



CLASS: 003-08/10-02/0007

REG.NO. 355-02-03-15-0006

## **Meta-evaluation of external quality assurance audits in 2011**

ZAGREB, September 2013



## Introduction

In line with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (OG 45/09), the Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency or ASHE) carries out procedure of external quality assurance audit of higher education institutions (hereinafter: audit) in 5-year cycles. First cycle (ESG 2.7.) started in 2010. On the basis of data that has been collected on QA systems at higher education institutions, ASHE Accreditation Council decided that all polytechnics and public universities are to be evaluated in the first audit cycle. The external QA audit will additionally be carried out at those higher education institutions that show interest and/or meet the preconditions for the successful implementation of the procedure.

In accordance with the ESG 2.8, which calls for agencies to analyse data collected during external evaluations - on existing conditions, trends, good practices and areas where improvements are needed - ASHE conducted an analysis of audit procedures carried out in 2011. Data collected and analyses carried out form the basis for decision and policy making in terms of quality development of external QA audit procedure, higher education institutions, and higher education system in general.

## Methodology of external QA audit procedure

Every year the Agency surveys higher education institutions and collects information on their QA systems. Based on data collected, the Agency proposes an annual plan of external audits for the following year. In selecting higher education institutions that will be subject to external QA audit, ASHE selects those that meet the prerequisites for a successful implementation of the procedure.

The annual Plan of external QA audits for 2011 (CLASS: 003-08/10-02/0007, REG.NO.: 355-01-10-0002), included the following institutions:

1. College of Agriculture in Križevci
2. University of Rijeka Faculty of Engineering
3. University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts
4. University of Zagreb School of Medicine
5. University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics
6. University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing
7. University College for Applied Computer Engineering in Zagreb
8. University of Dubrovnik
9. Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod

Quality assurance systems (hereinafter: QAS) at HEIs were evaluated in line with ESG 1.1 - 1.7., Ordinance on External Audit of Quality Assurance Systems at Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Croatia (CLASS:003-08/10-02/0004, REG.NO.:355-02-03-10-2) and Criteria for assessing the level of development and efficiency of QA systems at higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia, as defined by the Manual for Audit of Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Croatia (2nd edition, CLASS:003-08/10-02/0004, REG.NO.:355-01-10-5).



Criteria are:

- Preliminary phase - preliminary quality assurance activities are underway (agreements have been made at the level of HEI, documentation is being drafted)
- Initial phase - Quality assurance system is established but not fully functional (basic documents are drafted and adopted)
- Developed phase - Quality assurance system is functional, internal audit is implemented and system is improved on the basis of internal audit results
- Advanced phase - Quality assurance system is continuously developed on the basis of results of both internal and external audit.

All documents and criteria are published on ASHE website:

<https://www.azvo.hr/en/evaluations/evaluations-in-higher-education/audit-of-higher-education-institution> and are consistently used in all external QA audit procedures (ESG 2.2. and 2.3). Since the documents that define the external QA audit procedure have been tested through a pilot-project, there was no need to additionally revise/amend them.

The external quality assurance procedure includes the following elements: review of HEI's submitted documentation (the base of which is the adopted internal QA audit report); site-visit of the Audit Committee; drafting of the external QA audit report with recommendations for improvement (ESG 2.5.); the follow-up phase resulting in an analysis of the efficiency of activities carried out (ESG 2.6.); drafting of the final audit report, including a final assessment of the degree of development and efficiency of the evaluated QAS and recommendations for the following period, until the next external audit. The final audit report is adopted by ASHE Accreditation Council and published on Agency website.

Quality assurance systems that have met the set criteria and provided evidence of being functional, efficient and fit for purpose, in accordance with national and ESG standards, are awarded with a 5-year certificate by ASHE Accreditation Council, based on expert panel recommendation.

### **Seminars and workshops for HEIs**

Investing in development of human resources is one of priorities; one of the main tasks of the Agency is to carry out trainings of all the stakeholders in this procedure (HEIs and audit panels), and to continuously develop and improve the external QA audit procedure based on experience and data collected.

As part of preparations for audit procedure, on 12 November 2010 a workshop was organised for the representatives of HEIs (rectors, deans, representatives of QA units) included in the annual Plan of audits for 2011. Workshop was attended by 19 representatives of HEIs, who were informed on the procedure, standards, criteria, good national and international practice, and were provided with guidelines for preparing the necessary audit documentation. Participants assessed the quality of this workshop with an average grade of 4.1/5. The possibility to participate in discussion was rated the highest (4.6). The participants emphasised the issue of



employing a full-time QA manager that would be responsible for a continuous development of QA system at HEI.

### **Training of audit panel members**

External QA audits are carried out by panels of trained and certified audit experts, selected from ASHE audit expert database.

Credibility and quality of QA audit directly depends on the selection of competent panel members and their training. The Agency periodically organises training of new audit experts. After completing the training, the participants are awarded with a certificate and are included in ASHE audit expert database, from which panel members are selected. Certified audit experts are required to participate in audit workshops organised by the Agency.

Five-member audit panels comprise 1 Croatian and 1 foreign representative of HEIs, 1 student representative, 1 representative of the industry/business sector and 1 representative of ASHE. The experience so far shows that such a composition of panel provides for an objective implementation of the procedure, encourages synergy and stimulates discussion - both among the panel members and stakeholders at HEIs. It should also be noted that decisions regarding the final assessment of HEI's QAS, as well as recommendations for its improvement, are reached by consensus. Quality of audit committee's work also depends on the selection of committee chair. Role and responsibilities of committee chair are demanding; since the chair coordinates the work of panel members, adequate leadership skills are required. In addition to training, important factor for the overall success of audit procedure is the experience of appointed committee chairs.

Assessment of audit committee's work is carried out by satisfaction survey of committee members and HEI that was subject to external QA audit procedure (see: Tables 2 and 3).

### **External QA audit in 2011**

After the workshop for representatives of HEIs that were included in 2011 Plan of external QA audits, HEIs appointed their coordinators that coordinated the procedure together with ASHE coordinators and audit panel members.

The procedures were carried out within the agreed timescale, except for University of Zagreb School of Medicine and Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod. At the request of University of Zagreb School of Medicine, a follow-up period was extended for this institutions, and the procedure ended in January 2013. In February 2013, audit procedure of the Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod was completed as well. At the request of the Audit Committee, Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod drafted an amended follow-up report and submitted it to the Committee.

With this procedure, all external QA audits that were included in the Plan for 2011 were completed.



All the procedures were carried out without appeals. Final audit reports were adopted by the Accreditation Council and published on ASHE website (full version in Croatian and a summary in English). In accordance with recommendations included in final reports, Accreditation Council issued decisions on certification or re-audit.

Final assessments of the evaluated QAS are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1 Efficiency assessment of the evaluated QAS at HEIs included in Plan of external QA audits for 2011*

Higher education institution	ESG 1.1.	ESG 1.2.1.	ESG 1.2.2.	ESG 1.3.	ESG 1.4.	ESG 1.5.	ESG 1.6.	ESG 1.7.	Overall assessment of QA system:
University of Dubrovnik	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE CERTIFICATE
University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE CERTIFICATE
College of Agriculture in Križevci	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE CERTIFICATE
University of Zagreb Faculty of Organization and Informatics	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE CERTIFICATE
University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE
University of Rijeka Faculty of Engineering	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE CERTIFICATE
Algebra University College for Applied Computer Engineering	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	-	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE CERTIFICATE
University of Zagreb School of Medicine	DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE	DEVELOPED/ADVANCED PHASE CERTIFICATE
Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod	INITIAL PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	-	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE	DEVELOPED PHASE	INITIAL/DEVELOPED PHASE



Seven out of nine HEI QAS audited in 2011 were assessed as developed and therefore meeting the requirements for a certificate, which was awarded to them.

The efficiency of the internal quality assurance systema at the University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts and Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod were assessed with a transitory grade - between the initial and the developed phase - and Accreditation Council adopted panels' recommendation for a re-audit of these institutions after 18 months.

## Efficiency analysis of the evaluated quality assurance systems at higher education institutions

Evaluated HEIs recognize the need for systematic development of quality culture, in line with the ESG, and principle that HEIs are primarily responsible for quality of all their activities. Their positive attitude towards external evaluations should also be noted, as well as their understanding that a combination of internal and external evaluations contributes to an objective assessment of quality assurance system and all the activities at a HEI. Some of the institutions have had additional experience in similar procedures. Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod and Algebra University College for Applied Computer Engineering participated in NVAO pilot-project „Institutional audits of Croatian higher education institutes for professional education“. Faculty of Organization and Informatics in Varaždin, University of Zagreb, participated in CARDS 2003 pilot-project "Furtherance of the Agency for Science and Higher Education in its QA Role and the Development of a Supporting Information System".

Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, University of Zagreb, put additional effort in improving the quality of their study programmes by having them accredited with **ASIIN** (*Akkreditierungsagentur für Studiengänge der Ingenieurwissenschaften, der Informatik, der Naturwissenschaften und der Mathematik e.V.*), German accreditation agency specialised in accrediting degree programmes from the fields of engineering, informatics/computer science, natural sciences and mathematics.

Findings show that ESG 1.1. represents the greatest challenge for the evaluated institutions. One should, however, take into account the historical development of Croatian higher education institutions and their QAS. Croatian HEIs do not have a long tradition of developing and implementing documents related to ESG 1.1., which form the basis on which a functional quality assurance system is built. The majority of institutions have only recently adopted their first quality policies, strategies, guidelines and QA manuals. The fact that the majority of these documents were not made publicly available also had an impact on the level of their implementation. A lack of monitoring and document revisions was also noted.

External QA audits prompted HEIs to consider the ways in which they implement quality policies in their daily activities, and whether there is a need for their revision.

Some evaluated institutions did not have strategic documents with defined strategic goals. One of the main reasons for this, cited by HEIs, was the lack of a national strategy for higher education and science. Situation is even more complex in the case of audited university constituents, i.e. faculties. Since the faculty strategy should refer to both university and national strategy, managements of HEIs waited for the adoption of over-arching strategies before developing their own (as was the case with the evaluated constituents of the University of Zagreb). It was also noted that even those institutions that have adopted and published their strategic documents rarely have annual operating plans, or monitoring and analysing thereof. Moreover, the adoption of strategic documents is often linked to the mandate of new management; this should be avoided as the medium-term strategic documents cover five-year periods. Considering that the Republic of Croatia opted for a knowledge-based strategic development model, higher education institutions are expected to assume the role of proactive drivers of economic growth and social development. External QA audits that have been carried out prompted those HEIs that had no strategic documents to draft and adopt them, and those that had no developed monitoring mechanisms to establish and implement them.



Lack of experience is also noticeable in the implementation of internal audit procedures at HEIs, which should be regulated by specific regulations or QA manuals. At the evaluated HEIs, this procedure commonly referred to external QA audit, as described in the ASHE Audit Manual.

HEIs' internal audit procedures rarely define or include training of audit panel members or the follow-up phase. This was the main reason behind an observed lack of final analyses for the activities carried out, or analyses of QAS in general. In accordance with the audit committees' recommendations, corrective measures were taken by the institutions.

Opportunities for improvement were identified in structuring and writing of internal audit reports, which was amended in the new editions of QA manuals.

Approving, monitoring and periodical revision of programmes is closely related to the monitoring of relevant national legislation, and adhering to minimum quality indicators as prerequisites for further quality improvement of study programmes.

Analyses of study programmes are based on collected data and monitoring of the quality of accredited study programmes, in line with the defined indicators. Conducted self-evaluations of study programmes provided basis for their review and improvement; for example, a need for revision of learning outcomes and redistribution of ECTS credits was identified at some HEIs.

Students are included in QAS activities, but their role - as well as the role of alumni and external stakeholders - need to be strengthened, particularly in revisions of study programmes and learning outcomes. Students are included in the evaluation of teaching, although they are not always informed of the results.

Resources related to student standard meet the basic needs of students on the majority of evaluated HEIs, but in view of strategic plan development and plans for increasing the mobility, further targeted investments are needed.

Quality of teaching staff is formally verified through the procedure of appointment to teaching-scientific grades, in line with the national legislation. Quality assessment of teachers' work is taken into consideration within this procedure, in the form of student survey results. Other forms of evaluation, such as peer-review and teacher self-evaluation, are present only at some HEIs. At most HEIs, best teachers are given recognition.

Opportunities for continuous improvement of teaching competencies are rare. There is also no systematic planning in that respect. When planning employment policies and human resources development, special attention should be paid to professional needs of junior teaching staff, with regard to development of their teaching competencies and skills.

Efforts should be made to improve the international exchange of teachers, students and administrative staff; opportunities are available, but there is a lack of information and motivation.

Recommendation given to all HEIs was to choose similar institutions in Croatia and abroad, for the purpose of comparative analyses and the exchange of good practice.

Higher education institutions mostly publish their basic QAS documents, but should additionally intensify their efforts regarding collection, processing, analysing and publishing of data. Analyses should be made in accordance with the ESG, be publicly available and used in development planning. It was also noted that after being adopted, QAS documents are rarely



revised. Higher education institutions were recommended to regularly revise and update their documentation on the basis of internal QA audit results, analyses and feedback from all the QAS stakeholders.

Highest grades were given for ESG 1.7. - publishing relevant, unbiased information on study programmes and levels.

HEIs were recommended to publish information on their comparative advantages and employability of their graduates.

One recommendation was also to align Croatian and English versions of their web sites.

## Quality analysis of external QA audits in 2011

Table 2 shows the results of the questionnaire on the effectiveness of external QA audits in 2011 that was sent to panel members.

Analysis of the panel members' feedback (a survey that was carried out as a form of self-evaluation and evaluation of implemented procedures) shows that all procedures have been carried out in line with the adopted documents, standards and criteria (average grade of 4.8). Panel members assessed their own performance and efficiency with the average grade of 4.7. The overall procedure was assessed with a high grade of 4.9. Since the purpose of this survey is to improve the procedure based on experience, collected information and evidence, panel members' suggestions for improvement were particularly important. Although they assessed their own performance in audit procedures with the average grade of 4.7, panel members suggested that some improvements should be made in drafting of audit reports. Since writing of reports is a challenging part of the procedure, and external QA audit produces two reports - first after the site visit, and second after the follow-up phase - it is important for all panel members to equally participate in their drafting, in order to evenly distribute the workload and complete the procedure within the given deadlines. This is particularly important with larger institutions and non-integrated universities. It has been established thus far that panel chair and ASHE representative are the two most active members of an audit committee when it comes to preparing the audit report. Special attention will be paid in future trainings of audit experts to the role and responsibilities of all the panel members in drafting of audit reports.

Assessing the work of panel members in audit procedures so far, we can point out their accuracy, active participation in analysing the submitted documentation, ability to analyse data and provide suggestions for improvement, their teamwork, objectivity, affirmative approach to objects of evaluation, external evaluation procedure and the overall building of quality culture, and their openness to self-evaluation, learning and self-improvement.

Table 3 shows the results of the questionnaires sent to HEIs that were audited in 2011.

Questionnaires that are used for collecting feedback on satisfaction with the procedure are sent to higher education institutions at the end of audit procedure, upon the adoption of the final audit report. It has been noted that, when assessing the audit procedure, majority of stakeholders from HEIs focus only on site-visit of the audit committee.

Since external QA audit is a year-long procedure, with a 6 months follow-up phase, some stakeholders found it difficult to assess their satisfaction so long after the site-visit. In future seminars for the representatives of HEIs, special attention needs to be paid to the issue of collecting feedback and its use in development of audit procedure, as well as the added value of the overall procedure on internal quality culture at HEI. This primarily relates to the development of human resources and understanding the rights, duties, roles and responsibilities in actively contributing to the development of higher education institution, its profile and visibility.

Survey analysis showed that the question of applicability of standards and criteria is particularly challenging to HEIs, receiving an average grade of 3.8. It can be concluded that HEI stakeholders find it easier to apply quantitative indicators than refer to general standards such as ESG. The recommendation is to work with higher education institution in discussing and understanding individual ESG standards.



Cooperation with ASHE coordinator and communications between audit committee and QAS stakeholders were assessed with the highest average grade of 4.4.

**Table 2 - Results of the satisfaction surveys for audit committees in 2011 external QA audits**

Higher education institution	University of Dubrovnik	FER	University of Rijeka Faculty of Engineering	VGUK	APURI	Algebra	School of Medicine, University of Zagreb	Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod	FOI	Average grade
Clarity of the QA audit procedure	5.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	4.8	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.6	<b>4.8</b>
Clarity of QA audit standards and criteria	5.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	4.8	4.4	4.8	4.7	4.6	<b>4.8</b>
Applicability of QA audit standards and criteria	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.6	4.4	5.0	4.5	5.0	<b>4.8</b>
Clarity of guidelines for preparing audit documentation	4.8	5.0	4.3	4.8	4.8	4.6	5.0	5.0	4.6	<b>4.8</b>
Usefulness of training for QA audit procedure	5.0	5.0	4.3	5.0	5.0	4.8	5.0	4.5	5.0	<b>4.8</b>
Cooperation with coordinator: a) Before the site-visit	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.6	<b>4.9</b>
b) During the procedure	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	<b>5.0</b>
Overall assessment of the procedure	4.8	5.0	4.6	5.0	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.6	<b>4.9</b>
Quality of panel's work at the 1st panel meeting	4.8	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.0	<b>4.8</b>
Quality of panel's work at the 2nd panel meeting	4.8	5.0	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.5	4.0	<b>4.8</b>
Audit was conducted in accordance with the ASHE QA Manual, ASHE QA Ordinance and ESG	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.5	4.6	<b>4.9</b>
All the stages of audit procedure were carried out in accordance with planned goals and adopted methods of work	5.0	5.0	4.6	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.6	<b>4.9</b>
Satisfaction with own performance	4.8	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.2	4.6	<b>4.7</b>
<b>Average grade</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.8</b>

FER - University of Zagreb Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing

VGUK - College of Agriculture in Križevci

APURI - University of Rijeka Academy of Applied Arts

FOI - Faculty of Organization and Informatics in Varaždin, University of Zagreb

Algebra - Algebra University College for Applied Computer Engineering

**Table 3 - Results of the satisfaction surveys for evaluated HEIs in 2011 external QA audits**

Higher education institution	University of Dubrovnik	FER	Faculty of Engineering in Rijeka	VGUK	APURI	Algebra	School of Medicine, Zagreb	Polytechnic of Slavonski Brod	FOI	Average grade
Clarity of the procedure	5.0	3.2	4.3	5.0	4.5	4.8	4.2	4.2	3.6	<b>4.3</b>
Clarity of the standards and criteria	5.0	3.6	4.1	5.0	4.2	4.5	4.0	3.7	3.3	<b>4.2</b>
Applicability of the standards and criteria	4.5	3.2	4.2	4.0	3.5	4.3	3.8	3.3	3.6	<b>3.8</b>
Clarity of guidelines for preparing audit documentation	5.0	3.4	3.6	5.0	4.1	4.6	4.0	3.7	3.0	<b>4.0</b>
Overall assessment of the procedure	5.0	3.2	3.6	5.0	3.9	4.6	4.3	3.5	3.0	<b>4.0</b>
Cooperation with ASHE coordinator during the procedure	5.0	4.2	4.2	5.0	4.5	4.8	4.5	3.7	4.0	<b>4.4</b>
HEI had an opportunity to adequately present its quality assurance system	4.5	3.6	4.5	5.0	4.1	4.8	4.7	4.2	3.6	<b>4.3</b>
Communication between audit panel and QAS stakeholders	4.5	4.2	4.2	5.0	4.1	4.8	4.8	4	3.6	<b>4.4</b>
Audit Committee was:										
a) Competent	5.0	4.2	3.6	5.0	4.2	5.0	4.6	3.3	3.3	<b>4.2</b>
b) Objective	5.0	4.0	3.6	5.0	4.3	4.8	4.7	3.2	3.0	<b>4.2</b>
c) Well-informed	5.0	4.2	4.3	5.0	4.0	4.5	4.5	3.7	2.6	<b>4.2</b>
d) Well-intentioned	5.0	4.4	4.3	5.0	4.7	4.3	4.8	3.2	3.3	<b>4.2</b>
e) Constructive	5.0	4.4	3.4	5.0	4.4	4.8	4.7	3.5	3.0	<b>4.2</b>
Observations were clearly, objectively and appropriately presented in the reports	5.0	3.6	3.6	5.0	4.2	5.0	4.5	3.5	2.3	<b>4.1</b>
Recommendations for improvement are clear and applicable	5.0	3.4	4.2	5.0	4.4	5.0	4.5	3.7	2.6	<b>4.2</b>
External QA audit provided added value to HEI	5.0	3.2	4.2	5.0	4.3	4.8	4.4	3.7	3.6	<b>4.2</b>
Assessment of own contribution to discussions with audit panel during the site-visit:	4.6	4.6	4.3	5.0	4.1	4.8	4.4	4	3.6	<b>4.4</b>
External QA audit allows for improvement of HEI QAS	5.0	3.4	4.7	5.0	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.2	3.3	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Average grade for HEI</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>



### **Conclusion:**

External QA audit procedure contributed to better understanding of how significant management's support is to quality assurance system at HEIs, and that a functional QA system brings added value to the institution.

Although the majority of HEIs collect information on their activities and results, these need to be regularly analysed in accordance with quality indicators, for the purpose of improvement, development, recognition of good practice and excellence, as well as for identifying deficiencies and risks. It is necessary to continuously inform all the QAS stakeholders on the importance of their contribution to development of QAS, to encourage their cooperation and promote development of quality culture in academic and non-academic environment.

Zagreb, 5 September 2013

Made by:

Dr. sc. Vesna Dodiković-Jurković

Davorka Androić

Goran Briški