

# Development of Quality Culture – ASHE Role

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agency for science and higher education croatia

ENQA

eqar

# Overview



- The context of higher education and science in Croatia
- ASHE role
- Challenges





Shared values, beliefs, expectations and commitments towards quality

# Introduction of Bologna system in Croatia



- 2001 Croatia signed the Bologna Declaration - EHEA
- Impetus - wish to improve the education structure of the population, reform the system and join the EU
- Major changes: binary system, three-cycle system, ECTS, QA
- MSES - Education Sector Development Plan 2005-2010
- 2005 – Accreditation of Study Programmes according to Bologna process; first Bologna generation of students enrolled
- 2006 – ESG were adopted in Croatia
- 2006 – Establishment of QA Units at HEIs; introduce change, shared understanding of its purposes

# QA in Croatian Higher Education



Ministry of Science, Education and Sports

“Education Sector Development Plan 2005–2010”  
(2005) objective:

*‘A quality assurance system will be introduced into the higher education system of the Republic of Croatia by 2006.’*

CARDS 2003 project



## Other achievements in the reform of system



- Development of CQF
- Implementation of State Matura
- Establishment of new HEIs (around 30 new HEIs, mostly private colleges and public polytechnics)
- Development of QA system (institutional, national level)



- Established in 2005
- 2009 – redefinition of its role (Quality Assurance Act) and strengthening of its independence
- ASHE is a legal entity that autonomously and independently performs activities defined by Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act, Act on Recognition of Foreign Educational Qualifications and Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education
- Unifies various activities related to the science and higher education system

# Activities



1. Quality Assurance Role
2. Collecting and analysing data on the systems of science and higher education
3. National ENIC/NARIC Office
4. Central Applications Office
5. Support to work of various bodies
6. International cooperation





# ASHE membership in international networks



- Full member of INQAAHE since 2006
- Full member of ENQA since 2011
- Listed in EQAR
- Full member of CEENQA (former CEEN) since 2008
- Member of OECD IMHE Forum since 2008
- ECA member since 2012
- APQN – observer's status since 2012

International good practice – but implemented in the national context (“no recipe”)



# QA role



Initial accreditation

Re-accreditation

Thematic evaluation

Audit



# ASHE QA activities

ASHE activities	Self - assessment	Peer review	Site visit	Publication of a report	Follow-up procedure
Reaccreditation	+	+	+	+	+
Thematic evaluation	+	+	Possible, not compulsory	+	Not formally, but a negative outcome is followed up by reaccreditation
Audit	+	+	+	+	+

# QA procedures in line with ESG



- ✓ Periodic external review
- ✓ Standards and criteria (key areas)
- ✓ Accreditation Commissions/Councils
- ✓ Self-review
- ✓ Trainings
- ✓ Peer-reviews
- ✓ Site-visit
- ✓ Report
- ✓ Follow-up
- ✓ Decisions
- ✓ Outcome of external evaluations

# External QA in Croatia



- First cycle, at the beginning
- 1 national agency (ASHE)
- Public and private institutions
- International peer-reviews
- Students in peer-reviews
- Representatives of economic sector in peer-reviews
- Public disclosure
- Ministry issues licences
- ASHE issues audit certificate



# Initial accreditation



- New HEIs and/or new study programmes
- New scientific organisations established and/or financed by the state
- Fulfilment of **minimum criteria** is checked

# Re-accreditation



- 5-year cycles
- All public and private HEIs by 2015/2016
- All scientific organisations established and/or financed by the state by 2015/2016



# Re-accreditation of HEIs



## All HEIs by 2015/2016

- 2010/2011: re-accreditation of **20** HEIs in the field of economics and business
- 2011/2012: re-accreditation of **32** HEIs in the field of technical sciences
- 2012/2013: re-accreditation of **9** HEIs in the field of biotechnical sciences + 14 private HEIs





# Re-accreditation - Scope



# MINIMUM CRITERIA



- Prescribed by Ordinance of Accreditation of HE
- **teacher/student ratio** 1:30
- **spatial** criteria 1 student per 1,25 m<sup>2</sup>
- 50/33 percent of study programmes conducted by **teachers employed** at the institution/own teachers

# MINIMUM CRITERIA



## For HE institutions registered in the Register of Scientific Organizations

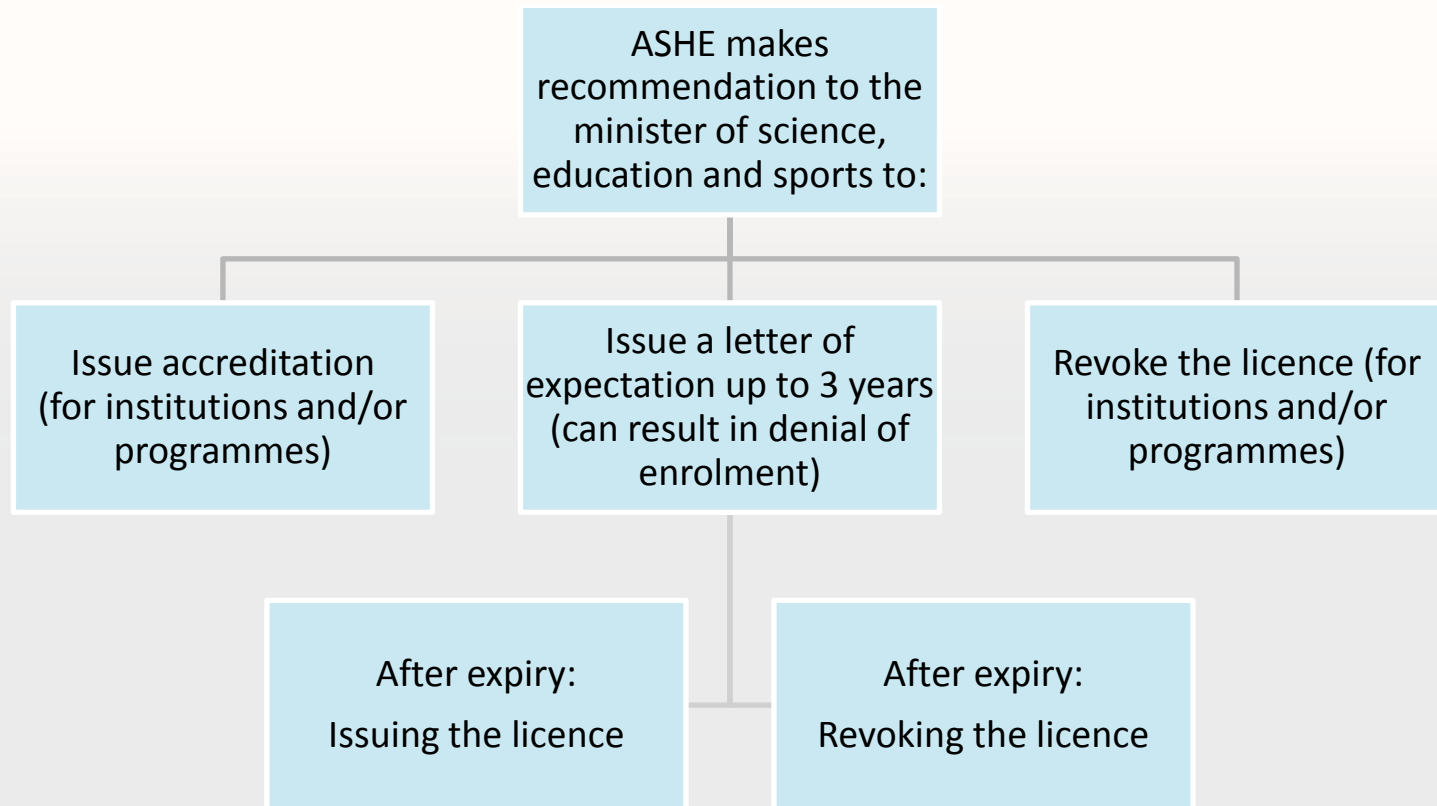
- Adopted long-term **strategic programme of research** in the area in which the teaching activity is performed
- Adequate **number and qualifications of employed researchers** (appointed into scientific position or with an adequate number of scientific papers published)
- Proof of adequate **facilities** and **equipment** for proposed research
- Proof of necessary **funds** secured for proposed research

# QUALITY GRADE



- Each standard consists of various criteria
- Fulfilment of each criteria must be described with following levels of implementation:
  - Not implemented
  - Starting phase of implementation
  - Partly implemented
  - Mostly implemented
  - Fully implemented

# Re-accreditation-outcomes





## 2010/2012 - Outcomes

- Accreditation granted to **30** HEIs
- Letter of expectation issued to **16** HEIs and **5** study programmes
- Accreditation recommendation to revoke the licence for **4** HEIs/ appeal procedure underway
- Revoke licence to 11 dislocated study programmes



- National Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (2009)
  - *ASHE carries out the procedure of QA audit - assessing the degree of development and efficiency of internal quality assurance system of HEIs.*
- 21 audits carried out from 2010-2012 (universities, faculties, academies; polytechnics, colleges,) 8 certificates.

# Internal Audit



- QA system of HEIs as a whole
- Scope → degree of development and efficiency of the internal QA system of HEIs
- Linked explicitly to ESG standards part I
- Integrated QA system (ISO+ESG)



# HEIs QA systems



- 150 QA units are established at HEIs
- 126 QA Ordinances
- 57 QA Manuals
- 108 students members of QA units
- 35 representatives from business sector are members of QA units
- 38 Internal audits (collective experience, using existing experience, follow up, feed back to strategic management, driver for a change)
- Enhancement of quality culture

Source: ASHE QA Questionnaire, 2012



# Introducing internal QA



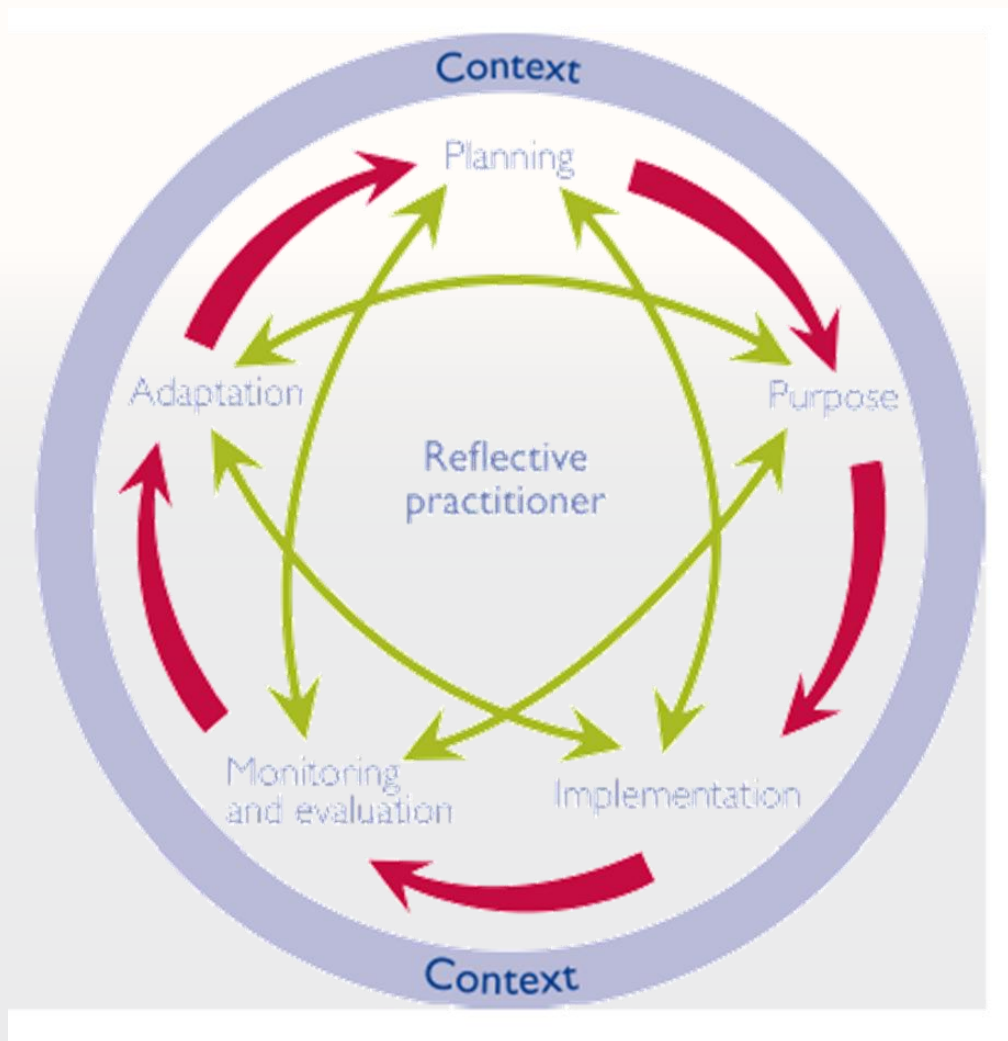
- Setting up system, introducing performance indicators, strategic planning
- Aims to explore the role of Institutional research to support institutional decision making
- Facilitate evidence based management for continuous improvement
- New ways to approach their tasks

# Introducing internal QA



- Provides control and consistency across the organisation
- Increases transparency and enhances feedback culture
- Feedback reporting for stakeholders
- Saves time and reduces cost by allowing departments to share services and reduce manual constraints

# Quality cycle



# Role of Students in QA system



- Internal QA system at HEIs:
  - Part of governance body at HEI (Senate, Faculty board, SU, ...)
  - Part of advisory body (QA Council, Board, Centre)
  - Participate in evaluation of QA system/procedures at
    - Institutional level
    - Programme level
- External QA system:
  - Part of decision body (ASHE Accreditation Council)
  - Part of expert's panel (audit, re-accreditation)

# Strengths - Good practice



- ASHE is a member of ENQA and EQAR
- External quality assurance procedures in line with the ESG, as well as European and international best practices
- Public call for experts (peer reviews)
- Foreign reviewers in the panels
- Business representatives and students included in the Management Board, Accreditation Council, and review panels
- NGO representative member of the Accreditation Council
- Reports and decisions are public

# Strengths – Good practice



- Fair and equitable treatment of all stakeholders (public, private, new or traditional HEIs)
- Involvement of all stakeholders in implementing changes and carrying out activities
- Public discussions with all stakeholders
- Public forum – ASHE website
- ASHE documents are public (standards, criteria & procedures)
- The Ministry clearly committed to independence of the national agency

# Strengths - Good practice



- Surveys
- Confidentiality Statement – ASHE staff
- Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement (everybody participating in external QA procedures)
- Accreditation Council Ethical Code
- No gifts from HEIs, no paid lunches or dinners from HEIs (members of peer-reviews) – written procedure
- ASHE annual report is public



# Challenges and Future



- Further development of external QA procedures in line with the implementation of National Qualification Framework
- International good practice – but implemented in the national context (“no recipe”)
- Shift from "inputs" to "outputs" /more focus on learning outcomes and employment of graduates
- Thematic reviews of "burning issues" in Croatian HE: doctoral education, learning outcomes...
- Support to evidence-based policy making: focus on data collection

# Challenges and Future



- Help our HEIs to enhance their position in EHEA and worldwide (mobility, cooperation with business sector)
- Continuing education of employees/stakeholders
- Further support to development of quality culture: workshops, conferences, reports
- Network of national QA units
- Strengthen regional and international cooperation
- ESG revision

# Thank you



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Thank you for your attention!

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