

CLASS: 602-04/23-02/170

FILE NUMBER: 355-01-23-01

In Zagreb, 14 September 2023

Following the provisions of Article 13, Paragraph 1 of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (Official Gazette, 151/22) and provisions of Article 32, Paragraph 1, Item 17 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (CLASS: 003-05/13-01/0001; FILE. NO.: 355-01-23-29), at its 4<sup>th</sup> session held on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 the Accreditation Council adopted the following

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONDUCTING THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**



agency for science and higher education

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Considering the provisions of the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and Science (Official Gazette, 151/22; hereinafter: the Act), the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and good European and international practice in the field of quality assurance in higher education, the Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) has prepared these Instructions for conducting the procedure of initial accreditation of higher education institutions (hereinafter: the Instructions) pursuant to Article 13, Paragraph 1 of the Act, and the provisions of Article 32, Paragraph 1, Item 17 of the Statute of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (CLASS: 003-05/13-01/0001; File. No.: 355-01-23-29), as well as the ESG Standard 2.3. The instructions are based on and aligned with the second part of the ESG (standards 2.1–2.7).

The Instructions contain (pre-)conditions for conducting the procedure in question, and specify in detail all the stages of the procedure itself.

The Instructions are intended for all higher education institutions planning to launch this procedure, as well as all the persons who are considered potential members of the expert panel, and for any other interested person; and they are considered the basis for a successful completion of the procedure of initial accreditation of higher education institutions, since they are based on a consensus of all relevant stakeholders involved in the drafting of these Instructions.

These Instructions are published on the Agency's website.

## 2. COMMON PROVISIONS

Initial accreditation of higher education institutions is a process of external evaluation of the quality of higher education institutions, which is conducted in the event of:

1. the establishment of a higher education institution;
2. a change in the status of a higher education institution.

In the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution, the compliance of the higher education institution with national legal criteria, national and international

standards, and trends towards quality improvement of the higher education institution, which, among others, includes the quality of teaching, scientific, artistic and professional work of teachers, scientists and associates and professional work of the staff working in professional services at a higher education institution, as well as the quality of the study programmes delivered or to be delivered at a higher education institution and the study process at higher education institutions, shall be assessed by making recommendations for quality improvement.

The procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution shall apply to all types of higher education institutions, as prescribed by the Act on Higher Education and Scientific Activity (Official Gazette, 119/22).

The procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution shall include the accreditation of study programmes as well as the accreditation of any educational programmes which are not considered study programmes, but which lead to partial qualifications pursuant to the Act.

In the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution, the **Quality Standards in the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution** (hereinafter: the Quality Standards) shall be applied. The Quality Standards contain quality elements and indicators, which include compliance with the requirements prescribed by the Act.

The Quality Standards were adopted by the Accreditation Council and they were published on the Agency's website.

The procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution shall take place in several steps:

1. submitting a request and documents necessary to conduct the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution;
2. conducting an external evaluation by an expert panel, including, inter alia, a visit to the higher education institution;
3. drawing up a report as a result of external evaluation;
4. adopting a decision;

5. designating and implementation of a follow-up procedure.

Croatian and English shall be used in the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution.

A staff member of the Agency as a coordinator and, if necessary, an interpreter or a translator, shall provide support to the expert panel.

All documents used in the procedure are public, and have been published by the Agency on its website.

The periods from 15 July to 31 August, and from 24 December to 6 January shall not be counted against the deadlines specified in the Instructions.

### **3. LAUNCH OF THE PROCEDURE OF INITIAL ACCREDITATION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION**

The higher education institution<sup>1</sup> initiates the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution **by submitting a request for a licence for the operation of a higher education institution** (hereinafter: the request).

The request shall be submitted to the Agency in Croatian and English using the form set out in Annex 1 to these Instructions, which forms an integral part of these instructions.

The request form is public and published on the Agency's website.

The completed request form is submitted electronically and must be signed either by a handwritten or electronic signature by the head of the higher education institution, and stamped. By signing the request, the head of a higher education institution guarantees that the information contained in the request is true and accurate.

Along with the request, the higher education institution shall provide the Self-evaluation Report drafted according to the Quality Standards and the following documentation in the Croatian language, and, if so requested in the request form, in the English language:

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this document the expression *higher education institution* shall refer to the institution submitting a request.

1. the founding act of the higher education institution;
2. a feasibility study justifying the need for establishing a public higher education institution;
3. evidence of adequate facilities and equipment;
4. evidence of resources necessary to perform teaching, research, i.e. artistic and professional activity;
5. employment contracts which have been concluded with the teaching staff;
6. evidence of financial resources necessary to perform higher education and professional activity.

A university, a faculty i. e. an arts academy shall provide the following documents along with the evidence mentioned above:

1. a strategic research/artistic research agenda for a period of several years for the research/artistic area in which the licence to operate is sought and
2. evidence of financial resources necessary to perform research i.e. artistic activity.

In addition to the evidence stipulated above, the public higher education institution shall also submit an opinion of the National Council for Higher Education, Science and Technological Development on the need to establish a public higher education institution.

Since the procedure of initial accreditation of higher education institutions shall comprise obligatory accreditation of study programmes as well as the accreditation of any educational programmes which are not considered study programmes, but which lead to partial qualifications, the higher education institution shall submit the documents necessary for conducting initial accreditation of study programmes, as stipulated in Article 15 of the Act, as well as proposals of educational programmes which are not considered study programmes, but which lead to partial qualifications.

Since it is the responsibility of the higher education institution to prove compliance with each standard contained in the Quality Standards, the higher education institution shall enclose additional evidence. Such additional evidence shall be provided by attaching it to the request and/or delivering it to the expert panel members, so they would have sufficient information to adopt the report in accordance with the instructions / remarks contained in the form itself. Likewise, the request contains notes about the documents to be submitted in the English language as well.

Upon receipt of the request, the Agency shall verify that the request contains all the required information and documentation. The verification of the request by the Agency is purely formal and does not involve assessment of compliance of a given analysis with the standard itself.

If the request has been prepared in accordance with the requirements, the Agency shall proceed with the process of initial accreditation of a higher education institution.

If the request does not contain all the necessary and specified data and/or documentation, or if the data is insufficient for establishing if the prescribed criteria are met, or if the request is incomprehensible, the Agency shall electronically invite the higher education institution to remedy the deficiencies in the request within a deadline set by the Agency. The period for remedying the deficiencies in the request shall not exceed 15 days from the date of receipt of the Agency's instruction.

## 4. EXPERT PANEL

### 4.1. Composition of the expert panel

An expert panel composed of **at least five members** shall participate in the initial accreditation of higher education institutions.

At least four expert panel members shall be appointed from among Croatian and foreign teachers, at least one of whom shall be from the same scientific field and area of the higher education institution.

One member of an expert panel shall be a student.

If the initial accreditation is being conducted at a university, a faculty, or an arts academy, the expert panel members shall be appointed from among Croatian and foreign teachers holding a scientific-teaching or artistic-teaching position.

If the initial accreditation is being conducted at a polytechnic/university of applied sciences, the expert panel members shall be appointed from among Croatian and foreign teachers holding the position of professor of professional studies, or tenured professor of professional studies, or among teachers holding scientific-teaching positions with experience in teaching at professional studies.

The student may not be the chair of the expert panel.

## **4.2. Conditions for the election of expert panel members**

The expert panel members from among teachers must also meet the following conditions:

- they must be recognised for excellence in teaching at their home higher education institution, i.e. be recognised for excellence in scientific or artistic and professional activities, and they must be internationally recognised;
- they must be familiar with quality assurance in higher education.

The student on the expert panel must meet the following conditions:

- he/she must be an excellent student;
- he/she must be a full-time student for a continuous period of time;
- he/she must be familiar with quality assurance in higher education.

All expert panel members must:

- have a good command of English;
- have good oral and written communication skills;
- be able to work in a team.

## **4.3. Conflict of interest**

A member of an expert panel is considered to have a conflict of interest in any of the following situations:

1. they have signed an employment or other cooperation contract with the higher education institution, or have had an employment or other cooperation contract with the higher education institution in the last three years;
2. they have participated in publications with employees of the higher education institution and/or projects which this higher education institution is participating in or carrying out, or if they participated in publications and/or such projects in the last three years;
3. they are participating in governing, expert or advisory bodies of the higher education institution, or have participated in these bodies in the last three years;
4. they have a personal connection to the head, i.e. the persons performing management duties at the higher education institution;
5. they are studying at the higher education institution or have completed a study



programme at the higher education institution;

6. they are part of the court proceedings against the higher education institution.

A conflict of interest also exists if the above-mentioned relations refer to the panel member's immediate family (legal spouse, first-degree relative, siblings, adoptive parent or adopted child).

In the case of initial accreditations of higher education institutions expert panels shall not be composed of members who are Croatian teachers employed at a higher education institution which delivers the same study programme as the higher education institution undergoing the evaluation procedure.

#### **4.4. Election and appointment of expert panel members**

When electing potential candidates for expert panel members, the Agency shall use:

- the internal database of reviewers maintained by the Agency;
- proposals of candidates who have answered a public call;
- recommendations of other agencies responsible for quality assurance in higher education and science;
- direct invitations addressed to potential candidates.

Potential candidates for expert panel members are required to declare whether they have a potential conflict of interest.

The expert panel shall be appointed by the Agency's Accreditation Council.

Upon appointment of the expert panel, the Agency shall submit the decision appointing the expert panel to the higher education institution which is entitled to apply for the exemption of an expert panel member within 7 days of receipt of the decision.

The Accreditation Council shall decide on the request for exclusion of an expert panel member and shall, if it considers the request for exclusion justified, appoint another expert panel member.

#### **4.5. Rights and obligations of expert panel members**

All expert panel members participating in the procedure of initial accreditation of higher education institutions:

- must be independent in their work;
- must not represent nor advocate the interests of their home institution;
- must not have a conflict of interest;
- must guarantee the confidentiality of information they have learned or obtained in the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution.

The appointed expert panel members shall sign a non-conflict of interest and confidentiality statement, ensuring that they are free from any conflict of interest and guaranteeing the confidentiality of information they have learned and/or obtained when conducting the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution.

During the initial accreditation of a higher education institution, the expert panel members may not accept gifts from the higher education institution or give gifts to that higher education institution.

All expert panel members shall be bound by all set out and agreed protocols, procedures and deadlines.

#### **The expert panel members shall be obliged to:**

1. prior to the visit, consult the whole documentation provided by the Agency;
2. on the basis of provided documentation and prior to the visit to the higher education institution, send a list of issues which the visit should focus on and, if necessary, compile a list of additional documentation they wish to receive during the visit to the higher education institution;
3. participate in the training organised by the Agency;
4. participate in the expert panel's visit to the higher education institution;
5. participate in all expert panel meetings;
6. take notes during the meetings with stakeholders at the higher education institution;

7. participate in writing of the report, including, inter alia, participation in the evaluation for each quality standard or area, writing an analysis and suggesting recommendations for improvement;
8. consider the consistency of the assessment they make and the analysis of each standard/area in the report;
9. respond to the higher education institution's comments on the preliminary report and, if the expert panel decides so, participate in writing of the final version of the report and/or explanation in case of disagreement with the statements made in the comments of the higher education institution;
10. following the request of the Accreditation Council, participate in its session and provide the necessary clarifications;
11. perform other tasks related to the procedure of initial accreditation of higher education institutions, in accordance with the division of tasks between the expert panel members.

**The chair of the expert panel shall additionally be obliged to:**

1. coordinate the work of all expert panel members;
2. distribute the work among expert panel members;
3. moderate the meetings of the expert panel;
4. moderate the exit meeting with the management of the higher education institution;
5. in the report, ensure consistency of the assessments and analysis of the standards, i.e. areas;
6. finalise the expert panel report and send it to the Agency (including both the preliminary and the final report);
7. moderate the meeting after receiving the comments of the higher education institution, to reply to the higher education institution's comments, to correct and/or update the final version of the report accordingly, and send it to the Agency; or to provide the Agency with an explanation of non-acceptance of the higher education institution's comments.

A member of an expert panel shall be entitled to remuneration for their work, in accordance with a general act of the Agency, and to a reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses, in accordance with the memorandum set out in Annex 5, which is an integral part of these Instructions.

## **5. SITE VISIT OF THE EXPERT PANEL**

The expert panel shall visit the higher education institution for the purpose of quality assessment. The site visit to the higher education institution is conducted as a site visit to the higher education institution (on site).

### **5.1. Training**

Prior to the site visit to the higher education institution, the expert panel members shall undergo training provided by the Agency.

Training shall take place in a virtual environment, and it may be organised on the premises designated by the Agency. During the training, the expert panel members will be acquainted with their tasks and duties, the procedure and purpose of the procedure of initial accreditation of a higher education institution, as well as the underlying national and European regulations for conducting the initial accreditation of a higher education institution. In the course of training, the expert panel members shall identify the main issues to be considered during the visit and submit them to the Agency, and if they deem it necessary, draw up a list of additional documents which they wish to obtain during the visit. The list shall clearly specify the documents to be submitted in the English language as well, if the panel deems it necessary for their work.

### **5.2. Organisation of the site visit**

The Agency shall announce the site visit to the higher education institution at least 15 days before the site visit. Following the announcement of the site visit, the higher education institution shall appoint an employee to coordinate the entire procedure and notify the Agency as soon as possible. The Agency shall then arrange all other details related to the visit with the designated person.

The site visit shall take place in accordance with a planned protocol determined in agreement with the expert panel members and the higher education institution. The

protocol draft shall be submitted to the expert panel members and the higher education institution at least one week before the site visit.

The obligatory part of every site visit protocol shall be meetings with the higher education institution's management, teaching staff, students (where applicable), representatives of employers, businesspersons, and business associates and, where appropriate, with professional services and representatives of non-government organizations, and/or professional associations. It is not allowed to record the meetings. The site visit also includes a visit to the premises of the higher education institution (e.g., classrooms, laboratories, i.e. premises where practical teaching is conducted, the library, IT classroom, work facilities, the student administration office, etc.).

For the expert panel visit, the higher education institution shall:

- ensure adequate premises for all the meetings scheduled in the protocol;
- ensure wireless internet access;
- provide a separate room where the expert panel, an employee of the Agency providing support to the work of the expert panel, and, if necessary, the interpreter can have their internal meetings, breaks and may lock away any personal belongings;
- to provide access to teaching activities, including classes, seminars, and practical teaching, as well as to provide access to a class in the event of changes in the status of a higher education institution;
- to provide access to, or otherwise ensure availability of examples of student assessments in the event of changes in the status of a higher education institution;
- facilitate meetings and interviews with staff and students at the choice of the expert panel, even if they are not predicted in the protocol;
- to provide the expert panel with access to documents governing its activities, inter alia, documents concerning staff, external associates and students (such as rules of procedure, agreements, copies of employment contracts for full-time teachers and their registration for health and pension insurance, statements by external collaborators on participation in teaching and permissions of their home institutions to take part in teaching, copies of advancement decisions for full-time teachers and freelancers, etc.), as well as provide access to the information systems used by the higher education institution in its work;

- provide access to all premises and equipment of the higher education institution.

During the meetings, the expert panel members keep notes of their observations.

The site visit of the expert panel to the higher education institution shall conclude with a meeting with the management of the higher education institution, where the expert panel informs the attendees of their observations during the evaluation. This meeting shall not include time for discussion regarding these observations. Consequently, the expert panel shall not provide the management of the higher education institution with their opinion on the outcome of the procedure in question.

## 6. REPORT

After the site visit, the expert panel shall draw up a report on the evaluation of the quality of criteria laid down in the Quality Standards. All expert panel members shall participate in writing of the report. The report shall be drawn up using the standardised form in Annex 2, which forms an integral part thereof.

The report which is written in English shall be translated into Croatian.

### 6.1. The manner of work on the final report

The expert panel's report shall be based on the materials provided by the higher education institution and on the findings learned from the site visit. **If the higher education institution provides additional evidence after the expert panel's visit, it will not be considered by the expert panel.**

The expert panel members consensually agree on assessments of standards and assessment areas, justifications / analyses of standards or assessment areas and recommendations for improvement. If no consensus is reached, decisions shall be brought by a majority vote of all expert panel members.

If a member of the expert panel disagrees with the assessments made for a given standard or assessment area, or if they disagree with a particular part of the report, they may write a dissenting opinion. The dissenting opinion shall be reasoned, manually signed, and submitted to the Agency. A dissenting opinion shall form an integral part of the report.

Quality grades of each standard and assessment area are also integral parts of each report. The quality grade shall determine the level of fulfilment of the Quality Standards and the assessment areas as follows: **not fulfilled, partially fulfilled and fulfilled**.

The grade **fulfilled** implies that a higher education institution fully complies with the standard, or does so to the greatest extent.

The grade **partially fulfilled** implies that a higher education institution complies with some elements of the standard, while not with others. The grade **partially fulfilled** may also be given if the standard is considered to have been fulfilled, but the manner of its implementation is lacking in efficiency and some improvements are proposed.

The grade **not fulfilled** implies that the higher education institution does not comply with the standard in full or to the greatest extent. A standard is deemed not to have been fulfilled if one of the criteria laid down by the Act is not met, or if the conditions laid down in another regulation applicable to that profession (for example, those related to regulated professions) are not fulfilled.

Based on the standards assessments, the expert panel shall grade each area.

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

- if any of the standards included in the assessment area have been graded as *not fulfilled*, the assessment area will be graded as **not fulfilled** as well;
- if none of the standards included in the assessment area have been graded as *not fulfilled* and most of the standards included in the assessment area have been graded as **partially fulfilled**, the area will be assessed as *partially fulfilled* as well;
- if none of the standards included in the assessment area have been graded as *not fulfilled* and most of the standards included in the assessment area have been graded as *fulfilled*, the area will be assessed as **fulfilled**, as well.

After the grades have been adopted, the expert panel shall also provide an analysis of each standard and area, and recommendations for improvement.

After the grades of all standards and areas have been passed, and after providing the analyses and recommendations for improvements, the expert panel shall provide the

Accreditation Council with a final recommendation on the outcome of the initial accreditation of a higher education institution.

The outcome of the procedure carried out may be:

1. the issuance of a licence to operate;
2. denial of the request for issuing a licence to operate.

The expert panel shall issue a final recommendation to deny the application for the issuance of a licence to operate if any of the areas has been assessed as not fulfilled.

If the expert panel believes that the deficiencies identified are of such a nature that they can be remedied by the higher education institution within 15 days, the expert panel shall not give a final recommendation on the outcome of the conducted procedure but shall propose to the higher education institution to make the necessary adjustments and/or amendments in order to remedy the deficiencies identified before adopting the final recommendation. The expert panel is obliged to justify such a proposal and provide clear and specific requirements, i.e. conditions to be met by the higher education institution in relation to the proposed adjustment and/or amendment.

In this case, the report with a proposal for adjustment and/or amendment shall be submitted to the higher education institution, which shall, within 15 days of date of receipt, submit the adjusted evidence of fulfilment of the request to the expert panel (for example, revised/amended study programme or proposal, in accordance with the stated requirements, i.e. the conditions of the expert panel) in Croatian and English, to the Agency.

Upon receipt of the evidence of fulfilment of the expert panel's request, the expert panel shall continue their work on the report and shall, based on the submitted documentation prepare a preliminary report, and make a final recommendation on the outcome of the conducted procedure.

The chair of the expert panel shall submit the preliminary report to the Agency within 15 days of the end of the site visit, or, in the event of proposals for adjustment, within 15 days of receipt of the documentation proving that the expert panel's request has been fulfilled.



The updated report which is written in English is translated into Croatian, and vice versa. In the event that the report needs to be adjusted, and there are obvious factual inaccuracies and/or inconsistencies between the assessments made and the analysis of a particular standard or area, the Agency shall submit the preliminary report to all expert panel members for further revision by e-mail, and provide an explanation for such request. The expert panel members shall submit the revised preliminary report not later than 7 days from the date of receipt of such a request.

The Agency shall submit the preliminary report in Croatian to the higher education institution, which shall be able to respond to it **within 8 days of receipt** of the preliminary report, if and only if it contains obvious factual inaccuracies and/or obvious errors in writing or figures. The comments shall be submitted to the Agency in Croatian and English electronically, using the form given in Annex 3, which is an integral part of the Instructions. **The higher education institution's comments must not address the views and conclusions of the expert panel.**

If the higher education institution does not submit comments on the preliminary report within the stated deadline, it will be considered the final report.

If the higher education institution submits comments on the preliminary report, the higher education institution's comments shall be submitted to the expert panel, which is obliged to consider it. If the expert panel considers the statements made in the comments to be justified, it shall amend the preliminary report accordingly, but if it considers that the comments are not justified, it shall state the reasons for dismissing them.

The expert panel chair shall submit either the said justification or the amended preliminary report to the Agency no later than 7 days from the date of receipt of the comments of the higher education institution.

The preliminary report submitted by the expert panel chair shall be considered the final report and shall be submitted by the Agency to the higher education institution. The higher education institution shall no longer have the right to comment on the final report.

The Agency shall submit the final report of the expert panel and the comments of the higher education institution, or the justification of the expert panel respectively, to the Accreditation Council.

## **7. ADOPTING A DECISION**

### **7.1. Reasoned proposal of the Accreditation Council**

Based on the final report containing quality assessments, the Accreditation Council shall adopt a reasoned proposal for issuing a licence to operate at their session.

The Accreditation Council may, if deemed necessary, ask the expert panel chair, or a member mandated by the chair, to attend the session and provide necessary clarifications.

A reasoned proposal for granting / denying a licence shall be adopted within six months of the date of submission of a duly completed request and shall be submitted by the Agency to the higher education institution.

### **7.2. Objection by the higher education institution**

Within 30 days of receipt of the reasoned proposal for granting / denying a licence, the higher education institution may file a complaint to the Complaints Committee against the reasoned proposal.

The complaint shall be reasoned and accompanied by relevant evidence.

The Complaints Committee shall examine the merits of the complaint and submit its comments on all the allegations within 15 days of the receipt of the complaint.

If the higher education institution has not lodged a complaint against the reasoned proposal for granting / denying a licence, the reasoned proposal shall be forwarded to the Agency.

### **7.3. Decision of the Agency**

Based on a reasoned proposal of the Accreditation Council and the comments of the Complaints Committee if a complaint has been lodged, the Agency shall decide on the licence by way of a decision to:

1. issue a licence;
2. deny to issue a licence.

The decision shall be issued within a maximum of 30 days upon receiving the reasoned proposal or the response of the Complaints Committee, and it shall comprise the

information required by Article 21, Paragraph 1 of the Act and the Agency's Decision on the form and a more detailed content of the licence.

There shall be no possibility of appeal against the decision of the Agency, but an administrative dispute may be initiated.

The Agency shall deliver the decision to the higher education institution.

The Agency shall also submit the decision to issue a licence to operate to the Ministry of Science and Education, for the purpose of adding it to the Register of Higher Education Institutions.

The higher education institution may start to operate after the entry of the higher education institution in the Register of Higher Education Institutions.

The licence to operate may not be transferred to other physical or legal persons.

## **8. FOLLOW-UP**

The decision to issue a licence shall also determine the follow-up procedure on the operation of the higher education institution to be carried out by the Follow-up Committee.

The higher education institution shall, within a maximum three months from the day of issuance of the licence, adopt an action plan defining the activities, deadlines and indicators necessary for meeting the recommendations of the expert panel. The action plan shall be submitted using the form set out in Annex 4 which is an integral part of these Instructions.

The Follow-up Committee shall analyse and evaluate the activities determined in the action plan and adopt an opinion, which shall be referred to the Accreditation Council.

The higher education institution shall report on the performance of the activities determined in the action plan after a period of two years.

## 9. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The final report, the comments of the higher education institution, and the decision to issue a licence or deny the request for a licence to operate shall be public documents, which shall be published on the Agency's website.

## 10. FEEDBACK

Upon completion of the initial accreditation of a higher education institution, the Agency shall collect feedback from the higher education institution and the expert panel members by means of a questionnaire. Feedback shall be collected to improve the work of the Agency.

President of the Accreditation Council



Prof. Mirjana Hruškar, PhD

## ANNEXES

Annex 1: Application form for initial accreditation of the higher education institution

Annex 2: Template of the Final report on initial accreditation of the higher education institution

Annex 3: Higher education institution's comments template

Annex 4: Action plan template

Annex 5: Justification for reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses

### **ANNEX 5: Justification for reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses**

**The Agency shall reimburse the expert panel members for the following expenses:**

- economy class tickets reserved and paid exclusively by the Agency (in agreement with the expert panel members) **or** economy-class train tickets, bus tickets **or** transport by a private car (a free parking space is provided in front of the Agency's building);
- hotel accommodation (half-board) during the procedure, reserved and paid exclusively by the Agency;
- lunch during the visit, reserved and paid exclusively by the Agency;
- public transport from home to the place of departure, i.e. from the place of arrival to the hotel, and return. Where there is a choice of transport, the expert panel members should use more convenient and affordable means of public transport.

**The Agency shall only reimburse the costs for which the original invoices have been submitted. The expert panel members shall submit the original invoices to the Agency.**

**The Agency shall not cover the costs of:**

- plane tickets purchased personally by the expert panel members;
- extra nights at hotels;
- hotel minibar;
- alcoholic beverages;

- additional costs incurred during the procedure, which are not stated in the costs covered by the Agency (refreshments at car stops or gas stations, expenses in restaurants and cafes at airports, etc.)