

# QA IN HE IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

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Regional capacities for QA and their relation to development and implementation of NQFs  
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# Introduction of Bologna system in Croatia



- 2001 Croatia signed the Bologna Declaration
- Impetus - wish to improve the education structure of the population, reform HE system, improve the quality and join the EU
- Major changes: three cycle system, ECTS
- 2005 – first Bologna generation of students enrolled





- Established in 2005
- Development of QA model in line *with **European standards and Guidelines for QA in HE (ESG)*** and best international practices began in 2005
- 2009 – redefinition of its role (Act on QA in Science and Higher Education) and strengthening of its independence
- 2011 – ENQA/EQAR membership / full compliance with ESGs

# Activities



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



# QA role



Initial accreditation

Re-accreditation

Thematic evaluation

Audit



# Initial accreditation



- New HEIs and/or new study programs
- New scientific organizations established and/or financed by state
- Fulfillment of **minimum criteria** is checked



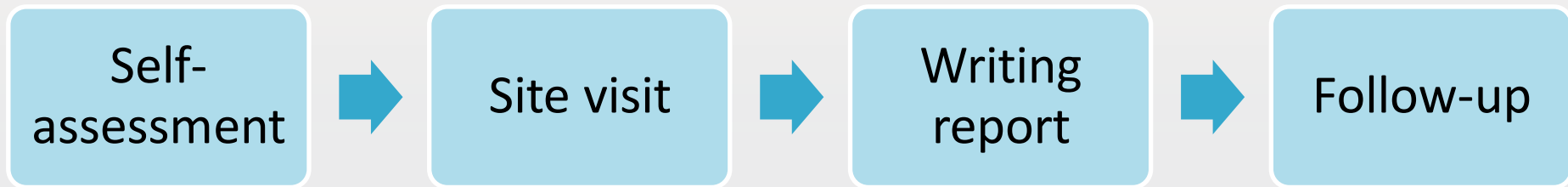
# Re-accreditation



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

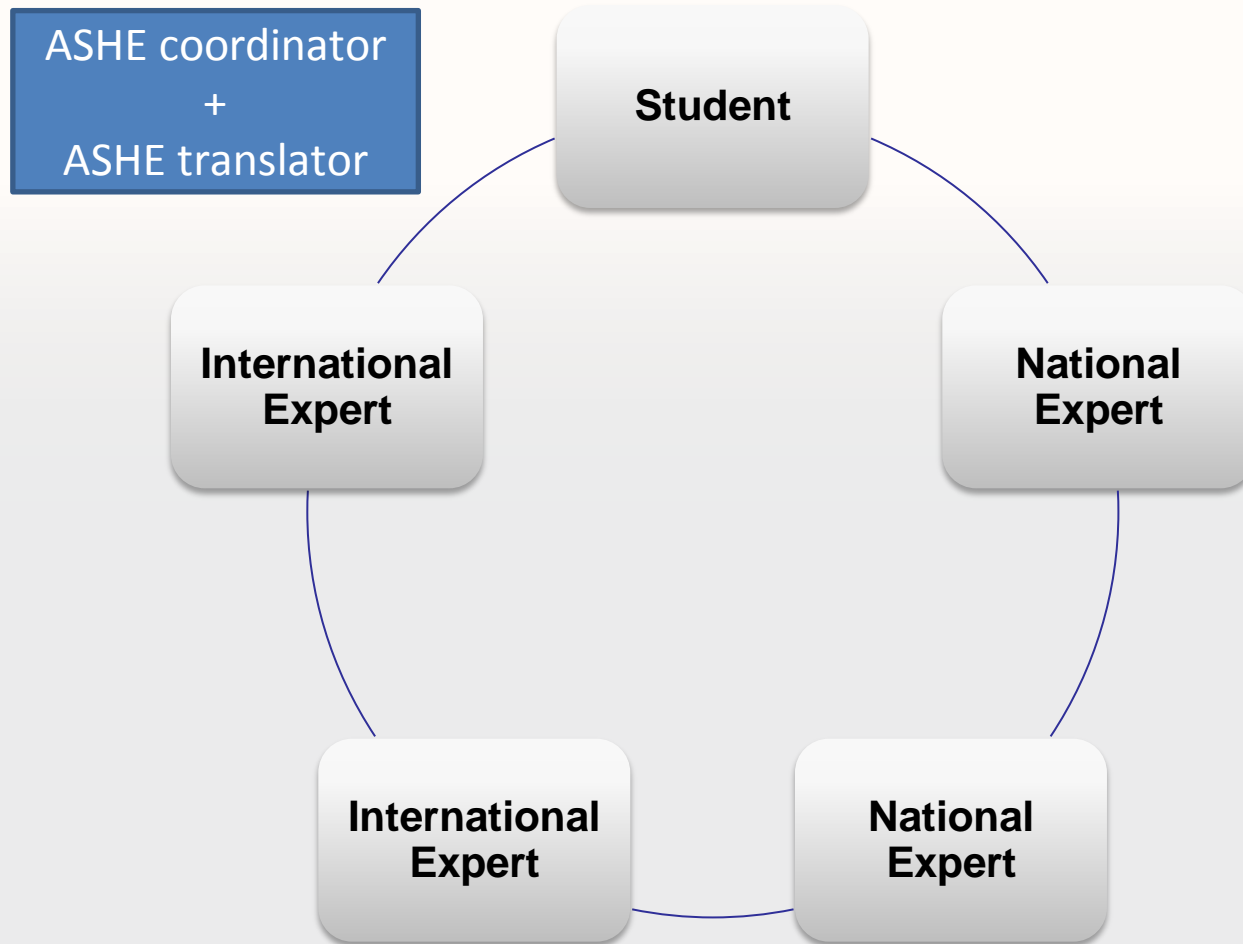


# Re-accreditation procedure





# Re-accreditation - Expert Panel



# Scope of re-accreditation



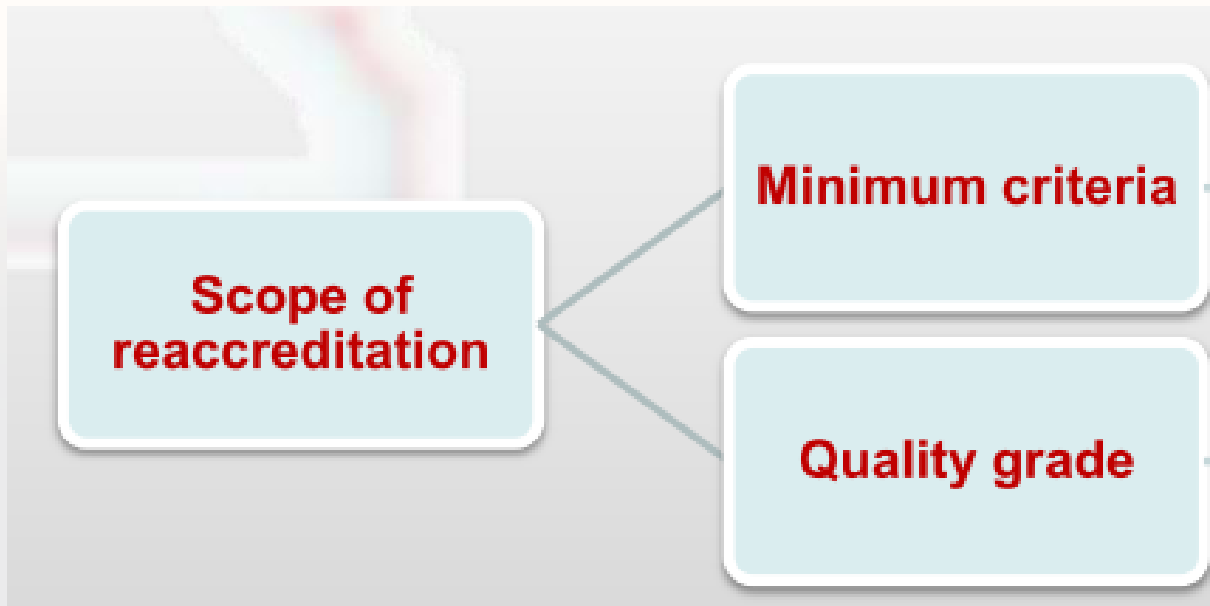
**Quality assurance:** ensuring the minimum academic  
threshold

and

**Quality improvement:** ensuring that institutions have  
processes and mechanisms for self-reflection and  
improvement



# Re-accreditation - Scope



# Minimum criteria



- quantitative criteria such as number of teachers / researches, student / teacher ratio and space criteria



# Quality grade criteria

Standards and criteria of quality defined by  
the Accreditation Council of the Agency

**1**

**INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**2**

**STUDY PROGRAMMES**

**3**

**STUDENTS**

**4**

**TEACHERS**

**5**

**SCIENTIFIC AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY / RESEARCH AND  
PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY**

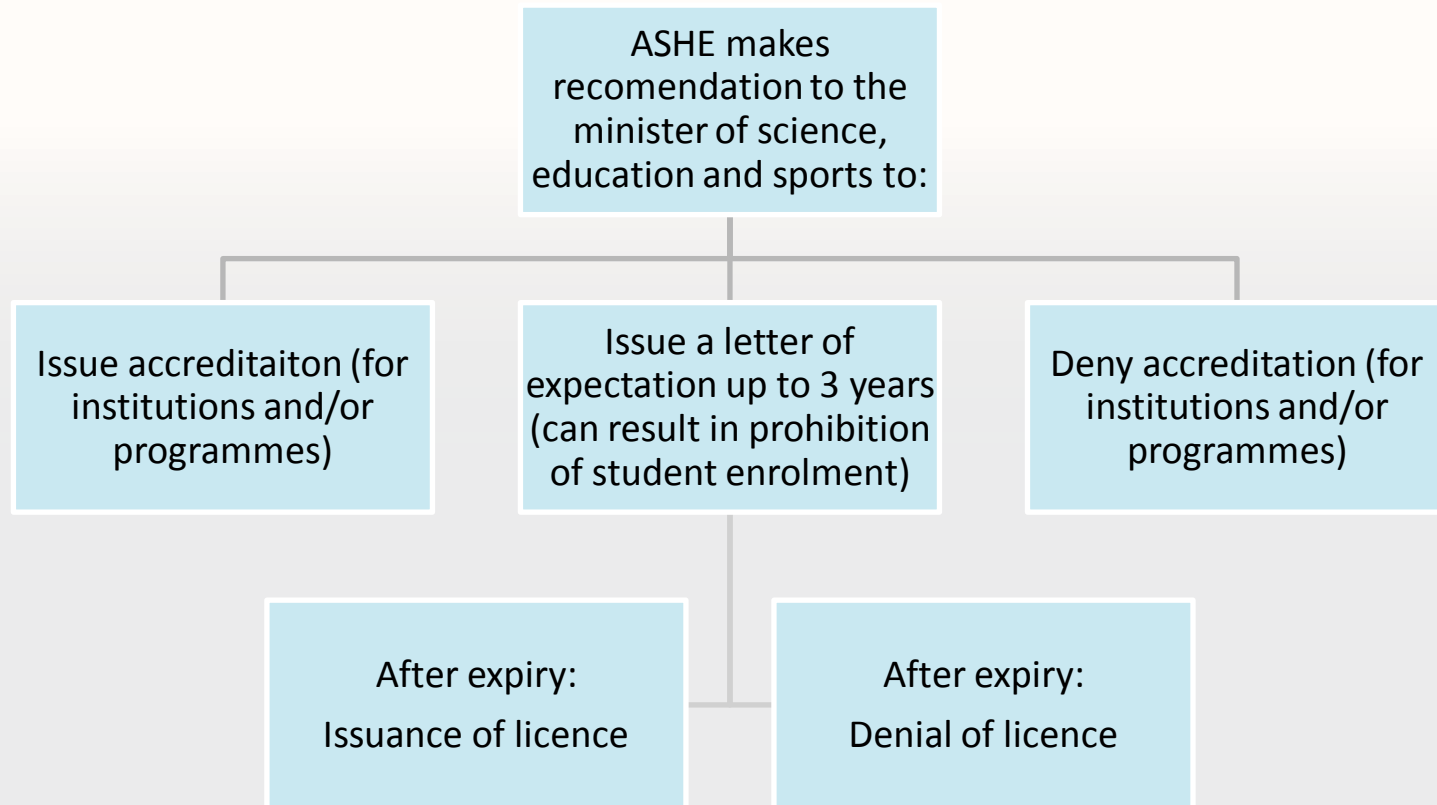
**6**

**INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND MOBILITY**

**7**

**RESOURCES: ADMINISTRATION, SPEACE, EQUIPMENT AND  
FINANCES**

# Re-accreditation-outcomes





## Outcomes

**50** accreditation  
recommendations

- accreditation granted to **30** HEIs
- letter of expectation issued to **18** HEIs
- accreditation denied to **2** HEIs and **13** dislocated study programs

# QA IN HE IN CROATIA



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





# Audit



- Scope → degree of development and efficiency of the internal QA system of HEIs
- Outcome → report with recommendations for improvement and a certificate issued by ASHE



# HEIs QA system



- 150 QA units are established at HEIs
- 126 QA Ordinances
- 57 QA Manuals
- 108 students members of QA Units
- 35 representatives from business sector are members of QA Units



# Thematic evaluation



- Scope → a segment of activities of HEIs or scientific organizations or equivalent evaluation subjects
- Outcome → report with assessment



# Thematic evaluation



- 2011/2012 → thematic evaluation of **25** public research institutes
  
- 2012/2013 → thematic evaluation of all postgraduate doctoral studies
- thematic evaluation of studies in biomedical field (compliance with EU Directive)



# Strenghts



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



# Strenghts



- Fair and equitable treatment of all stakeholders (public, private, new or traditional HEIs)
- Involvement of all stakeholders in implementing changes and carrying out activities
- Public discussions with all stakeholders
- Accreditation reports and decisions are public
- System-wide analysis are public
- Public forum – ASHE website
- ASHE documents are public (standards, criteria & procedures)
- ASHE annual report is public



# Strenghts



- Surveys
- Confidentiality Statement – ASHE staff
- Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement (everybody participating in external QA procedures)
- Accreditation Council Code of Ethics
- No gifts, no paid lunches or dinners from HEIs (for members of peer-reviews or ASHE staff) – written procedure
- Ministry clearly committed to independence of the national agency



# Challenges and Future



- Successful completion of the first re-accreditation cycle (by 2015)
- Reconsidering the model of re-accreditation for the second cycle (starting from 2016)
- Further development of external QA procedures towards the implementation of National Qualification Framework
- Shift from *inputs* to *outputs* / more focus on **learning and research outcomes** and **employment of graduates**
- QA of transnational education, joint studies, e-learning ...





# Challenges and Future



- Thematic reviews of ‘burning issues’ in Croatian HE: doctoral education, learning outcomes ...
- Further support to development of quality culture: workshops, reports ...
- Help our HEIs to enhance their position in EHEA and world-wide (mobility, cooperation with industry)
- Support to evidence-based policy making: **focus on data collection**



# Thank you





# Thank you for your attention!

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