Pursuant to the Article 35, Paragraph 1, Point 1 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (Official Gazette 151/22) and Article 54, Paragraph 2 of the Institutions Act (Official Gazette 76/93, 29/97, 47/99, 35/08, 27/19, 151/22), with the prior approval of the Ministry of Science and Education, the Management Board of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, at its 75th session held on 25 January 2023, hereby adopts the following

STATUTE

OF THE AGENCY FOR SCIENCE AND HIGHER EDUCATION

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Object of standardization

Article 1

The Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter: the Statute) shall govern the activity, internal organization and organization of work and other matters of relevance to the performance of activities of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency).

Legal status

Article 2

(1) The Agency has the status of a legal entity with public authority and is entered in the court register.

(2) The Agency shall independently and autonomously perform activities within the scope of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science, the Institutions Act, the Act on Recognition and Validation of Foreign Education Qualifications, the Act on Higher Education and Science, the Act on the Croatian Qualifications Framework, the Ordinance on the Register of the Croatian Qualifications Framework, respecting the European standards and guidelines and international practices in the field of quality assurance in higher education and science.

(3) The founder of the Agency is the Republic of Croatia.

(4) The founding rights over the Agency are exercised on behalf of the founder by the ministry responsible for science and education (hereinafter: the Ministry).

(5) The Agency shall periodically undergo an international external evaluation process carried out by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), on the basis of which it shall be registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).
(6) Any form of influence on the work of the Agency, especially in a way that might jeopardize its autonomy and independence, shall be prohibited.

Title

Article 3

(1) The title of the Agency shall be: Agencija za znanost i visoko obrazovanje.

(2) The abbreviated title of the Agency shall be: AZVO.

(3) The name of the Agency in English shall be: Agency for Science and Higher Education.

(4) The abbreviated title of the Agency in English shall be: ASHE.

Seat

Article 4

The seat of the Agency shall be in Zagreb.

Seal, stamp and memorandum

Article 5

(1) The Agency shall have round seals with the diameter of 25 mm, 38 mm and 18 mm, with an inscription ‘Agency for Science and Higher Education’ at the upper part, and ‘Zagreb’ at the lower part of its rim.

(2) Documents issued by the Agency on the basis of public authorization shall be stamped with a round-shaped seal containing the coat of arms of the Republic of Croatia in the centre, the inscription ‘The Republic of Croatia’ at the upper part, and ‘The Agency for Science and Higher Education’ at the lower part of its rim. The seal shall be designed in sizes of 38 mm, 25 mm, and 18 mm.

(3) If the Agency uses more than one seal identical in diameter, each of these seals shall be specified by an ordinal number above the coat of arms of the Republic of Croatia, and for the seals without the coat of arms, the ordinal number shall be placed below the word ‘Zagreb’.

(4) In its administrative work, the Agency shall use a rectangular stamp containing the name of the Agency and a space for noting the record number and date of receipt of the document, for the purpose of regular operations of the Agency.

(5) In its official correspondence, the Agency shall use a business paper – a memorandum containing the title and seat of the Agency, which may contain the logo and other information relevant to the functioning of the Agency.
Usage of the seal and stamps

Article 6

(1) Ordering, usage and replacement of seals bearing the coat of arms of the Republic of Croatia shall be conducted in the manner proscribed by law.

(2) The Director of the Agency or a person authorized by them shall be responsible for keeping and correctly using the seal and stamp.

Signature and initials system

Article 7

(1) When a legal document is prepared, it is first initialled by the person who had prepared it, then it is initialled by the second person who reviewed it, and then by a superior, in accordance with the established procedure for the flow of documents, after which the act is sent to the director or another person authorized for signature.

(2) The Director of the Agency and the person authorized by them, as well as the presidents of the Agency’s bodies shall authenticate the legal documents in an electronic form with a qualified electronic signature of the qualified trust service provider.

Scope of the Agency

Article 8

(1) The Agency shall perform the following activities:

a) conducting external evaluation procedures – initial accreditation, re-accreditation, one-off evaluation, and thematic evaluation of a higher education institution or a scientific institute, as well as initial accreditation of studies;

b) conducting the evaluation of implementation of programme agreements;

c) conducting the recognition and validation of foreign higher education qualifications;

d) encouraging the acquisition and expansion of knowledge and research on the quality system of higher education, scientific and artistic activity in the Republic of Croatia, and provides training for members of professional panels in external evaluation procedures;

e) collecting and processing data about the system of higher education, scientific and artistic activities;

f) providing information on requirements for enrolment in higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia, and consolidating the data on whether the enrolment requirements were met by the applicants at higher education institutions;

g) inclusion in and liaising with the international associations and networks dealing with
quality assurance in the system of higher education and scientific activities;

h) conducting the validation procedures for higher education institutions and scientific institutes abroad;

i) performing other activities in accordance with other regulations.

(2) In conducting its activities, the Agency shall execute the tasks referred to in Paragraph (1), points (a), (b), (c), and (e) of this article as a public authority and shall adopt Quality Standards for Higher Education and Scientific Activity (hereinafter: Quality Standards), ordinals and decisions.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY

Assessment and evaluation of quality and effectiveness of work

Article 9

(1) The external quality assessment system shall include the evaluation and assessment of quality and work efficiency at a higher education institution or a scientific institute, based on objective and clear criteria laid down by the European and international quality assurance standards in the field of higher education and scientific activity, the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science, and the regulations adopted on the basis thereof.

(2) The external quality evaluation system shall be implemented through quality evaluation in the procedures of initial accreditation, re-accreditation, one-off evaluation, and thematic evaluation of a higher education institution or a scientific institute, as well as through the process of initial accreditation of study programmes.

Data collection and processing

Article 10

(1) The Agency shall collect and process data related to the state and efficiency of higher education system and scientific activities, necessary to establish the standards and criteria for evaluation and assessment in the evaluation processes, and for strategic decision-making for the development of higher education and scientific activities. The Agency submits the collected data, analyses and statistics to the Ministry, and coordinates the records it keeps with the Ministry, on the basis of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the Act on Higher Education and Scientific Activity.

(2) The Agency systematically collects and processes data on monitoring students’ employability at a national level in order to improve higher education and to further connect it to the labour market.

(3) The data collection and processing procedure shall be governed by the Agency through a general act in accordance with the rules governing the protection of personal data and data confidentiality.
Recognition and validation of foreign education qualifications

Article 11

(1) The Agency shall establish the National ENIC/NARIC Office, an information centre for academic mobility, recognition and validation of foreign higher education qualifications, which is a part of the European Network of National Information Centres on academic mobility and recognition.

(2) The scope of activities of the National ENIC/NARIC Office shall include the following:
- validation of foreign higher education qualifications for access to the labour market in the Republic of Croatia;
- providing information about foreign higher education systems;
- providing information about the national educational system and national higher education qualifications;
- other tasks in accordance with special regulations.

Article 12

(1) The Agency shall set up a Central Registration Office, which shall:

a) implement the enrolment process for all higher education institutions for all types and levels of study;

b) compile data on meeting the requirements for enrolment into higher education institutions;

c) develop a ranking scale for credited results of the students enrolling to higher education institutions;

d) provide information on requirements for enrolment to higher education institutions;

e) conduct the recognition of foreign educational qualifications for the purpose of education continuation;

f) perform other tasks in accordance with special regulations.

(2) In order to harmonise data about student performance on the state graduation (matura), the Central Registration Office shall cooperate with the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education and Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Croatia.

(3) Representatives of the universities and one representative of the Croatian Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences are allowed to contribute to the work of the Central Application Office.
III. BODIES OF THE AGENCY AND THEIR JURISDICTION

Bodies of the Agency

Article 13

The bodies of the Agency shall be: the Management Board, the Director of the Agency, the Accreditation Council, the Complaints Committee and the Follow-up Committee.

Management Board

Article 14

(1) The Agency shall be managed by the Management Board consisting of the President and eight members.

(2) The President and the members of the Management Board shall be appointed for a four-year term.

(3) The President and seven members of the Management Board shall be appointed and dismissed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, as follows:

- one member shall be proposed by the National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technological Development;

- three members proposed by the Rectors’ Conference of the Republic of Croatia;

- two members proposed by the Croatian Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences;

(4) One member shall be appointed and dismissed by the council of workers of the Agency as a representative of the Agency’s employees, in accordance with the general regulation governing employment relationships.

(5) At the latest, three months before the expiry of the term of office of the President and of the members of the Management Board, the Agency shall issue an invitation to the competent authorities referred to in Paragraph 3 of this article to propose candidates. The Agency shall, through the Ministry, refer the collected proposals from the said competent authorities to the Government of the Republic of Croatia for appointment.

Article 15

(1) The President or a member of the Management Board may terminate their term of office before the expiry of the time referred to in Article 13, Paragraph 2 of this Statute, if they request the dismissal by their own accord, or on the grounds of serious breach of duty laid down in the Statute of the Agency, in the event of failure to perform their duties in an orderly manner for more than six months, in the event of permanent loss of capacity, and in the event of a non-suspended conviction for a criminal offence rendering them unsuitable to perform
their duties.

(2) The reasoned decision on serious misconduct of the President of the Management Board and a member of the Management Board referred to in Paragraph 1 of this article shall be adopted by the Management Board by a majority of all members of the Management Board.

(3) The Agency shall inform the Government of the Republic of Croatia of the existence of grounds for dismissal of the President and/or a member of the Management Board before the expiry of the period for which they have been appointed.

Article 16

(1) If, for any reason, the number of members of the Management Board is reduced (apart from the member of the Management Board chosen from the ranks of employees), the Management Board shall inform the founder about the necessity to appoint a new member within eight days from the day of the announcement.

(2) The term of office of the newly appointed member of the Management Board shall last until the expiration of the term of office of the formerly appointed member.

Article 17

(1) The Management Board of the Agency shall:
- adopt the Statute of the Agency following a proposal from the Director, and after obtaining the approval of the ministry responsible for higher education and science;
- appoint and dismiss the Director;
- appoint and dismiss the Deputy Director and Assistant Directors of the Agency, following a proposal of the Director;
- appoint and dismiss the members of the Accreditation Council;
- adopt the annual work programme of the Agency;
- supervise the implementation of the annual work programme of the Agency;
- adopt the annual financial plan of the Agency;
- adopt the final financial report of the Agency;
- determine the services provided by the Agency for compensation, and the compensation for the rendered service;
- adopt the annual work programme of the Accreditation Council;
- adopt the annual work report of the Accreditation Council;
- adopt the annual activity report of the Agency;
- adopt the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and Establishment Plan of the Agency;
- adopt the Rules of Procedure on the activities of the Management Board;
- adopt other acts of general acts within the scope of the Agency’s work;
- sign an employment contract with the Director of the Agency, in which case the Management Board is represented by its President;
- decide, as a second instance body, on the rights of employees concerning their employment and work;
- undertake other tasks in accordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science, and the Statute of the Agency.

**Article 18**

(1) The Management Board shall operate at sessions.

(2) Sessions of the Management Board shall be convened as necessary, and at least three times per year.

(3) Sessions of the Management Board shall be convened by the President of the Management Board.

(4) A proposal to convene a session of the Management Board may be submitted by each member of the Management Board, or by the Director of the Agency. The President of the Management Board shall decide on the received proposal.

(5) The Management Board shall be presided over by the President of the Management Board, and if they are not present or are prevented from attending, by a member of the Management Board authorised to do so by the President.

**Article 19**

(1) At its sessions, the Management Board shall decide on matters falling within its jurisdiction. The session may be direct, remote, or electronic.

(2) The decisions and conclusions of the Management Board shall be brought by a majority vote of all the members of the Management Board.

(3) After the vote, the President of the Management Board shall determine the result of voting.

(4) Minutes of the sessions of the Management Board shall be recorded, while decisions and conclusions adopted by e-mail are noted in the minutes.
Article 20

Matters related to the presiding of meetings of the Management Board, minutes, publication of decisions, and other matters relevant to the functioning of the Management Board shall be governed in particular by the Rules of Procedure of the Management Board.

Article 21

The Management Board may, when appropriate, constitute professional bodies (commissions) to perform tasks falling within its scope.

**Director of the Agency**

Article 22

The Director shall be the head of the Agency who:

- organises and directs the work of the Agency;
- represents and acts on behalf of the Agency;
- proposes the adoption or amendment of the Statute to the Management Board;
- adopts the Decision on the form and content of the permit to operate for the activities of a higher education institution and a scientific institute;
- adopts an annual re-accreditation plan for higher education institutions and scientific institutes, following a proposal of the Accreditation Council;
- adopts other general acts within the scope of activities of the Agency;
- autonomously takes legal action in the name of the Agency and on behalf of it, up to the amount determined in Article 23, Paragraph 2 of this Statute;
- submits a proposal of the Deputy Director and Assistant Directors of the Agency to the Management Board;
- submits a proposal of the Agency’s annual work programme to the Management Board;
- submits a proposal of the Agency’s annual financial plan to the Management Board;
- submits an annual report on the Agency’s activities to the Management Board, without any decision-making power;
- performs tasks in accordance with the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science, and the Statute of the Agency.
Article 23

(1) The Director may, within the limits of their authority, authorise another person within or outside the Agency to represent the Agency in legal transactions.

(2) The Director of the Agency shall, without the consent of the Management Board, decide on the acquisition, encumbrance or disposal of the Agency’s assets in cases where the individual value does not exceed € 50,000.

(3) The Director of the Agency shall, with the prior consent of the Management Board, decide on the acquisition, encumbrance and disposal of real estate and other assets of the Agency in cases where the individual asset value ranges from € 50,000 to € 130,000.

(4) The acquisition, encumbrance or disposal of real estate and other assets of the Agency whose individual value exceeds the amount referred to in Paragraph 3 of this article shall require the prior consent of the founder.

Article 24

The Director may not, without special authorisation of the Management Board, act as a counterparty and sign contracts with the Agency in their own name and on their own behalf, in their own name and on behalf of other persons, nor in the name of other persons and on behalf of other persons.

Article 25

(1) To be appointed Director of the Agency, a candidate must:

- have a doctorate degree and be appointed as an associate professor or hold a hierarchically superior scientific-teaching rank;

- have at least 4 years of professional experience in managerial and organisational duties in the fields of higher education and science;

- have a strong track record of work in higher education, science and quality assurance in higher education and science in an international context;

- excellent knowledge of spoken and written English.

(2) The Director shall be appointed and dismissed by the Management Board of the Agency.

(3) The term of office of the Director shall be four years, and a person may be reappointed as the Director of the Agency once.

Article 26

(1) The Director of the Agency shall be appointed following an open call.
(2) The decision to announce the open call shall be taken by the Management Board no later than one month before the expiration of the current term of office.

(3) The competition is advertised in the *Official Gazette (Narodne Novine)*, on the Agency’s website, and via the Croatian Employment Services.

(4) The content of the call and the deadline for applying shall comply with the Labour Act, the Institutions Act, the Basic Collective Agreement for Public Services, and other special regulations governing these matters.

(5) The Management Board shall reserve the right not to appoint the Director following the open call.

(6) In the event referred to in Paragraph 5 of this article, the Management Board shall decide to cancel the open call.

**Article 27**

(1) The call announces requirements for the appointment of the Director, the term of office of the Director, the deadline for submitting applications, with an indication ‘for the call for the appointment of a director – do not open’, the evidence that the conditions are met, submitted by the applicant in the original or a certified copy, an instruction for candidates claiming priority under specific regulations.

(2) In addition to the application for the call and the documents required by the call, the candidate must submit a work programme for the term of office.

**Article 28**

(1) Applications for the competition will be filed unopened.

(2) The Management Board shall appoint a three-member panel consisting of the members of the Management Board.

(3) The panel referred to in Paragraph 2 of this article shall open and review all the received applications, determine whether the applications are timely and complete, draw up a record, and refer it to the Management Board for further proceedings.

(4) The Management Board shall conduct an interview with all the candidates who submit a timely and complete application.

(5) The Management Board shall adopt a decision on appointment of the Director.

**Article 29**

(1) If no candidates apply for the call, or none of the candidates are selected, or the call is cancelled in the event described in Article 26, Paragraph 5, the call shall be repeated.
(2) In the events referred to in Paragraph 1 of this article, the Management Board shall appoint an Acting Director, with a term of office no longer than one year.

(3) If the term of office of the Director of the Agency expires before the procedure of appointment of a new Director has been completed, the Management Board shall appoint an Acting Director until a new Director is appointed, with a term of office no longer than one year.

Article 30

(1) The Management Board shall be required to dismiss the Director before expiry of the term of office for which they have been appointed if it is established that the conditions for dismissal described in the Law on Institutions are met.

(2) In the event of dismissal of the Director, the Management Board shall appoint an Acting Director.

(3) In the event referred to in Paragraph 2 of this article, the Management Board shall, within 30 days of the date of appointment of the Acting Director, publish a call for appointment of the Director.

Accreditation Council

Article 31

(1) The Accreditation Council consists of thirteen members, namely:

- six members from the academic ranks of full professors or tenured professors;

- two members from the academic ranks of scientific advisors or tenured scientific advisors;

- two members from the academic ranks of professor of professional studies or a tenured professor of professional studies;

- one member from the ranks of full-time students of university studies;

- one member from the ranks of full-time students of professional studies;

- one member from the economic sector.

(2) Six members of the Accreditation Council are appointed by the Management Board from the ranks of full professors or tenured full professors, two members from the ranks of scientific advisors or tenured scientific advisors, one member from the ranks of full-time students of university studies, and one from the ranks of full-time students of professional studies.

(3) A public call for nominations of candidates for members of the Accreditation Council referred to in Paragraph 2 of this article shall be made by the Agency.
(4) Proposals for candidates referred to in Paragraph 2 of this article shall be submitted by the National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technological Development, the Rectors’ Conference, as well as higher education institutions and scientific institutes, on the basis of a public call referred to in Paragraph 3 of this article.

(5) Two members of the Accreditation Council shall be appointed by the Management Board from the ranks of professor of professional studies or a tenured professor of professional studies, on a proposal from the Croatian Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences.

(6) One member of the Accreditation Council shall be appointed by the Management Board from the economic sector, on a proposal from representative employer organisations.

(7) A member of the Accreditation Council cannot be the Rector, the Vice-Rector, the Dean, the Vice-Dean, the director of a scientific institute, the deputy nor assistant director of a scientific institute, the founder nor head of the founder of a higher education institution, nor a scientific institute, nor the owner of a private higher education institution, nor the head nor owner of a legal body that is the founder of a private higher education institution.

(8) During the appointment of members of the Accreditation Council, the competencies of each candidate regarding the international, European and national quality assurance system in higher education and scientific activity shall be considered.

(9) The term of office of the Accreditation Council members shall be four years, and the same persons may be re-appointed as members of the Accreditation Council once.

(10) The members of the Accreditation Council shall elect the President of the Accreditation Council among themselves.

(11) The Director of the Agency shall participate in the activities of the Accreditation Council, with no decision-making rights.

Article 32

Accreditation Council shall perform the following tasks:

- adopt the Quality Standards,
- adopt the quality assessment criteria and indicators in external evaluation procedures;
- propose the annual implementation plan for the re-accreditation of higher education institutions and scientific institutes;
- appoint the members of expert panels in external evaluation procedures;
- appoint the members of the Follow-up Committee;
- decide on the exclusion of a member of an expert panel in external evaluation procedures;
- adopt a reasoned proposal or a reasoned opinion in evaluation procedures;
- propose the annual work programme of the Accreditation Council to the Management
Board;

- submit the annual report on the work of the Accreditation Council to the Management Board;

- arrange the system and manner of work of bodies of the Accreditation Council;

- adopt the Ordinance on the Implementation of the Re-accreditation Procedure, on a proposal from the Director;

- adopt the Ordinance on the Implementation of the One-off Evaluation Procedure, on a proposal from the Director;

- adopt the Ordinance on the Implementation of the Thematic Evaluation Procedure, on a proposal from the Director;

- adopt the Ordinance on the Implementation of Procedure for Accreditation of Joint Studies, on a proposal from the Director;

- adopt the Ordinance on Evaluations Abroad;

- adopt the Instructions for Conducting the Procedure of Initial Accreditation of Studies;

- adopt the Instructions for Conducting the Procedure of Initial Accreditation of a Higher Education Institution;

- adopt the Instructions for Conducting the Procedure of Initial Accreditation of a Scientific Institute;

- propose the annual re-accreditation plan;

- adopt Rules of Procedure of the Accreditation Council;

- decide on other professional matters following a request of the Management Board and the Director of the Agency.

Article 33

(1) The Accreditation Council makes decisions at sessions.

(2) The session shall be convened and presided by the President of the Accreditation Council.

(3) The Accreditation Council shall make decisions by a majority vote of all the members.

(4) The manner of work and election of the President of the Accreditation Council shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Accreditation Council, with the prior consent of the Management Board.
Complaints Committee

Article 34

(1) The Complaints Committee shall be the expert body of the Agency which shall decide on the objection raised in the external evaluation procedures.

(2) The Complaints Committee shall have seven members, at least two of whom shall be of the legal profession, one member shall be a professor of professional studies, and one member shall be a full-time student.

(3) Members of the Complaints Committee shall be appointed by the National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technological Development from the ranks of full professors or tenured full professors, and from the ranks of students.

(4) The members of the Complaints Committee shall be appointed for four-year terms of office, and the same person may be reappointed once.

(5) The selection of the members of the Complaints Committee shall particularly be concentrated on the competences of each candidate regarding the international, European and national quality assurance systems in higher education and scientific activity.

(6) A member of the Complaints Committee cannot be a Rector, Vice-Rector, Dean, Vice-Dean, director of a scientific institute, deputy nor assistant director of a scientific institute, nor the founder nor head of a founder of a higher education institution nor a scientific institute.

(7) The members of the Complaints Committee shall elect the President of the Complaints Committee from among themselves.

Article 35

(1) The Complaints Committee shall operate in sessions. The sessions shall be convened and presided by the President of the Complaints Committee.

(2) The Complaints Committee shall adopt decisions at its sessions by a majority vote of all members.

(3) The detailed working arrangements of the Complaints Committee shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Complaints Committee with the prior consent of the Management Board.

Follow-up Committee

Article 36

(1) The Follow-up Committee shall be the expert body of the Agency.

(2) The Follow-up Committee shall be composed of seven members appointed by the Accreditation Council, namely:
- one member, who is also the President of the Follow-up Committee, shall be from the ranks of the Accreditation Council;

- six members of the Follow-up Committee following a public call launched by the Agency, five of whom shall be from the ranks of teachers or scientists, and one member from the ranks of full-time students.

(3) The members of the Follow-up Committee shall be appointed for four years, and the same person may be reappointed once.

(4) During the selection and appointment of the members of the Follow-up Committee, the competences of each candidate regarding international, European, and national quality assurance systems in higher education and scientific activity shall particularly be regarded.

Article 37

(1) The Follow-up Committee shall operate in sessions.

(2) The session shall be convened and presided by the President of the Follow-up Committee.

(3) The Follow-up Committee shall make decisions at its sessions by a majority vote of all members.

(4) The detailed working arrangements of the Follow-up Committee shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure adopted by the Follow-up Committee with the prior consent of the Management Board.

Article 38

Depending on the type of external evaluation procedure, the Follow-up Committee shall:

- analyse and evaluate action plans adopted by a higher education institution or scientific organisation, following an external evaluation process;

- analyse and evaluate the achievement of activities foreseen in the action plan of a higher education institution or scientific organisation;

- adopt opinions, recommendations, or proposals in the follow-up process, and address them to the Accreditation Council;

- provide professional and advisory assistance to the Accreditation Council on matters related to the follow-up of work of a higher education institution or scientific institute;

- decide on other matters related to the follow-up of work of a higher education institution or scientific institute, following a request of the Accreditation Council.
IV. INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF THE AGENCY

Article 39

The legal employment status of the Agency’s workers, the procedure for exercising their rights and obligations under the employment relationship, as well as their earnings, shall be subject to the Labour Act, regulations related to public service employees, and the general acts of the Agency.

Article 40

(1) The Director shall have a deputy.

(2) The Deputy Director shall be appointed and dismissed by the Management Board, on a proposal from the Director of the Agency, following an open call, and the term of office of the Deputy Director shall be the same as that of the Director.

(3) A person who fulfils the following criteria may be appointed Deputy Director:

- at least a master’s degree in university studies or integrated undergraduate and graduate university studies in the relevant profession;

- at least 4 years of professional experience at the level of education referred to in the previous subparagraph of this paragraph;

- outstanding results in the area of quality assurance in higher education and science;

- excellent knowledge of spoken and written English.

Article 41

(1) The Deputy Director may be dismissed before the expiry of the period for which they were appointed.

(2) The Management Board shall dismiss the Deputy Director:

- if they request the dismissal by themselves in accordance with the employment contract;

- if such reasons arise that result in termination of their employment, under specific or general regulations;

- if they fail to comply with the Agency’s regulations or general acts of the Agency, or they unfoundedly fail to implement the decisions of the Agency’s bodies, or act contrary to them;

- if, through their negligent or improper work, they cause major damage to the Agency, or ignore or negligently perform their duties in such a way as to cause, or may cause, major disruptions to performance of activities of the Agency.

(3) The dismissed person may challenge the dismissal decision through legal action in the
competent court within 30 days of receipt of the dismissal decision, if they consider that there were no grounds for dismissal referred to in Paragraph 2 of this article, or that there was an infringement during the adoption of the discharge decision, which significantly affected the outcome of the procedure.

Article 42

(1) The Director shall have Assistant Directors.

(2) Assistant Directors shall assist the Director in the organisation and management of professional activities of the Agency, direct the work of the management, and perform other tasks in accordance with the general acts of the Agency and upon authorisation of the Director.

(3) Assistant Directors, from the ranks of the Agency’s workers, shall be appointed and dismissed by the Management Board, following a proposal from the Director of the Agency, and the term of office of the Assistant Director shall be the same as that of the Director.

(4) A person who fulfils the following conditions may be appointed as Assistant Director:

- at least a master’s degree in university studies or integrated undergraduate and graduate university studies in the relevant profession;

- at least 4 years of professional experience at the level of education referred to in the first subparagraph of this paragraph, in the relevant activities within the Agency’s scope of work;

- spoken and written knowledge of English.

(5) The following organisational units shall be constituted in the Agency: directorates, sectors, services, departments, sections, and offices.

Article 43

(1) For performance of the professional tasks referred to in Article 8. of the Statute, the following directorates shall be constituted within the Agency:

- **The Directorate for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science** shall perform tasks related to the external evaluation procedures, assessment of implementation of programme agreements, as well as evaluations abroad, and it shall collect and process data on the higher education system, scientific and artistic activity, as well as research activities on the higher education quality system, the tasks of inclusion in international associations, and other professional tasks related to quality assurance and improvement, described in more detail in the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and Establishment Plan.

- **The Directorate for Evaluation of Qualifications** shall perform the tasks of assessment of foreign higher education qualifications, the validation of qualification standards and the standards of sets of learning outcomes, tasks related to support of sectoral councils, and other professional tasks described in more detail in the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and
Establishment Plan.

- **The Central Applications Office** (organised at a level of a directorate) shall perform tasks related to recognition of educational qualifications and management of a central application procedure, monitoring the employability of students, and other professional tasks described in more detail in the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and Establishment Plan.

- **The Directorate for General, Legal and Economic Activities** shall perform all general/common, legal, financial, accounting, and personnel actions necessary for the Agency’s operation and work, as well as other professional tasks described in more detail in the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and Establishment Plan.

(2) Lower-level organisational units shall be set up within the directorates.

(3) Detailed internal organisation of the Agency shall be governed by the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and Establishment Plan of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, adopted by the Management Board, following a proposal from the Director of the Agency.

### V. PUBLIC TRANSPARENCY AND DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

**Public Transparency**

**Article 44**

(1) The Agency shall ensure transparency of its functioning through regular public communication and reporting to other institutions about the Agency’s work and activities.

(2) Data and information on the Agency’s work and activities shall be provided by the Director of the Agency or by a person designated by them.

**Data confidentiality**

**Article 45**

(1) The term data confidentiality shall refer to confidential data and documents related to the activities of the Agency proclaimed by the Director or the Management Board, in accordance with special regulations, the communication of which to an unauthorised person could be detrimental to the work, interests and reputation of the Agency.

(2) Members of the Agency’s bodies and expert panels, and all employees of the Agency who in any way become aware of the information considered to be secret shall be bound by professional confidentiality, and the obligation of confidentiality shall continue after the termination of their employment at the Agency.

(3) The confidentiality of information, the level of classification, the access to classified information, its protection and other matters relevant to confidentiality of the Agency’s data shall be governed by the Ordinance on Data Confidentiality.
VI. FINANCING OF THE AGENCY

Sources of funding and financial operations

Article 46

(1) The Agency shall be financed from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia, from assigned revenue, and from the Agency’s own revenue.

(2) The Management Board shall adopt the Agency’s financial plan which shall determine the amount of revenue and expenditure for one financial year.

(3) The Management Board shall adopt the Agency’s final financial report.

(4) The Agency shall use its resources, including the profits generated by its activities, solely to perform and develop its activities.

(5) The assigned revenue referred to in Paragraph 1 of this article shall consist of revenue resulting from implementation of the procedure of validation and recognition of foreign educational qualifications, and resources from the funds and programmes of the European Union, which the Agency shall spend on material expenditures and costs of services incurred in the process of validation and recognition of foreign educational qualifications.

(6) The Agency’s own revenue referred to in Paragraph 1 of this article shall be managed independently in accordance with the financial plan and the Ordinance on the Criteria and Manner of Using Own Revenue.

VII. BYLAWS, GENERAL ACTS AND INDIVIDUAL ACTS OF THE AGENCY

Types of acts

Article 47

The bylaws and general acts of the Agency shall be the Statute, ordinances, quality standards, rules of procedure, and decisions regulating particular issues related to the organisation and activities of the Agency.

Article 48

In accordance with the law and the Statute, the bylaws and general acts of the Agency shall, within the scope of their competence, be adopted by the Management Board, the Director, the Accreditation Council, the Complaints Committee and the Follow-up Committee, concerning:

1. compliance with legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions;
2. operation in accordance with the provisions of this Statute;
3. regulation of relations within the Agency.
Article 49

Individual acts governing particular matters and employees’ rights shall be adopted by the Management Board or by the Director, in accordance with the Statute and other general legal acts.

Publication and entry into force of this Statute

Article 50

The bylaws shall be published on the website of the Agency, and enter into force on the day of their publication.

The Interpretation of the Statute and other acts

Article 51

(1) In the event of ambiguity and inconsistency in the application of provisions of this Statute and other legal acts, the interpretation shall be provided by the Management Board of the Agency.

(2) The matters not set out in this Statute shall be regulated by provisions of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science, the Institutions Act, the Act on Recognition and Validation of Foreign Education Qualifications, the Act on Higher Education and Scientific Activity, the Act on the Croatian Qualifications Framework, the Ordinance on the Register of the Croatian Qualifications Framework, and other regulations governing the matters within the scope of work of the Agency.

Amendments and Annexes to the Statute

Article 52

Amendments and annexes to the Statute shall be adopted by the Management Board in the manner of and in accordance with the procedure laid down for their adoption.

VIII. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

Deadline for adoption of bylaws

Article 53

The Agency shall harmonise and/or adopt regulatory and general acts in accordance with this Statute within six months of the date of its entry into force, except for those acts the period of which is regulated by a special law.
Article 54

After the entry into force of this Statute and the Ordinance on Internal Organisation and Establishment Plan, the employment relationship of each worker of the Agency shall be aligned with those general acts within three months.

Entry into force of this Statute

Article 55

This Statute shall enter into force on the date of its publication on the website of the Agency, after obtaining the consent of the ministry responsible for science and education.

Upon the entry into force of this Statute, the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education – consolidated on 29 July 2013 (CLASS: 003-05/13-01/0001, REG. NO.: 355-01-13-11) shall cease to be in force.

Zagreb, 31 January 2023

CLASS: 003-05/13-01/0001
REG. NO.: 355-01-23-29

President of the Management Board
prof. dr. sc. Dijana Vican

The Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education was published on the Agency’s website on 1 February 2023 and has entered into force on 2 February 2023.

The Statute was translated on 31 March 2023.