and thus improving the conditions for, and the quality of, the execution of programmes significantly, as well as ensuring the necessary capacities to implement the programme of lifelong learning.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXPERT PANEL**

### ***ADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION***

1. The panel commends the Academy on the quality of its documentation, on your complete honesty and on your vision and mission for your Academy '*centred on the creative, competent, provided-for and happy student*' (p.22 pf SER).
2. The panel commends the very obvious passion, commitment and the professional competencies of Academy staff, senior and junior, as artists. We also commend the nurturing tradition of your Academy – you do look after your students, they see Academy as their second home.
3. Your facilities as they exist are extremely good and we commend your plans for renovation and renewal of buildings, equipment and resources in support of your students and staff.
4. We commend your determination to innovate, to involve your Academy and students in interdisciplinary research and projects to reassert your leadership role in Croatian society and in the international world of art and media.
5. The panel commends Zagreb Academy's already strong engagement with its University. The panel encourages continued integration in Quality Assurance, Teaching Skills improvement and Administration which will allow the Academy to continue to concentrate on enhancing and developing the core art skills, critical ability and learning of the students.

### ***DISADVANTAGES OF THE INSTITUTION***

1. Communication with students needs to be improved – clear explanation of their learning and assessment procedures. Also, continued enhancement of mechanisms to hear the student voice, allowing students to be effectively involved in decision-making and problem-solving processes and in the ongoing improvement of the Academy.
2. The Academy needs effective mechanisms and structures for the improvement and development of teaching, learning and assessment skills. These mechanisms may have to be created collaboratively, at a Croatian national level.
3. A fair and equitable distribution of administrative duties is needed in the Academy. The panel respects the fact that the new management at the Academy is very new and you are pointed in many of the right directions. But there is a lot of work to be done and effective, sustained administration will be needed.

4. Please work hard to communicate your message and story with the world. There is already a great story in the Academy, over one hundred years old. If the Academy tells that story, people will come, from all over the world, to learn from you.

### ***FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE***

1. Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts has enthusiastic, artistically rigorous and well-motivated teaching staff and well-focused students.
2. Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts is well integrated into its University and is trusted with the leadership of new university policies and procedures, initiatives and innovations.
3. Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts has a well-defined leadership position in arts education in Croatia and so attracts leading students from across the country.
4. Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts strongly supports student and teacher mobility.
5. Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts has strong links with local business, arts organisations and the local community and is a leader in interdisciplinary projects, art research and PhD study.

## ***RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT***

### **1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance**

1.5. The quality policy and quality assurance system is well-developed, but not yet sufficiently implemented at all levels of activity of the Academy. This applies in particular to the inclusion of students in all forms in the activity to improve quality culture. It is also recommended that the activities of the Commission for quality management more strongly include external stakeholders.

1.6. Although the Academy has all the necessary documentation, which clearly describes the procedures for improving the quality of even those relating to the monitoring of the quality of teaching and teachers, their implementation is still in its initial stage. It is necessary for the entire Academy to increase awareness of the need for daily improvement of teaching and monitoring its quality, especially teachers' skills.

### **2. Study Programmes**

2.1. Involvement in programme quality improvement and programme renewal has been insufficient. Student surveys are formal. As survey questionnaires are made by the university, the questions do not properly reflect peculiarities of art studies and specific needs of the students. There is no system that would analyse, summarize, assess and implement students' wants. The description of feedback has not been created and feedback system has not been implemented.

External stakeholders (employers, public and private sector and the civil society) have not been sufficiently involved in study quality monitoring and programme renewal. Communication with social partners is being carried out informally, yet, it does not ensure systematic cooperation and regular participation of social partners in study quality monitoring.

Study programmes have general programme descriptions which include learning outcomes, additionally, there are descriptions of separate courses. The course descriptions clearly define the aims, annotations, forms and methods, types and criteria of evaluation; but the links between the Programme and course results could be better highlighted.

Provided examples of diploma supplements encompass undertaken courses and acquired competencies.

Regular Alumni survey and result analysis has not been carried out.

There is positive evidence that informal communication with external stakeholders (employers, public and private sector and the civil society) and students is active.

It is not clear how study programme monitoring and renewal is going on, who is responsible for it and who participates in study quality processes.

The panel recommends that the Academy:

- more actively involves students in the development of study programme quality
- improve student survey questionnaire ensuring that survey results will be analysed, assessed and will influence the advancement of study quality
- will involve students' Council into the survey
- will formalize cooperation with external stakeholders (employers, public and private sector and the civil society) and involve them in monitoring and renewal of study programme quality
- involve assistant teachers in study programme quality renewal.

### **3. Students**

The panel concludes that most of students' needs are met. There are some problems that can be solved in a certain amount of time: more adequate student surveys, much more active student council, better preparation for job market (management class), improving their academic and creative writing skills, better equipment for some classes and, as the students themselves have said, better communication on every relation on the academy (students - assistants - teachers -management programme development-programme improvement).

There are some things that are commendable: the students are content with their mobility options, with their mess hall at the HEI, conditions of working in classes, they are overall satisfied with HEI and most of them would enrol in the Academy again. There are happy students at the Academy of fine arts in Zagreb.

3.2. HEI partly supports students in their extracurricular activities. Students have the ability to stay in their classes after official class is finished in order to work more. They are informed via e-mail and posters about various competitions and projects on which they can apply to. There are some excellent activities on which students can take part on the teaching department at Jabukovac, such as: 24 hours drawing, Cash&Carry, Days of open doors etc.

3.3. HEI does offer counselling and mentorship to each student. Most students use option of teacher counselling in order to improve their skills. However, there are not enough professional orientation services to ensure personal and professional development of students. The students are not introduced to the needs of job market, or encouraged and

educated to be more oriented on self-employment. Psychological counselling is available to students by the University of Zagreb.

3.4. Knowledge assessment procedures and methods are established and published, but in practice it differs from teacher to teacher and their assistants. In some cases, the assistant is more familiar with the work of a student so it is important that their assessment is taken in consideration. Sometimes their assessments are ignored and sometimes are taken more seriously. Again, it differs from teacher to teacher. The feedback that student get from their teacher also varies from teacher to teacher, which is linked with teacher's lecturing skills. Teachers' lecturing skills are in definite need of improvement. However, it should be considered that art is a specific field which is extremely hard to grade, even with clear learning outcomes. Student's possibility to appeal is included in the statute of HEI.

3.6. The HEI has a problem with its web-site. Web-site should be a most important medium of informing the public about their work, but it is faulty in its design, which makes it difficult for the user to find the information he seeks.

3.7. It is clear that problems with the student council have existed for some time. The students blame themselves for their inertness, lack of interest and inactivity. It is their duty to involve themselves in the life of their academy and student council is their tool to improve their time spent on the HEI. Without the student's council they have no means of improving their student standard, no means of influencing important decisions, which are in direct link with their education quality. The panel suggest that the new student council should write its own statute. Such a statute, which would be more specific to the students' interests and concerns, would allow the council to act more easily in their activities and would better represent the Academy's students.

The Academy needs more communication with and explanation to students. The students are most heard when there's a threatening problem, all the way up to appeals (when it's too late). Otherwise, the students are not expressing the problems – the Academy hears months later about problems which could have solved immediately.

If the Academy's systems are more open for the students, the students will open up and will express their concerns.

3.8. The student surveys are serious problem due to, again, the specific nature of art academy. The existing surveys are inadequate for this HEI. There are many situations in which the student's anonymity is compromised. There should be a different way of students grading their teachers. Also the students don't get the results of their surveys as they should.

## **4. Teachers**

4.1. The Zagreb Fine Arts Academy needs better developed policies for artistic-teaching staff that ensure their professional development, as needed to advance the institution's mission. It is also a challenge on a national level for all artistic-teaching staff and all art academies. The institution, in cooperation with other art academies, should organize more obligatory workshops, lectures and consultations for teachers. They should be encouraged to recognize this need for development of quality of their teaching skills, as they recognize the need for their artistic professional upgrading.

The panel suggests that Academies and Universities across Croatia should collaborate on the collective development of teaching skills. The provision of structured Learning, Teaching and Assessment courses (perhaps at a Croatian national level) for teachers and assistant teachers would be an effective 'reward' for teachers and assistant teachers. Such a structured, collective approach would improve teaching and learning conditions for teachers, assistant teachers and (most importantly) students across Croatia.

Teachers should also be encouraged to enrol in more exchanges and international workshops, seminars etc. Experience of colleagues from abroad would help in teachers' personal development as well as the development of future plans for the institution itself.

## **5. Scientific and Professional Activity**

The panel commends Zagreb Academy's determination to innovate, to involve the Academy and students in interdisciplinary research and projects to reassert the Academy's leadership role in Croatian society and in the international world of art and media. The panel is encouraged by Zagreb University's trust of and integration of the Academy in the development of University policies, strategies, innovations and new initiatives. The panel would encourage the Academy to consider the development of a separate Office responsible for Research and External Activity.

5.1. Zagreb Academy has a strategic research agenda and some exciting plans and prospects in the area of interdisciplinary research, but monitoring, evaluation, review and planning of such activity must in the future be accomplished through key performance indicators, preferably through indicators which will be intelligible to Zagreb University and the Ministry for Education, Arts and Science.

5.5. Zagreb Academy appears to have few effective mechanisms in place for recognising and encouraging the excellence of its employees, and no defined or structured reward system. Reward systems might (in time) include allowing teachers, but especially assistant teachers, to access Academy facilities (especially studio facilities) when they're

not actually working at the Academy (after hours, at weekends and even during holidays). Other 'reward' systems might in time include supporting and encouraging the provision of, or access to, structured Learning, Teaching and Assessment courses (perhaps at a Croatian national level) for teachers and assistant teachers. Another 'reward' would be a clear and transparent system for assistant teacher professional progression within defined, transparent durations. A final 'reward' would be work to improve the hours and working conditions of assistant teachers, most or all of whom seem to be working at least double their contracted hours.

## **6. International Cooperation and Mobility**

6.5. The Zagreb Academy has only partly created adequate conditions for attracting students from abroad. Zagreb Academy needs to continue to increase Erasmus and bilateral agreements with international partner institutions. Zagreb Academy needs some web presence in English, telling the Academy's story, telling about the exciting opportunities for study in Zagreb. Also, to start to deliver some course components, or some subjects in English would have attractions for international students and could benefit Zagreb Academy students (learning their subject vocabulary in English would, on graduation, increase their employability and opportunities for educational and professional mobility). Once again, Zagreb Academy must maintain and develop its leadership role in Croatian society and in the international world of art and education. Zagreb Academy has a powerful, deep and rigorous artistic voice – it must make this voice heard across the world, continuing to argue vociferously for the important place of art in human society.

6.6. Once again, the panel feels that the Zagreb Academy has only partly created adequate conditions for attracting teachers from abroad. Zagreb Academy needs to continue to increase Erasmus and bilateral agreements with international partner institutions. Zagreb Academy needs some web-pages in English, telling the Academy's story, telling about the opportunities for teaching and learning in Zagreb. Also, to start to deliver some course components, or some subjects in English would have attractions for international teachers and could benefit Zagreb Academy students (learning their subject vocabulary in English would, on graduation, increase their employability and opportunities for professional mobility). The panel believes that there is already a great story in Zagreb Academy, a story which is over one hundred years old. If that story is told, people will come, students and teachers, from all over the world, to learn from the Academy.

## **7. Resources, Administration, Space, Equipment and Finance**

7.4. Some of the safety protocols (the provision of dust masks, chemical storage, fume extraction, lighting, safety signage, fire extinguishers, and some basic safety training) at the Zagreb Academy are starting to conform to European standards. The Zagreb Academy main building apparently has no smoke or fire detection mechanism, no fire alarm and no safety or evacuation drills are ever conducted. The panel would encourage the Academy to develop a fire evacuation plan and to conduct fire drills at least once or twice a year (first year students especially will not know what to do or where to go in the event of a fire – they must be told, walked through the exit procedures and then be given a chance to experience a full evacuation of the building. Such an evacuation should be completed within minutes. Effective strategies for the evacuation of students, staff and visitors with disabilities must also be developed and regularly reviewed). The panel notes that wheelchair access and wheelchair toilets have recently been improved.

7.6. For an institution of its size and importance, the current library is very small. Though well-appointed, the library needs more space and more computers for students. A library is not just the provision of books. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it also requires reading rooms for students, the provision of computers, scanners and printers, access to modern research databases like JSTOR and Lynda, subscription to relevant e-journals and the purchase of e-books (which should also be accessible to Academy students whilst they're off-campus).

# **DETAILED ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE TO THE STANDARDS AND CRITERIA FOR RE-ACCREDITATION**

## ***1. Management of the Higher Education Institution and Quality Assurance***

1.1. ALU has adopted mission and vision and a clear proposal for a strategy in which they worked out all the objectives and monitoring mechanisms, and all involved and external stakeholders. It is recommended as soon as possible the adoption of a Strategy and compression of real and feasible action plan.

1.2. ALU has all relevant documents indicating thoughtful strategic objectives, which are elaborated in detail the proposed model to monitoring implementation. The organizational structure is clearly explained with a well-defined horizontal and vertical accountability. Strategic involvement of students and external stakeholders is recommended.

1.3. ALU, its strategic documents in line with the university and its documentation, contributes significantly to the strategic commitment of the university.

1.4. All study programmes are consistent with the mission and vision of the Academy. It is recommended that further steady and coordinated development of the existing study programmes, which must be quickly adapted to the needs of society, but do not lose from its original quality and mission.

1.5. The quality policy and quality assurance system is well-developed, but not yet sufficiently implemented at all levels of activity of the Academy. This applies in particular to the inclusion of students in all forms of activities to improve quality culture. It is also recommended that the Commission for quality management more strongly engages external stakeholders.

1.6. Although the Academy has all the necessary documentation, which clearly describes the procedures for improving the quality of even those relating to the monitoring of the quality of teaching and teachers, their implementation is still in its initial stage. It is necessary for the entire Academy to increase awareness of the need for daily improvement of teaching and monitoring its quality, especially teachers' skills.

1.7. Monitoring and improving the quality of artistic creation and research in the ALU is well-developed. The artistic research should be earlier and more strongly involve students.

1.8. ALU has the ethical standards for teaching and scientific activities with which they are familiar to all students, teachers and other stakeholders, and all procedures to monitor unethical behaviour are comparable with those of the renowned European institutions.

## **2. Study programmes**

2.1. Mechanisms for monitoring and improving the quality of study programmes are partly documented, efficient, regularly implemented and involve relevant stakeholders, particularly students.

However, their involvement in programme quality improvement and programme renewal has been insufficient. Student surveys are formal. As survey questionnaires are made by the university, the questions do not properly reflect peculiarities of art studies and specific needs of the students. There is no system that would analyse, summarize, assess and implement students' wants. The description of feedback has not been created and feedback system has not been implemented.

External stakeholders (employers, public and private sector and the civil society) have not been sufficiently involved in study quality monitoring and programme renewal. Communication with social partners is being carried out informally, yet, it does not ensure systematic cooperation and regular participation of social partners in study quality monitoring.

Study programmes have general programme descriptions, which include learning outcomes; additionally, there are descriptions of separate courses. The course descriptions clearly define the aims, annotations, forms and methods, types and criteria of evaluation; however, links between the programme and course results could be better highlighted.

Provided examples of diploma supplements encompass undertaken courses and acquired competencies.

Regular Alumni survey and result analysis has not been carried out.

There is positive evidence that informal communication with external stakeholders (employers, public and private sector and the civil society) and students is active.

It is not clear how study programme monitoring and renewal is going on, who is responsible for it and who participates in study quality processes.

The panel recommends that the Academy:

- more actively involves students in the development of study programme quality
- improve student survey questionnaire ensuring that survey results will be analysed, assessed and will influence the advancement of study quality
- will involve students' Council into the survey

- will formalize cooperation with external stakeholders (employers, public and private sector and the civil society) and involve them in monitoring and renewal of study programme quality
- involve assistant teachers in study programme quality renewal.

2.2. Since the enrolment quota is defined at the level of University, HEI is not required to regularly analyse the needs of society. However, passing rate and available resources are analysed and taken into account when determining the enrolment quota. There is no systematic cooperation with the Croatian Employment Service. Although the results of analyses do not significantly affect the enrolment quota, they are defined in accordance with the size of the institution, the availability of teaching and research resources, as well as the number of enrolled students and passing rate, in order to ensure sustainability.

2.3. The method for establishing quotas is documented, available resources and pass rates are analysed and taken into account when setting quotas.

Adequacy of enrolment quotas is followed with regard to the institutional size and availability of teaching and research resources, student pass rates and the number of previously enrolled students, in order to avoid an unsustainable increase.

In certain cases students who are enrolled have insufficient art study skills which are due to reduced teaching of Art fundamentals in gymnasiums. However, lecturers flexibly adjust teaching and learning programmes as well as methods to different level of first year students. It has been recommended for the Academy to take a mission to unite artistic society and persuade the government and Ministry of Science and Education that the fundamentals of art and creativity are vital for a contemporary person, particularly during ones formation period.

It has been recommended to increase the number of fine art lessons in primary and secondary schools, gymnasiums.

2.4. Learning outcomes are stated for the study programmes, module and course level and correspond to the stated EQF and CroQF level/comparable programmes at European institutions.

The link between course level learning outcomes and learning outcomes stated at the study programme level could be presented more precisely.

The difference between the learning outcomes of BA and MA study programme levels should be more obvious.

The learning outcomes present the minimal acceptable standard for passing. Learning outcomes include cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

2.5. Learning outcomes stated for the study programme, module and course level are based on regular assessments of student learning during the whole course of study.

Teachers at a study programme ensure that the assessment of student learning is in line with the defined learning outcomes, that the full range of learning is being assessed, and that the assessment is appropriate to the qualification level. During the evaluation

samples of graduate, master and doctoral theses, tests, projects, essays, were presented. Assessment of competences during the course of study is based on the learning outcomes stated on the study programme, module and course level. Assessment includes the whole spectrum (cognitive, affective, psychomotor) of the learning outcomes defined at each level. The assessment methods are reviewed and analysed. The assessment methods in BA and MA levels could be more versatile.

2.6. Student workload is assessed realistically and based on standards defined to calculate hours necessary to perform all student activities. The ECTS allocated to each course are based on an assessment of the student workload.

Workload indicates the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

Full-time student's workload is between 1500 to 1800 hours, and 1 ECTS credit equals 25 to 30 working hours. Norms are defined for calculating the time necessary to complete students' obligations in ECTS credits. The ECTS credits are attached to courses in line with those norms. ECTS credit allocation has been revised.

2.7. The teaching plan and programme list the method, or a combination of methods, of curriculum development used in developing the study programme. The institution has defined the criteria for assessing the content and quality of the study programme.

The content and the quality of study programmes are mostly comparable to those implemented at renowned European institutions.

The study programmes are developed in line with appropriate curriculum development methods.

The institution has defined criteria for assessing the content and the quality of the study programmes, and who and when performed the assessment. Seeking the content of study programmes to be based on the latest scientific/artistic discoveries, it has been recommended to actively join the activities of professional networks.

2.8. Teachers make use of various teaching methods, which include integrative and practical learning. The institutional teaching and learning methods are comparable to those of renowned European institutions.

The teaching plan and programme include a variety of teaching and learning methods adequate for university or professional study programmes. Integrative learning is encouraged via cooperative and individual learning methods. Cooperation with relevant professionals and practical learning are encouraged. Teaching peer-review system is in place. It has been recommended to employ more different teaching and learning methods in BA and MA levels.

2.9. The students and teachers have access to the most relevant and up-to-date sources of scientific and professional literature, and the amount of available sources is comparable to what is available at renowned European institutions.

Students and teachers have access to relevant and up-to-date learning resources (library, including journal databases, modern computers, etc.).

The institution allocates a part of its income, tuition fees, project funds etc. for that purpose. However, the library could be bigger, it is recommended to establish media resources library and it is necessary to expand journal databases and to equip it with more computer work stations.

Appropriate supplemental resources, including electronic journal databases, scientific literature and other sources that aid in acquisition of knowledge, are made available by the teachers.

2.10. Cooperation with partner organizations is efficient and includes stakeholders. Students' practical work is aimed at achieving learning outcomes. Data on its effectiveness is collected by students and partner organizations.

Employers were contacted to accept students and enable them to apply what they have learned (through e.g. student projects, internships, volunteering, etc.). It has been recommended to more often include such cooperation into study process and to assess it relevantly.

### **3. Students**

The panel concludes that most of students' needs are met. Some problems can be solved in a certain amount of time: improved student surveys, much more active student council, better preparation for job market (management class and careers counselling), improving student academic and creative writing skills, better equipment for some classes and, as the students themselves have said, better communication on every relation on the academy (students - assistants - teachers - management - programme development - programme improvement).

There are some things that are commendable: the students are content with their mobility options, with their mess hall at the HEI, conditions of working in classes, they are overall satisfied with HEI and most of them would enrol in the Academy again. There are happy students at the Academy of fine arts in Zagreb.

3.1. We found that the competencies of applicants evaluated upon admission are fully aligned with the demands and expectations of their future careers. Admission criteria are set high and are shown in tables 2.2 in the self-evaluation document, where we can see that HEI doesn't fill their admission quotas in order to maintain certain quality level.

3.2. HEI partly supports students in their extracurricular activities. Students have the ability to stay in their classes after official class is finished in order to work more. They are informed via e-mail and posters about various competitions and projects on which they can apply to. There are some excellent activities on which students can take part on

the teaching department at Jabukovac such as: 24 hours drawing, Cash&Carry, Days of open doors.

3.3. HEI does offer counselling and mentorship to each student. Most students use option of teacher counselling in order to improve their skills. However, there are not enough professional orientation services to ensure personal and professional development of students. The students are not introduced to the needs of job market, or encouraged and educated to be more oriented on self-employment. Psychological counselling is available to students by the University of Zagreb.

3.4. Knowledge assessment procedures and methods are established and published, but in practice it differs from teacher to teacher and their assistants. In some cases, the assistant is more familiar with the work of a student so it is important that their assessment is taken in consideration. Sometimes their assessments are ignored and sometimes are taken more seriously. Again, it differs from teacher to teacher. The feedback that student get from their teacher also varies from teacher to teacher which is linked with teacher's lecturing skills. Teachers' lecturing skills are in definite need of improvement. However, it should be considered that art is a specific field which is extremely hard to grade, even with clear learning outcomes. Student's possibility to appeal is included in the statute of HEI.

3.5. Since 2013/2014 there is an official alumni club. There is a database of the alumni and they are included in various formal and informal activities on the HEI.

3.6. The HEI has a problem with its web-site. Web-site should be a most important medium of informing the public about their work, but it is faulty in its design, which makes it difficult for the user to find the information he seeks.

3.7. It is clear that problems with the student council have existed for some time. The students blame themselves for their inertness, lack of interest and inactivity. It is their duty to involve themselves in the life of their academy and student council is their tool to improve their time spent on the HEI. Without the student's council they have no means of improving their student standard, no means of influencing important decisions which are in direct link with their education quality. The panel suggest that the new student council should write its own statute. Such a statute, which would be more specific to the students' interests and concerns, would allow the council to act more easily in their activities and would better represent the Academy's students.

The Academy needs more communication with and explanation to students. The students are most heard when there's a threatening problem, all the way up to appeals (when it's too late). Otherwise, the students are not expressing the problems – the Academy hears months later about problems which could have solved immediately. If the Academy's systems are more open for the students, the students will open up and will express their concerns.

3.8. The student surveys are serious problem due to, again, the specific nature of art academy. The existing surveys are inadequate for this HEI. There are many situations in which the student's anonymity is compromised. There should be a different way of students grading their teachers. Also the students don't get the results of their surveys as they should.

#### **4. Teachers**

4.1. The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified full-time teachers to ensure the quality and continuity of teaching and learning on all study programs. Qualifications of the artistic and scientific teaching staff are in line with strategic goals of the institution and adequately cover core disciplines.

The institution is taking care that retired professors are replaced with adequate number of assistants, and despite government restrictive policy for employment of the new teaching staff, they manage to maintain their quotas.

It is advisable to support assistants to work on their own projects and professional development. Academy should provide them with working space within the facility, since lots of them do not have their own studios, and their assistant salary does not allow them to rent one.

It could be useful, to both teachers and students, to organize more guest-professors, and international experts as lecturers.

4.2. The institution carries out the policy of growth and development of human resources, but is facing the national problem of prohibition of employment of the new teaching staff. Solution for this problem should be one of the main goals in the near future of all Croatian academies. Cooperation of institutions in this field is necessary and crucial if they want to be recognized in their specific structure and needs.

4.3. The institution takes into account the number of full-time teachers, maintaining the optimal ratio between students and full-time teachers. However, there are noticeable differences in professional engagement from one professor to another, and some of the assistants take too much burden in this process. It is advisable to full-time teachers not to forget that they are not just artists, but teachers with obligations to students of this academy.

4.4. The Zagreb Fine Arts Academy needs better developed policies for artistic-teaching staff that ensure their professional development, as needed to advance the institution's mission. It is also a challenge on a national level for all artistic-teaching staff and all art academies. The institution, in cooperation with other art academies, should organize more obligatory workshops, lectures and consultations for teachers. They

should be encouraged to recognize this need for development of quality of their teaching skills, as they recognize the need for their artistic professional upgrading.

The panel suggests that Academies and Universities across Croatia should collaborate on the collective development of teaching skills. The provision of structured Learning, Teaching and Assessment courses (perhaps at a Croatian national level) for teachers and assistant teachers would be an effective 'reward' for teachers and assistant teachers. Such a structured, collective approach would improve teaching and learning conditions for teachers, assistant teachers and (most importantly) students across Croatia.

Teachers should also be encouraged to enrol in more exchanges and international workshops, seminars etc. Experience of colleagues from abroad would help in teachers' personal development, as well as the development of future plans for the institution itself.

4.5. Policies governing the assignment of teachers' workload in distribution of effort that include teaching, research, mentorship and student consultations are not clear or completely developed.

Also, the distribution of efforts considering different administrative obligations of teaching staff such as participating in various boards, councils, commissions or writing ordinances, must be more equitable distributed. If they are not, it causes discontentment and burn-out syndrome in the ones that do more than the others. Also, it is advisable to include mechanisms of awarding extra efforts, and achievements of certain teachers.

4.6. HEI ensures that teaching and research activities of the employed teaching staff are not affected by their external commitments.

Most of the teaching staff external commitments are in the field of their artwork or scientific work, which is compatible with their academic careers. It is obligatory to report their professional external activities to HEI, and to organize the schedule according to their possibilities. Attention is paid that teaching and the students are not missed. If however some problem occurs, colleagues and students have functioning mechanisms to report such shortages. Impact of those external commitments of the teaching staff should be positive on quality and efficiency of their work on the parent institution.

## ***5. Scientific and professional activity***

The panel commends Zagreb Academy's determination to innovate, to involve the Academy and students in interdisciplinary research and projects to reassert the Academy's leadership role in Croatian society and in the international world of art and media. The panel is encouraged by Zagreb University's trust of and integration of the Academy in the development of University policies, strategies, innovations and new initiatives. The panel would encourage the Academy to consider the development of a separate Office responsible for Research and External Activity.

- 5.1. Zagreb Academy has a strategic research agenda and some exciting plans and prospects in the area of interdisciplinary research, but monitoring, evaluation, review and planning of such activity must in the future be accomplished through key performance indicators, preferably through indicators which will be intelligible to Zagreb University and the Ministry for Education, Arts and Science.
- 5.2. Zagreb Academy is already cooperating with other institutions and organisations, both in Croatia and abroad, as well as with other faculties, departments and courses within Zagreb University. The Academy is to be commended for this activity and should be encouraged to build on and expand its collaborative networks over the next five years.
- 5.3. For the number of research projects it is currently involved in, and for the number, scale and range of research projects it envisions over the next five years, Zagreb Academy has an adequate number of researchers. The panel accepts that Zagreb Academy already has cooperative networks, in Croatia and abroad (Across Europe, in the U.K. and U.S.A.) and these networks already result in benefits and opportunities for Academy and for students.
- 5.4. Zagreb Academy is publishing in some of the most prestigious, global publishing and exhibition arenas. Such world-class publication and exhibition must be developed and expanded and broadly publicised if Zagreb Academy is to maintain and enhance its leadership role and its voice in Croatian society and in the international world of art and education.
- 5.5. Zagreb Academy appears to have few effective mechanisms in place for recognising and encouraging the excellence of its employees, and no defined or structured reward system. Reward systems might (in time) include allowing teachers, but especially assistant teachers, to access Academy facilities (especially studio facilities) when they're not actually working at the Academy (after hours, at weekends and even during holidays). Other 'reward' systems might in time include supporting and encouraging the provision of, or access to, structured Learning, Teaching and Assessment courses (perhaps at a Croatian national level) for teachers and assistant teachers. Another 'reward' would be a clear and transparent system for assistant teacher professional progression within defined, transparent durations. A final 'reward' would be work to improve the hours and working conditions of assistant teachers, most or all of whom seem to be working at least double their contracted hours.
- 5.6. Zagreb Academy does publish and exhibit adequately. This activity must continue to be encouraged and developed over the next five years in support of the Academy's, and the University's mission and vision.
- 5.6. Zagreb Academy is to be commended for already being involved in an adequate number of domestic and international artistic, educational and even research projects.

5.8. Zagreb Academy is already involved in technology transfer and the transfer of knowledge with industry and the public sector, especially in areas like Art Education and Conservation. The panel would encourage the Academy to develop concise Academy guidelines and policies for such external activity – making it clear what work is appropriate and what is not appropriate, what the benefits and risks for the Academy, for external stakeholders and for student learning and (finally) clear, simple mechanisms for the handling of any revenue – again so that such (even modest) finance can be fed directly back into the Academy to benefit students. Also, the panel would encourage the Academy to start to continue to develop interdisciplinary and research projects with other Departments, Faculties, Chairs and Courses within Zagreb University and with Universities and scientific institutions across Croatia and abroad. Though a challenge to develop, such cooperation can present great benefits in terms of mutual understanding and professional and institutional development.

5.9. Zagreb Academy is already involved in technology transfer and the transfer of knowledge with industry and the public sector, especially in areas like Art Education and Conservation. Once again, the panel would encourage the Academy to develop concise, clear and simple Academy guidelines and policies for such external activity (see 5.8. above).

5.10. The panel note that Zagreb Academy is currently the only Academy in Croatia to offer PhD courses. Such high-level academic, research and interdisciplinary activity must be encouraged, developed and enhanced over the coming years if Zagreb Academy is to maintain and develop its leadership role in Croatian society and in the international world of art and education. Zagreb Academy has a powerful, deep and rigorous artistic voice – it must make this voice heard across the world, continuing to argue vociferously for the important place of art in human society.

## **6. *International cooperation and mobility***

6.1. The Zagreb Academy does enable and facilitate the mobility of students from other higher education institutions.

6.2. Zagreb Academy students have opportunities to complete part of their study programme abroad. Zagreb Academy should be encouraged to continuously increase the number of agreements (both Erasmus and bilateral) with international partner institutions, thereby progressively increasing the number of mobility opportunities for Academy students and for students from abroad.

6.3. The panel considers that Zagreb Academy does encourage the international cooperation and mobility of its teachers. Over the next five years, such teacher mobility

must closely fit with the strategic activities of the Academy and University. At the moment, there doesn't yet seem to be clear analysis of teachers' international experience. How does the international experience feed back into the activities of the Academy, the mission and vision, the development and enhancement of study programmes and the enhancement of student learning?

6.4. Zagreb Academy is a member of a number of international educational and artistic bodies and so has opportunities to share research findings and experiences with similar professionals and institutions around the world. A continued expansion of such collaborative and cooperative activity must be encouraged over the next five years.

6.5. The Zagreb Academy has only partly created adequate conditions for attracting students from abroad. Zagreb Academy needs to continue to increase Erasmus and bilateral agreements with international partner institutions. Zagreb Academy needs some web presence in English, telling the Academy's story, telling about the exciting opportunities for study in Zagreb. Also, to start to deliver some course components, or some subjects in English would have attractions for international students and could benefit Zagreb Academy students (learning their subject vocabulary in English would, on graduation, increase their employability and opportunities for educational and professional mobility). Once again, Zagreb Academy must maintain and develop its leadership role in Croatian society and in the international world of art and education. Zagreb Academy has a powerful, deep and rigorous artistic voice - it must make this voice heard across the world, continuing to argue vociferously for the important place of art in human society.

6.6. Once again, the panel feels that the Zagreb Academy has only partly created adequate conditions for attracting teachers from abroad. Zagreb Academy needs to continue to increase Erasmus and bilateral agreements with international partner institutions. Zagreb Academy needs some web pages in English, telling the Academy's story, telling about the opportunities for teaching and learning in Zagreb. Also, to start to deliver some course components, or some subjects in English would have attractions for international teachers and could benefit Zagreb Academy students (learning their subject vocabulary in English would, on graduation, increase their employability and opportunities for professional mobility). The panel believes that there is already a great story in Zagreb Academy, a story which is over one hundred years old. If that story is told, people will come, students and teachers, from all over the world, to learn from the Academy.

6.7. The Zagreb Academy has developed many forms of inter-institutional cooperation through Erasmus and other European projects, bilateral agreements and joint programmes. The panel would encourage the continuation and development of such cooperation over the next five years.

## **7. Resources: administration, space, equipment and finances**

7.1. The Zagreb Academy is dispersed in a collection of buildings, some of which are in dire need of upgrading, modernisation and renovation. The work space provided is generally good, though students seem to have few or no study spaces or places to meet and Wi-Fi access seems to be problematic. The situation in the New Media and Animation building is terrible, with falling ceilings, dead pigeons in lofts etc. The panel accepts that the University and the Academy have ambitious plans for building and campus development and eventual centralisation around the main Academy building. Such single-campus centralisation will, in time reduce running costs for the Academy and will reduce travel costs and disruption for staff and students. For an institution of its size and importance, the current Academy library is very small. Though well-appointed, the library needs more space and more computers for students, along with access to modern search databases like JSTOR.

7.2. The panel agrees that, for an Art institution of such size, Zagreb Academy appears to have an adequate ratio of teaching and non-teaching staff. However, some Vice Deans seem to be overloaded with responsibilities and work.

7.3. The panel would encourage the continued development of policies which would ensure the professional development of non-teaching staff in line with the institution's mission.

7.4. Some of the safety protocols (the provision of dust masks, chemical storage, fume extraction, lighting, safety signage, fire extinguishers, and some basic safety training) at the Zagreb Academy are starting to conform with European standards. The Zagreb Academy main building apparently has no smoke or fire detection mechanism, no fire alarm and no safety or evacuation drills are ever conducted. The panel would encourage the Academy to develop a fire evacuation plan and to conduct fire drills at least once or twice a year (first year students especially will not know what to do or where to go in the event of a fire – they must be told, walked through the exit procedures and then be given a chance to experience a full evacuation of the building. Such an evacuation should be completed within minutes. Effective strategies for the evacuation of students, staff and visitors with disabilities must also be developed and regularly reviewed). The panel notes that wheelchair access and wheelchair toilets have recently been improved.

7.5. The provision of modern equipment (tools, kilns, extraction equipment) seems to be in line with the mission of the Academy. Computer equipment and Wi-Fi are in short supply. In equivalent institutions in Europe, it would be usual to provide more common computer spaces for students, where written assignments could be researched and worked on.

7.6. For an institution of its size and importance, the current library is very small. Though well-appointed, the library needs more space and more computers for students. A library is not just the provision of books. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it also requires reading rooms for students, the provision of computers, scanners and printers, access to modern research databases like JSTOR and Lynda, subscription to relevant e-journals and the purchase of e-books (which should also be accessible to Academy students whilst they're off-campus).

7.7. Students are all able to complete their studies at the Academy. Sources of funding and all conditions related to funding seem transparent and do not limit institutional autonomy. The panel accepts that many of the funding difficulties experienced by the Zagreb Academy are governed by external and national constraints.

7.8. The panel notes that the Zagreb Academy does use its own funds to raise the quality of teaching and artistic activity in line with the institutional and University mission. This activity must continue, especially where central funding is effectively capped and effective policies for such external activity and research should be developed. Independent external activity is an effective mechanism for equalising and compensating for funding difficulties. The panel also notes that Zagreb University has recently created an office for the development of teaching skills. This development is to be encouraged. The panel suggests that Academies and Universities across Croatia should collaborate on the collective development of teaching skills.