Zagreb, 23 June 2017

On the basis of the Accreditation Council’s Conclusion on the implementation of new procedure of re-accreditation of higher education institutions, adopted at the Accreditation Council’s 86th session held on 20 June 2017, in accordance with the Article 22 and Article 26, Paragraph 3 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette, 45/09), Article 17 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette, 24/7), Article 7 of the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Scientific Activity and Re-Accreditation of Scientific Institutions (Official Gazette, 83/20), and Article 22 and Article 44, Paragraph 22 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education, the director of the Agency, Prof. Jasmina Havranek, PhD, adopted

THE PROCEDURE FOR THE RE-ACCREDTATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- revised text -

I. INTRODUCTION

Re-accreditation of higher education institutions (universities, with their constituent units – faculties and art academies; polytechnics and colleges) is a procedure carried out by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as the Agency or ASHE) pursuant to Article 22 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette, 45/09), the Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Delivering a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette, 24/10) and the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (Official Gazette 83/10), in line with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG, 2015) and good international practice.
II. DOCUMENTS IN THE RE-ACCRREDITATION PROCEDURE

The following documents are used in the re-accreditation procedure:

a) Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (Official Gazette, 45/09);
b) Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette, 24/10);
c) Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Scientific Activity Re-Accreditation of Scientific Institutions (Official Gazette, 83/10);
d) Standards for the evaluation of quality of universities and university constituents in the procedure of re-accreditation of higher education institutions or Standards for the evaluation of quality of polytechnics and colleges in the procedure of re-accreditation of higher education institutions (hereinafter: Standards for the evaluation of quality);
e) Principles and criteria for the re-accreditation of postgraduate university study programmes in the Republic of Croatia, in case of re-accreditation of postgraduate university (doctoral) studies, or parts of activities of higher education institutions carrying out these studies.

The listed documents are published on the Agency website (www.azvo.hr).

III. RE-ACCRREDITATION PROCEDURE

1. Plan of re-accreditation

By 30 June* of each year, the Agency defines an annual plan of re-accreditation for the following year, publishes it on ASHE website and informs the included higher education institutions. A higher education institution included in the annual plan of re-accreditation may, within a period of 15 days*, request a postponement for the next academic year, providing a valid reason is given. The final decision on the postponement is issued by the Accreditation Council.

Apart from the annual plan, the re-accreditation of a higher education institution can be conducted at the request of the minister of science and higher education (hereinafter: the minister), or at the request of a higher education institution.
2. Expert panel and selection criteria

The expert panel members are selected:
- On the basis of a public call, published on the Agency website;
- From the database of experts, maintained by the Agency;
- On the basis of recommendations from other agencies for quality assurance of science and higher education;
- By directly contacting potential reviewers.

Re-accreditation of a higher education institution is carried out by an expert panel, headed by a panel chair; expert panel is appointed by the Accreditation Council at its regular session or by an electronic vote.

An expert panel consists of five members (including the panel chair); however, if the evaluated HEI carries out study programmes in multiple fields, a larger panel can be appointed.

Composition of an expert panel

- An expert panel comprises four (4) university teachers appointed to a scientific-teaching or artistic-teaching grade (assistant professor, associate professor, full professor), or researchers from scientific institutes (in the re-accreditation of a university or a university constituent). In the re-accreditation of a polytechnic or a college, the panel includes at least two (2) college professors appointed to a grade in scientific fields in which the evaluated HEI delivers its study programmes, or persons appointed to the grade of senior lecturer and holding the academic degree of Doctor of Science / PhD, or Master of Science.
- At least one, but generally two of the above mentioned university teachers / researchers / college professors should be employed at a higher education institution / research institute outside the Republic of Croatia. Alternatively, one expert from the business sector or a professional field closely related to the field in which the evaluated institution delivers study programmes may be included in the expert panel in place of one university teacher / college professor.
- An expert panel includes one student from the field in which the evaluated institution delivers study programmes.

Expert panel members should possess appropriate competencies in relevant areas in which the evaluated institution carries out its activities, be recognised for their teaching/research excellence, and have good international visibility.

A panel chair should have good knowledge of higher education quality assurance, be experienced
in conducting quality assurance procedures and have an appropriate managerial experience in higher education. A student member of the expert panel should be recognized for his/her academic excellence (high GPA) and the continuity of studies, and have the fundamental knowledge in the area of higher education quality assurance.

The panel members are expected to have good command of the English language, good oral and written communication skills, be able to work in a team environment and agree to all set protocols, procedures and deadlines.

The panel members are independent in their work and do not represent their respective institutions. During the re-accreditation procedure, the panel members shall adhere to the principles of impartiality and objectivity.

The panel members should not be in conflict of interest.

A **conflict of interest** exists if:

a) A panel member is/was under an employment contract, or any other type of contract or agreement on cooperation with the evaluated higher education institution **at the time of the re-accreditation procedure**, or **in the last 3 years**;

b) A panel member participates, in any capacity, in a project carried out or involving the evaluated higher education institution;

c) A panel member is/has **in the last 3 years** been a member of management, professional or advisory bodies of the evaluated higher education institution;

d) A panel member is personally associated with the management/dean of the evaluated higher education institution;

e) A panel member is a student or a graduate of the evaluated HEI.

A conflict of interest is also present if the above mentioned association relates to panel member’s immediate family (spouse, first-degree relative, adoptive parent).

During a re-accreditation procedure (before and after the site visit), there shall be no direct communication between panel members and the evaluated HEI; panel members shall inform the coordinator on possible violations of this provision.

The coordinator is an Agency employee. The panel members shall maintain the confidentiality of information obtained during the re-accreditation procedure. For the reasons listed above, the panel members shall sign a **Confidentiality and Non-conflict of Interest Statement**.

The panel members **may not accept any gifts** from the evaluated HEI, before, during or after the site visit.
3. HEI's complaint about the composition of an expert panel

After the members of the expert panel have been appointed, the Agency submits the Decision on the Appointment of Members of the Expert Panel to the higher education institution undergoing re-accreditation. HEI has the right to object to the composition of the expert panel, in which case it shall submit the objection within 7 days* from the date of receipt of the Decision.

If a HEI submits its objection to the composition of an expert panel, and the Accreditation Council decides that the objection is reasonable, new panel members shall be appointed within 30 days*. Objection to the composition of an expert panel does not affect set deadlines for the submission of the self-evaluation report and other documents.

4. The role and obligations of members of the expert panel, panel chair, coordinator, translator and copy-editor/proofreader

Expert panel members are required to:

- Examine all documents submitted by the coordinator;
- Having read the self-evaluation report, and before the site-visit to a higher education institution, send to the coordinator a list of questions that should be addressed during the site visit and, if necessary, submit a list of additional documents the panel would like to examine during the site visit;
- Participate in the training sessions organized by the Agency;
- Participate in all expert panel meetings;
- Take notes during the meetings with stakeholders at the higher education institution;
- Participate in drafting of the final report and grading of individual quality standards and assessment areas;
- Meet all the set deadlines;
- As per request of the Accreditation Council, examine HEI's action plan and report on the implementation of the action plan, and submit the panel's report on the implementation of the action plan to the Agency (two years after the site visit).

In addition, the panel chair is required to:

- Coordinate the work of all panel members;
- Lead discussions and chair the meetings during the site visit;
• Chair the exit meeting with the HEI's management;
• Ensure the consistency of the final report and standards for the evaluation of quality;
• Finalise the report of the expert panel and submit it to the Agency;
• As per request of the Accreditation Council, examine the HEI's action plan and report on the implementation of the action plan, and submit the panel's report on the implementation of the action plan to the Agency (two years after the site visit).

**Time frame of expert panel's contractual obligations:**
• 1-2 days for preparation: examining the self-evaluation report and other supporting documents, preparing questions;
• 1-5 days for the site visit to a higher education institution: training of the expert panel, site visit proper, work on the final report and Standards for the evaluation of quality;
• 1-2 days for finalising the final report.

** Minor alterations are allowed if an expert panel conducts two or more re-accreditation procedures.**

Panel members shall receive remuneration for their work, in accordance with general acts of the Agency, and the Agency shall cover their travel and accommodation expenses. All other expenses are covered by the panel member.

Details on travel and accommodation expenses are defined in the Annex I of this Procedure, which forms an integral part thereof.

A coordinator is not a member of an expert panel.
A coordinator is an Agency employee, tasked with providing administrative and professional support to the expert panel.

**Coordinator is required to:**
• Examine all relevant documents in the re-accreditation procedure;
• Attend all meetings;
• Check if the submitted self-evaluation report and accompanying documents are valid and complete, and - if necessary - request the amendment of documents by HEI;
• Communicate with expert panel members and the higher education institution;
• Organize and conduct the training of expert panel members;
• Draw up a site visit protocol and organize a site visit to the evaluated higher education institution;
• Ensure the accuracy of the expert panel’s final report (Croatian and English version);
• Ensure that the report is drafted on a standardised form;
• Ensure that the expert panel's final report and all supporting evidence are prepared for the Accreditation Council session, and, if necessary, participate in the Accreditation Council session in which that report is discussed;
• Coordinate a follow-up procedure, procedures regarding action plans etc.

Translator and copy-editor/proofreader are not members of the expert panel.

Translator is required to:
• Provide simultaneous or consecutive interpretation during the site visit;
• Provide translation of relevant documents from English into Croatian, and vice versa;
• Ensure that the translation of the report is factually correct, and written on a standardised form.

Copy-editor/proofreader is required to:
• Copy-edit/proofread the final report on a standardised form.

5. Self-evaluation and data entry into the information system (hereinafter: the MOZVAG database)

The Agency organizes a one-day workshop on drafting a self-evaluation report for HEIs included in the plan of re-accreditation. When drafting the self-evaluation report, higher education institutions can ask questions at the QA Forum on the Agency website.

Upon receiving notification that it is included in the plan of re-accreditation, HEI shall within 90 days* submit its self-evaluation report, drafted in line with the Standards for the evaluation of quality, as stipulated by the Act on Quality Assurance, Ordinance on the Content of a Licence and Conditions for Issuing a Licence for Performing Higher Education Activity, Carrying out a Study Programme and Re-Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (Official Gazette, 24/10) and the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing Licence for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-Accreditation of Scientific Organisations and Content of Licence (Official Gazette 83/10).

The higher education institution is obliged to respect the 90-day deadline for the submission of the
self-evaluation report; in case the deadline is exceeded, HEI shall in part assume the responsibility for the level of preparedness of the expert panel (with regard to the information contained in the self-evaluation report).

The change of data in the MOZVAG database shall not be possible after the self-evaluation report is submitted.

The higher education institution is obliged to place the notification of the re-accreditation procedure and instructions from the Agency on their bulletin board and homepage of their website; the instructions contain information regarding confidential communication on issues related to the evaluated higher education institution. Only the coordinator has access to data, and provides the information to the members of the expert panel who signed a Confidentiality and Non-conflict of Interest Statement.

The self-evaluation report of the higher education institution is drafted in accordance with the Standards for the evaluation of quality and it should contain clear, consistent and verifiable information.

The self-evaluation report is drafted in Croatian and English, and has a maximum of 100 pages.

The self-evaluation report contains the following obligatory elements:

- A short description of the higher education institution (history, organization - organizational chart, mission and vision);
- The information on whether the higher education institution is listed in the Register of Scientific Organisations (if so, scientific area and field should be stated);
- The name of the study programme, professional or academic degree/qualification obtained upon the completion of the study programme, type of study programme (university or professional), study cycle, area and field, the institution delivering the study programme, the institution providing the study programme, duration of the study programme, ECTS credits, mode of study (part-time or full-time), place of delivery, the year in which the study programme was accredited, i.e. the information from the MOZVAG database or the Directory of study programmes and the level of the Croatian Qualifications Framework;
- The description of the self-evaluation drafting process;
- The outcomes of all previous evaluations, the summary of the follow-up activities;
- All quantitative data higher education institutions need to prepare in accordance with the self-evaluation in the re-accreditation procedure; the data is entered into the MOZVAG database (the analytics from the MOZVAG database, which is an integral part of the self-evaluation report, is prepared on the basis of this information).
Higher education institutions shall once a year, and not later than on 1 November of the current year, update the information on its teachers, students and study programmes in the MOZVAG database, which forms an integral part of the analytics. Tables related to assessment areas 2, 3 and partly 4 (the part related to teachers) are mostly reporting tables that are generated based on data entered into the MOZVAG database for each academic year. Tables related to the assessment area 5 and partly the assessment area 4 (the part related to resources and finances) are completed in the re-accreditation procedure, during the drafting of the self-evaluation report.

The MOZVAG database is locked on the day the self-evaluation – containing analytics tables - is submitted. If any new evidence and information is presented to the expert panel during the site visit, the expert panel shall take them into account in grading the standards and drafting the final report. The MOZVAG database shall remain locked until the final decision is reached by the Accreditation Council.

Attachments to the self-evaluation report are not included in the total page count.

The self-evaluation report should be adopted by a competent body of the evaluated higher education institution. The self-evaluation report of a HEI is signed by the dean of the institution, and submitted to the Agency in written and electronic form (on a CD), in Croatian and English. The coordinator ensures that the documentation is complete; if necessary, the Agency shall ask for amendments to the documents. The higher education institution shall submit the amended/completed documentation within 14 days* from the day of receipt of the Agency's request.

The Agency shall submit the self-evaluation report to all members of the expert panel. The expert panel shall examine the self-evaluation report and all additional documentation, and draft comments on the identified advantages and disadvantages of the evaluated HEI, and possible outstanding issues to be addressed during the site visit. If the higher education institution underwent any type of evaluation in the past, the Agency shall submit a report thereon to the expert panel.

After the self-evaluation report is submitted, the Agency agrees on the details of the site visit, including the site-visit protocol, with the higher education institution and expert panel members. The higher education institution shall appoint a site visit coordinator for a direct communication with the Agency coordinator. The site visit coordinator is in charge of the organizational details of the visit and responsible for HEI's adhering to the site visit protocol.
6. Training of expert panels

Before the site visit, all members of expert panels shall undergo a training where they are informed on tasks, procedure and purpose of re-accreditation.

Expert panel members are required to submit a preliminary report that will briefly review each standard according to the available evidence (self-evaluation report and other documents of the higher education institution) at least 3 days prior to the training, or write down what further evidence is needed for an objective opinion to be delivered. The coordinator gathers the preliminary reports, which the expert panels shall discuss during the site visit.

One day before the site visit, the expert panel shall meet at a location specified by the Agency. At that meeting, the coordinator shall outline the tasks and duties of each member of the expert panel and present the Croatian and European documents relevant for the quality assurance procedures in science and higher education. The main issues that should be discussed during the site visit shall also be identified.

On the day of training, members of the expert panel shall elect a panel chair.

7. Site visit to a higher education institution

A site visit to a higher education institution may last from 1 to 3 days, or exceptionally longer, which is determined by the Agency, in agreement with the members of the expert panel and the higher education institution. The site visit is carried out according to a predefined protocol that is submitted to the higher education institution and members of the expert panel no later than one week prior to the site visit.

A coordinator, a translator, and if necessary, assistant coordinators shall accompany the expert panel in the site visit to a higher education institution. Upon approval of the Director of the Agency and the evaluated higher education institution, independent observers may also participate in a site visit, provided that they sign the Confidentiality and Non-conflict of Interest Statement.

The obligatory parts of every site visit protocol are meetings with HEI management, representatives of the teaching and non-teaching staff, students, representatives of employers, business sector and partner institutions, as well as a tour of the facilities (lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, student administration office, IT classrooms, facilities for practical work, etc.).

A higher education institution shall provide adequate premises for the scheduled meetings, internet access (Wi-Fi) and a separate room for expert panel’s internal meetings, etc.

During the meetings, the panel members shall take notes on their observations. The higher education institution shall provide documents governing their activities (e.g. the founding act,
regulations, rules of procedure, contracts, decisions, agreements, reports, analyses etc.) and examples of exams, seminar papers, final and graduation theses, dissertations, certificates, degree certificates and diploma supplements. The higher education institution shall also provide all necessary information on study programmes, including syllabi with defined learning outcomes. During the site visit, the expert panel may pay special attention to those study programmes for which amendments to the study programme proposal were requested in the initial accreditation. A site visit to a higher education institution ends with an exit meeting with HEI’s management, in which the panel chair or a panel member appointed by the chair informs HEI’s representatives of the panel’s observations during the site visit. Panel’s observations and findings shall not be discussed during the exit meeting.

8. The Report and Standards for quality assurance

Standards for the evaluation of quality are an integral part of each report, aligned with the final report form. The report is based on the information submitted by a higher education institution and the findings obtained during the site visit. The report should also include recommendations for improvement. The report is prefaced by a summary. On the last day of the site visit, all members of the expert panel participate in drafting of the preliminary report, which contains a grade of each standard / assessment area, passed jointly by all panel members. An expert panel agrees on the final version of the report via e-mail. A panel chair submits the final report to the Agency within 30 days from the end of site visit. If the same expert panel carries out two or more re-accreditation visits, the deadline for the submission of a final report can be extended to 60 days. ASHE coordinator reviews the final report and ensures that all the quality standards have been assessed. If a coordinator establishes that the report needs amendments, the final report is returned by e-mail to the panel chair and all panel members for completion. The panel chair shall submit the finalised version of the report within 7 days.

9. The manner of passing a grade according to the Standards for the evaluation of quality

The standards are described as a certain level of quality, organized into five assessment areas and aligned with the ESG. Taking into account the descriptions of individual standards, the expert panel grades each standard on the basis of examined evidence and available indicators. Grades at the level of a standard are as follows: unsatisfactory level of quality; minimum level of quality;
satisfactory level of quality and high level of quality.
The expert panel shall grade each assessment area based on the grade of standards within it.
Grades at the level of the assessment area: unsatisfactory level of quality; minimum level of quality;
satisfactory level of quality and high level of quality.

In grading the assessment areas, the expert panel shall adhere to the following rules:

- If any of the key standards (1.1; 2.2; 3.1; 3.8; 4.1; 4.5; 4.7; 5.1; 5.5) within an assessment area is assessed as unsatisfactory level of quality or minimum level of quality, the grade of the assessment area cannot be higher than the minimum level of quality;
- The assessment area can be graded high level of quality if most of the standards within that assessment area have been assessed as high level of quality, and no standards have been assessed as unsatisfactory level of quality or minimum level of quality.

The grades of standards and assessment areas should be based on consensus-based decisions. If a consensus is not reached by the panel, the grade is passed by a majority vote. If the votes are divided, i.e. if a decision was not adopted by a majority vote, the panel chair shall make the final decision.

If there is any difference of opinions with regard to the decision, it will be included in the final report, together with a rationale thereof.

10. HEI's comment on the final report of an expert panel

The Agency shall submit Croatian and English version of expert panel's final report to the evaluated higher education institution. Higher education institution may, within 15 days* from the day of receipt of the final report, submit comments to the final report, stating objections and/or providing clarifications regarding possible procedural errors/misconducts or formal inaccuracies. The Agency shall submit the expert panel's final report and HEI's comments (if any) to the Accreditation Council.

11. The opinion of the Accreditation Council and the decision-making procedure

Following the re-accreditation procedure carried out, and based on the final report of the expert panel and comments from the higher education institution (if any), the Accreditation Council shall render an opinion to:

- Issue a confirmation on the fulfilment of conditions for performing higher education and/or scientific activities, or parts of activities;
- Deny a license for performing higher education and/or scientific activities, or parts of activities;
• 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 Accreditation Council gives an opinion on the outcome of the re-accreditation procedure based on the expert panel's report containing the quality grade and comments from the higher education institution, by adhering to the following rules:

• If any of the assessment areas is graded as unsatisfactory level of quality, the outcome of the re-accreditation procedure may be the issuance of a letter of expectation*** or a denial of the licence;

• If any of the assessment areas is graded as minimum level of quality, the outcome of the procedure may be the issuance of a letter of expectation***;

• If all assessment areas are graded as the satisfactory level of quality or high level of quality, the outcome of the procedure may be the issuance of the licence.

*** A letter of expectation can also include the suspension of student enrolment.

If the Accreditation Council determines that a letter of expectation should be issued to HEI, it shall define a deadline for the implementation of improvements (follow-up). The maximum deadline for the implementation of improvements is three years, depending on the type of deficiencies identified. A letter of expectation can also include the suspension of student enrolment within a set period.

12. A higher education institution's objection to the opinion of the Accreditation Council and the Complaints Committee

After the opinion of the Accreditation Council is submitted to the higher education institution, the institution has the right to file a written objection to the Accreditation Council's opinion within 15 days* from the date of receipt of the opinion.

An objection may be filed on grounds of substantial violations of the accreditation rules, which have or could have affected the Accreditation Council's decision.

New facts or evidence that was not presented during the site visit cannot be presented in the objection procedure.

The Complaints Committee (hereinafter: the Committee) comprising three (3) members, at least one being a legal expert, shall decide on the objection. Two (2) alternate Committee members are also appointed.

The members of the Committee shall be appointed for a term of three years.
Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Agency's Management Board, following a proposal of the Rectors’ Conference and the Council of Polytechnics and Colleges, under the following conditions:

- Experience in internal quality assurance in science and higher education;
- Experience in external quality assurance in science and higher education (for example, as member of an expert panel in an external evaluation) and/or managerial experience in higher education and science;
- Experience in higher education and science in an international context (for example, work on international research projects, participation in evaluation procedures abroad, study or work abroad);
- Excellence in respective professional field (publications, awards, appointment into managerial and representative bodies);
- High ethical standards and adhering to the principles of academic integrity;
- Excellent knowledge of Croatian and European legal framework and the context of quality assurance in higher education and science;
- Excellent command of English;
- Knowledge of the methods of evaluation of higher education institutions and scientific organizations.

Experience in cooperation with European higher education bodies (E4 group) and work experience/cooperation with other complaints bodies will be considered as an advantage.

The Committee members are independent in their work and do not represent their respective institutions. In reaching decisions, the Committee members shall adhere to principles of impartiality and objectivity.

The Committee members shall not be in any conflict of interest and shall sign a Confidentiality and Non-conflict of Interest Statement.

The composition, term and manner of work and decision-making of the Committee, as well as other related issues, are defined in detail by the Rules of Procedure of the Committee.

The Committee shall reach decisions on the basis of relevant re-accreditation procedure documentation, and shall adhere to the principle of independence.

The Committee shall pass an opinion on the objection within 30 days* from the day of its submission.
The Committee may request additional explanations from the coordinator and/or panel chair, if needed to render an informed opinion on the objection. The Committee's opinion shall include a rationale.

The Committee’s opinion shall be submitted to the Accreditation Council. The Accreditation Council shall discuss the Complaints Committee’s opinion, reach the final decision and submit it to the Agency for the purpose of adopting the accreditation recommendation.

13. Accreditation recommendation of the Agency

Following the procedure of re-accreditation, and based on a prior opinion of the Accreditation Council, the Agency shall provide an accreditation recommendation to the minister to:

- Issue a confirmation on the fulfilment of conditions for performing higher education and/or scientific activities, or parts of activities;
- Deny the license for performing higher education and/or scientific activities, or parts of activities;
- Issue a letter of expectation with the deadline for resolving deficiencies of up to three years.

The accreditation recommendation also includes a quality assessment of a higher education institution, and recommendations for quality improvement.

14. Follow-up in case of issuance of the letter of expectation

A higher education institution shall keep account of the deadline for removing deficiencies set in the letter of expectation. No later than three months prior to the deadline, a higher education institution shall submit a report on the improvements made to the Agency. The Accreditation Council shall examine the report and decide if a higher education institution has implemented recommendations for improvement and eliminated deficiencies identified during the re-accreditation procedure.

If necessary, the Accreditation Council may instruct the panel or part of the panel to re-visit the higher education institution, in order to establish the extent to which the deficiencies were eliminated. The expert panel's report is then submitted to the higher education institution, which has the right to file a complaint, in accordance with Item 10.
The panel’s report and HEI’s comments thereof, if any, shall be submitted to the Accreditation Council, which, taking into consideration all documents arising from the re-accreditation procedure, makes an opinion on the following:

- Issuing a confirmation on the fulfilment of conditions for performing higher education and/or scientific activities, or parts of activities;
- Denial of license for performing higher education and/or scientific activities, or parts of activities;

In such a case, the Accreditation Council cannot adopt another opinion on the issuance of a letter of expectation. On the basis of the Accreditation Council’s opinion, the Agency shall adopt an accreditation recommendation, as per Item 13.

**15. Action plan and recommendations for improvement**

In case a certificate on the fulfilment of conditions for carrying out activities of higher education and/or scientific activity or part of activity was issued to a higher education institution following the re-accreditation procedure, the higher education institution shall:

Adopt a five-year action plan within 6 months* from the day of submission of the certificate, for the purpose of quality improvement in accordance with the recommendations of the expert panel, and submit it to the Agency;

Report on the implementation of the action plan to the Agency two years after the adopted action plan*, and update the information on the conditions of the study programme delivery in the MOZVAG database accordingly.

The report on the implementation of the action plan should describe the manner and the extent to which the recommendations for improvement stated in the expert panel’s report have been implemented. The action plan and the report on the implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Agency in written and electronic form (on a CD), in Croatian and English. The analytics from the MOZVAG database is an integral part of the report on the implementation of the action plan.

Following a request of the Accreditation Council, the action plan and the report on the implementation thereof are submitted to the panel chair or a designated panel member, who will submit the report to the Agency after examining the documents. The report is discussed at the Accreditation Council session and published on the Agency website.
16. Public information

The final report of an expert panel in Croatian and English, comments of a higher education institution to the final report, and the accreditation recommendation of the Agency are published on the Agency website after the completion of the re-accreditation procedure.

17. Feedback

Upon the completion of re-accreditation procedure, the Agency gathers feedback from higher education institutions and members of expert panels, for the purpose of improving the Agency's activities.

18. Directory of study programmes of higher education institutions

The Agency maintains the Directory of study programmes of higher education institutions. The Agency shall update the information in the Directory of study programmes in accordance with the outcome of re-accreditation of a higher education institution. The Directory of study programmes of higher education institutions is public and accessible via Agency website.
IV. TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS

The procedures of re-accreditation of higher education institutions that started before this Procedure entered into force shall be completed in accordance with the provisions of the Procedure that was relevant before the entry into force of this Procedure.

The Agency shall adopt the first re-accreditation plan for 2018 by 30 June 2017.

The Management Board shall appoint the Committee within 6 months from the day of entry into force of this Procedure.

Upon the entry into force of this Procedure, the Procedure of Re-accreditation of Higher Education Institutions (revised text) of 16 December 2015 (CLASS: 602-04/14-04/0019, FILE No. 355-02-04-15-6) shall cease to have effect.

This Procedure shall enter into force on the date of its adoption, and it shall be published on the Agency website.

* The timescales within this document do not include periods from 15 July to 31 August and 24 December to 6 January.
ANNEX I

The Agency shall directly cover or reimburse the following expenses to the members of expert panels:

- Airline tickets (economy class), with reservations and purchase made exclusively by the Agency (in agreement with the members of the expert panel), or train/bus tickets, or transport by personal car (free parking space provided in front of the Agency building);
- Hotel accommodation (half board), with reservations and purchase made exclusively by the Agency;
- Lunch during the site visit, organized and paid exclusively by the Agency;
- Non-alcoholic refreshments during the drafting of the report and work on the Standards for the evaluation of quality;
- Public transport:
  - From home address to the airport (and back), from the airport to the hotel (and back);
  - From home address to the railway station (and back), from the railway station to the hotel (and back);
  - From home address to the bus station (and back), from the bus station to the hotel (and back).

Where there is a choice of transport, panel members should use the means of public transport that are more practical and convenient.

The Agency shall reimburse only those expenses for which the original receipts have been submitted. The panel members shall deliver the original receipts to ASHE coordinator.

The Agency shall not cover or reimburse the following expenses:

- Airline tickets purchased by the panel members;
- Extra nights at hotels;
- Hotel mini-bar;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Additional expenses incurred during the procedure that are not listed under expenses covered by the Agency (e.g. refreshments bought at gas stations or rest areas, expenses incurred in restaurants and cafes at airports etc.).