

**COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

**MONITORING, ASSESSING AND ASSURING  
QUALITY IN THE SLOVENE HIGHER  
EDUCATION AREA IN 2007 AND 2008**

**META-REPORT BY THE SENATE FOR EVALUATION**

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## **SENATE FOR EVALUATION – MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Senate for Evaluation is to systematically monitor, assess and assure the quality of Slovene higher education and vocational education as a part of the European higher education area. The Senate engages in public work to stimulate, develop and constantly improve the culture of quality.

In its work, the Senate for Evaluation adheres to best practice cases in the European higher education area, to European recommendations and to quality standards. It strives to achieve equal and active cooperation in international and, above all, European agencies and associations for quality.

## Address of the chairperson of the Senate for Evaluation

The Bologna process leads to better compatibility and comparability of higher education systems; it facilitates mobility for students, graduates and higher education staff and it helps the institutions to attract students and experts from other continents. Higher education is being modernized through a three-cycle structure, which within the national contexts, includes the possibility of intermediary qualifications connected to the first Bologna cycle and to accepting the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area<sup>1</sup>.

The Bologna reforms in Slovenia are an opportunity for rethinking and monitoring programmes, for the reform of teaching methods (student orientation, continuous assessment, flexible study courses), for strengthening internal communication and for better transparency. Strengthening is a broader term than quality assurance and is the sum of many ways to develop higher education institutions in Slovenia. The largest obstacle for strengthening quality is a lack of resources for implementation of identified required improvements and not the nature of internal or external quality assurance procedures.

When the new Higher Education Act came into force at the end of 2006 (OG RS, nr. 119/2006) and the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia was reformed in the first half of 2007 and the Office of Higher Education was established, the Senate for Evaluation took over the tasks of monitoring, assessing and assuring quality.

The task of the Senate for Evaluation is to analyse self-evaluation reports, run external evaluation procedures, appoint commissions for external evaluation and to manage external evaluation procedures. The Senate is composed of nine members who represent all academic fields of study.

In accordance with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the Senate for Evaluation is independent of the government bodies; in deference to this neutrality, rectors, pro-rectors, deans, vice-deans, directors of university members or independent higher education institutions or headmasters and directors of vocational colleges may not be appointed as senate members. Senate members have to include an employee representative and a student representative.

In Slovenia we promote self-evaluation and carry out the legal requirement for external evaluation and mandatory re-accreditation. In the context of international comparability, Slovenia has developed a uniform methodology in the evaluation of the Slovene higher education. We have learned from the experience gathered through self-evaluation at Slovene universities; and, based on that, prepared common, uniform instructions for self-evaluation that are suitable for all higher education institutions in Slovenia. We have trained evaluators, carried out pilot evaluations, issued reports on them and now we are carrying out the regular external evaluation programme and are publishing the finished meta-report on institutional external evaluation in 2007 and 2008.

The Council for Higher Education and its senates (evaluation and accreditation) have also set the objective to fulfil the ENQA membership requirements and apply for membership. For that purpose we have acquired the help of the experts of the Senate's professional service.

When carrying out institutional external evaluation we adhere to the following **evaluation principles**:

- **ethical conduct**: a basis for professional work;

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<sup>1</sup> Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009

- **proper presentation:** reports have to be truthful and accurate;
- **professionalism:** assiduousness and deliberation in evaluation;
- **independence and neutrality:** a base for impartial evaluation and unbiased evaluation conclusions;
- **evidence-based approach:** a rational method for achieving reliable and reproducible evaluation conclusions in the systematic evaluation process.<sup>2</sup>

The activities of the Senate for Evaluation in the external assurance of higher education institutions and vocational colleges are:

- **following procedures** for internal quality assurance in higher education institutions and vocational colleges;
- **developing external quality assurance procedures:** purposes and goals of the procedures are defined and published prior to developing the procedures themselves. Everyone who is responsible (even higher education institutions and vocational colleges) is participating in these activities;
- **decision criteria** is published and consistently used;
- **senate procedures** correspond to their purpose and achieve their goals;
- **reporting:** reports (on external evaluations) are written clearly and are accessible to everyone for whom they are intended;
- **follow-up procedures** of implementation of recommendations, preparation of action plans, consistent implementation;
- **occasional repeated evaluations and reviews:** cycle duration and procedures used are clearly defined and published in advance;
- **system-wide analyses:** the Senate prepares occasional reports on general findings from carried out evaluations.

I am obliged to thank all colleagues, evaluators, foreign experts and everyone responsible at the higher education institutions and vocational colleges; and I owe a special thanks to the Senate's professional service and to the students for their support in development and implementation of the quality system in higher education in the Republic of Slovenia.

Prof. Dr. Franci ČUŠ  
Senate Chairperson

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<sup>2</sup> SIST EN ISO 19011: 2003

## Address by the editor

You are reading the first meta-report of the Senate for Evaluation of the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia, which, after changes have been made to higher education legislation in 2006, is responsible for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality in Slovene higher education area. The Senate assumed these tasks at the end of November of 2007 from the Quality Assessment Commission of Slovenia, which in 2006 carried out the first four pilot institutional external evaluations of higher education institutions and started procedures for institutional evaluations in 2007.

As the Senate for Evaluation assumed its tasks at the end of 2007, its first initiative in 2008 was to complete the institutional evaluations of higher education institutions for 2007 and to carry out all evaluations for 2008, when for the first time vocational colleges were included into evaluation, which under international criteria, fall under the category of short tertiary education programmes. The requirement for uniform quality standards was clearly expressed at the conference of European ministers responsible for higher education in Berlin, in September 2003. In addition to intensive preparation for evaluation of higher education institutions from 2007, the Senate's professional service first studied the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) for assuring quality in the European higher education area and the conditions for membership in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The Senate for Evaluation came to the conclusion that its criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring the quality of higher education institutions, study programmes and research, and professional activities, should observe the European Standards and Guidelines. Furthermore, the Senate for Evaluation decided to adopt and use these until it adopted its own criteria. After studying the ENQA membership requirements, the professional service of the Senate came to the conclusion that the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia – the parent body of the Senate for Evaluation - has certain advantages to the National Commission for the Quality of Higher Education, because in addition to the evaluations, it also carries out accreditations of higher education institutions and study programmes, a function which is closely linked to assuring quality. Moreover, the Senate had adopted and publically made available rules of procedure, which defined its tasks, evaluation and accreditation procedures and the due decision-making processes.

On the other hand, the Senate had to work consistently to first meet the basic requirement for membership in ENQA – continuous performance of external evaluation for at least two years. Furthermore, it had to integrate foreign experts into external evaluation commissions and so immediately translate the whole documentation into English. Thus, by publishing this report, another essential requirement for equal cooperation within the European network of agencies has been met.

The introductory part of the meta-report describes the changes to the higher education legislation, formation of a new Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia and especially the formation of the Senate for Evaluation. As in 2008, when the professional, administrative and technical tasks were carried out by the Office of Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia and after that by the Secretariat of the Council, we have decided to refer to them as the Senate's professional service.

This introduction is followed by a short review of the work carried out during that year by the Senate for Evaluation and by detailed descriptions and analyses of evaluations in 2007, followed by those in 2008 and by an analysis of self-evaluation reports of higher education institutions and vocational colleges in 2007. The concluding findings of the Senate are followed by the appendixes, which include the composition of external evaluation commissions, a new set of instruments for evaluation, defined by the Senate, and questionnaire analyses by the Senate's professional service.

Let me present the chapters on institutional external evaluations in 2007 and 2008 in more detail. In addition to preparation for institutional external evaluations described in the introduction, central parts of the chapters consist of summaries of findings from all final evaluation reports, arranged according to individual fields of assessment of higher education institutions or vocational colleges based on Criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality. Therein we tried to include the essential strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses (in 2007 we recorded opportunities for improvement) of institutions, schools and colleges. In a special table, according to the fields of assessment defined by the criteria, we made careful note of examples of recommended set-ups (and occasionally best case examples as well), which were identified by individual external evaluation commissions as a strength of the individual institution or college. The meta-report then follows with summaries of feedback by the evaluated higher education institutions and vocational colleges and by the findings of the Senate's professional service with recommendations for improving the work of the evaluation commissions. The contents of the chapter on institutional external evaluations in 2008 are then completed by feedback from foreign evaluators. Each of the chapters also includes a joint analysis of review questionnaires – preparations for external evaluations, which the institutions and colleges had to fill out during the commission's visit.

In addition to the analysis of self-evaluation reports by the higher education institutions and vocational colleges, we have tried to extract recommendations for improving the work that should help institutions and colleges develop, modify and assure quality and carry out self-evaluations.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that in order to guarantee unhindered and quality work undertaken by the Senate for Evaluation, we have to strengthen its professional service, especially if we want to apply for ENQA membership as soon as possible and become full member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR). These memberships will bring with them constant and intense international cooperation, integration of Slovene evaluators into European evaluation groups, continuous self-evaluation, periodic external evaluation of the Council and the Senate (at least every five years the work of the Council will be evaluated by recognized European agencies). In addition to the required tasks that will have to be carried out at home, there will be over a hundred external evaluations of institutions and study programmes each year, at least every seven years, which is the requirement for re-accreditation. Finally, we have to strive constantly to strengthen the assistance that the Senate provides in professional service to higher education institutions, vocational colleges and external evaluation commissions.

Tatjana Debevec  
Secretariat

# **COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

## **Amending the Higher Education Act**

With the coming into force of the Amending Act to the Higher Education Act in the autumn of 2006, which was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, nr. 119/2006 – official consolidated text - the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia was given new competences and tasks in addition to the accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes and to giving consent to the habilitation of higher education employees and scientific employees. The most important of the new tasks were monitoring, assessing and assuring the quality of higher education i.e. in the whole of tertiary education in the state.

The Council took over the role of the evaluation body from the Quality Assessment Commission of Slovenia (hereafter: National Commission) and by means of the Act from 2004 (HEA-oct, OG RS nr. 100/04) the role of a planned agency for quality assurance, which was, however, never founded. This part of Council operation is in accordance with the criteria required for membership in the European association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (hereafter: ENQA); that is why the Council is defined as an independent body in the above Act.

The Council had to reorganize its work: in order to carry out accreditation, evaluation and habilitation procedures, it appointed three senates. According to the last paragraph of Article 50 of the Act, all professional, administrative and technical tasks for the Council and the senates were carried out by an administrative body within the ministry in charge of higher education. Therefore, a Decree amending the Decree on Administrative Authorities within Ministries was published on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2006 in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia nr. 132, according to which, a new body was created at the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology: The Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Higher Education. The Office carried out its duties until 12<sup>th</sup> August 2008, when, according to amendments to the Higher Education Act – HEA-F (OG RS, nr. 64/2008), these tasks were taken over by the Secretariat of the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia as its integral part. The Secretariat is, therefore, no longer dependent on the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, which is in accordance with the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia (CC nr.: U-I-370/06-20) issued on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008. This decision resulted in new amendments to the Higher Education Act. The court's decision found that a body within the ministry does not guarantee the required independence defined in European regulations. Approved independence is one of the essential conditions for ENQA membership).

## **Forming a New Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia**

In accordance with Article 50 of the Higher Education Act from 2006 the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (hereafter: Council) has a partnership-based structure composed of experts for higher education, science and technology and for higher vocational education, representatives of the students of higher education institutions and vocational colleges as well as employee and employer representatives. In accordance with their positions, the rectors of the three Slovene universities are also members as well as the president of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. All fields of study are represented in the Council.

For operating and making decisions in evaluation, accreditation and habilitation procedures the Council appoints three senates, which also have a partnership-based structure (each of them has one employer and one student representative). The senates have nine members, at least five of them are at the same time also council members; others are external experts. Senate members may not be rectors, pro-rectors, deans, vice-deans, directors, headmasters..., i.e. no one, who may influence neutral decision making. Council and senate members are appointed for a period of six years, and student representatives for two years.

The first session of the newly formed council was held at the end of April 2007, when the rules of procedure were adopted and the recommendations for senate members were passed. By the end of July 2007 several constituent sessions were held, and in the autumn the service rules were adopted.

### **Council Secretariat**

According to the last amendment of the Act (August 2008), the professional tasks for the Council and the senates are carried out by the Council Secretariat (hereafter: Secretariat) as its integral part. At the end of 2008 the Secretariat had six full time employees and was run by a director, who was appointed by the Council for a five-year period. Secretariat tasks are carried out in four internal organizational units: sector for accreditation, sector for evaluation (hereafter: Senate's professional service), sector for habilitation and general service.

The Secretariat carries out professional, administrative and technical tasks required for the unhindered work of the Council, the senates, their working bodies i.e. the commissions, and above all:

- prepares recommendations for annual work plans, annual reports and financial reports, takes care of honouring agreements and contracts entered into by the Council;
- maintains contacts with stakeholders, professional public and other public, organizes training courses for independent experts;
- manages cooperation with related domestic and foreign institutions;
- prepares recommendations for regulation and other acts, which are adopted by the senates or the Council;
- carries out administrative and professional tasks in accreditation, habilitation, evaluation and other procedures;
- prepares materials for the Council and senates and organizes sessions, keeps minutes and records.

### **COUNCIL AS THE EVALUATION BODY**

The main task of the Council is to care for the quality of Slovene higher education and vocational education by monitoring, assessing and assuring the quality of higher education institutions and vocational colleges, their study programmes and scientific, research, art and professional activities. In addition, it:

- cooperates with foreign institutions and agencies for accreditation and evaluation form abroad and their experts;
- cooperates with higher education institutions and vocational colleges and promotes self-evaluations, organizes training courses for external evaluation commissions and publishes

reports on individual external evaluations, analyses them and prepares and publishes annual national reports;

The Council defines the criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring the quality of higher education institutions and vocational colleges, study programmes and scientific, research, art and professional activities.

## **SENATE FOR EVALUATION**

The constitutive session of the Senate for Evaluation (hereafter: Senate) was held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2007. On 18<sup>th</sup> September 2007 the rules of procedure were adopted, which define the Senate's competences, procedures, decision making process and the procedures for formation and allocation of tasks of its working bodies. The rules are in accordance with the rules on Council procedures. The Senate makes decisions independently in the first instance; the appeal body is the Council.

Senate's main tasks are:

- gathering and analysing reports on self-evaluation and external evaluations;
- management of external evaluation procedures and preparation of scientific bases for them;
- appointing commissions for external evaluation of higher education institutions and vocational colleges, study programmes and scientific, research, art and professional activities;
- managing external evaluation procedures, reporting on those procedures and encouraging self-evaluation of higher education institutions and vocational colleges.

The Senate has two standing bodies: a special commission for external evaluation procedures in higher education; and a special commission for external evaluation procedures in vocational education. The commissions deal with professional questions and problems from individual fields of Senate's operation and issue position statements, opinions and recommendations for decisions of Senate sessions.

In addition to the standing bodies, the Senate also appoints special 5-member commissions for external evaluation from the pool of independent and trained evaluators, which are approved by the Council on Senate's proposal. As a rule, at least one member of the commission has to be a foreign expert.

Evaluation procedures are initiated through submission of written applications; the applications have to be prepared in accordance with the evaluation criteria. Higher education institutions and vocational colleges submit applications on the required forms and enclose documentation and other required enclosures. The applications are collected by the Senate's professional service which then verifies if they are formally complete and regularly informs the Senate chairperson and the chairmen of working commissions. Senate chairperson – or the Senate's professional service on his authority – notifies the institution or college if the applications are not complete and requests a completion of the application. The professional service documents what parts of the application were lacking, how they were remedied and forwards those records to the Senate chairperson or to the competent working commission.

When the working commission recommends an external evaluation, it proposes that the Senate appoints trained and Council-approved evaluators to special 5-man commissions for external evaluation. It then forwards the motion with a proposal of the decision on appointing the commission to the Senate for final decision. Final decisions are made by the Senate at Senate sessions with a majority vote of its members.

The special 5-man commission for external evaluation carries out the evaluation (visit) of the higher education institution or vocational college and issues a final report on external evaluation. The evaluated institution may issue a separate opinion on the report and both are taken into account during the re-accreditation, which has to be carried out every seven years.

## **EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN 2007 AND 2008**

### **Short review of the work done by the Senate**

In accordance with EU policies on establishing a joint European higher education area, whose main goal is to assure quality of higher education in that area, the Senate first studied the European regulations, standards and recommendations from this field and started preparing regulations and other acts required for its operation. It started to prepare for cooperation with other European institutions and their experts on accreditation and evaluation of higher education and for meeting the requirements for membership in the ENQA and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (hereafter: EQAR). It also continued the procedures for institutional external evaluation of higher education institutions, which had been initiated by the National Commission in spring 2007:

1. The Senate found that the criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring the quality of higher education institutions, study programmes and research, art and professional activities (hereafter: criteria), adopted by the National Commission, were in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (hereafter: ESG), and therefore the Senate agreed in its regulations that it would use those criteria until new criteria could be adopted.
2. At its 2<sup>nd</sup> session on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2007 The Senate adopted and published the Rules of the Senate for Evaluation which, according to the Higher Education Act, were a requirement in order to take over and fulfil the tasks of the National Commission.
3. The Senate collected and analysed self-evaluation reports of higher education institutions and vocational colleges for 2007.
4. The Senate formed its own working bodies and prepared everything necessary for continued evaluations of higher education institutions whose incomplete applications were assumed from the National Commission at the end of September 2007. It adopted a work plan until the end of 2007, a work plan for 2008, a financial plan and issued a mission statement.
5. The Senate organized two trainings for external evaluators: the first at the end of January 2007, the second at the end of October 2008 – more than 70 evaluator candidates attended the all-day training on 24<sup>th</sup> October at Hotel Union, coming from the ranks of higher education and vocational teachers, representatives of the economy and student representatives. The evaluators were approved by the Council: the first trained group which carried out pilot evaluations at the end of November 2007 and the second group after it finished its training at the beginning of November 2008.
6. From among the trained evaluators the Senate appointed 5-member external evaluation commissions which carried out 11 institutional external evaluations of higher education institutions and for the first time they evaluated vocational colleges as well. Two-day visits to the higher education institutions and vocational colleges were carried out in February, March, May, June and November. Employees of the Senate's professional service participated in the visits as external observers and in the last three visits respectable foreign experts participated as well.

7. For the second group of evaluations the Senate prepared:

- a new set of instruments for external evaluations (review questionnaires (one for higher education institutions and one for vocational colleges) intended for preparation for external evaluation, a record of the external evaluation commission's visit, instructions for preparation of a final evaluation report) and had them translated to English together with other important documents;
- questionnaires for the management and the students of evaluated higher education institutions and vocational colleges which are used to assess satisfaction with the work of external evaluation commissions and to collect suggestions for improvement of their work as well as the work of the Senate and the Senate's professional service - implementing the self-evaluation of the Council and the Senate.

8. In a year's time international cooperation developed as well:

- the Senate's professional service participated in various international meetings and forums on the topic of quality (including both ENQA forum in November 2007 in Roma and November 2008 in Budapest);
- the Council acquired full membership in Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEE Network) – on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2008 the admittance documents were signed in Albania;
- in December 2008 the Council applied for membership in the European Consortium for Accreditation – an ECA; a visit of the consortium representatives to Slovenia was planned for 2009;
- the Senate's professional services initiated contacts with other acknowledged European agencies (ASIIN, ACQUIN...);
- as members of external evaluation commissions the Senate appointed recognised foreign experts from an agency that is an ENQA member – EU-approved “Bologna” experts;
- on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> December Dr. Achim Hopbach, ENQA Vice-President, visited the Senate and the Secretariat; on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008 the council was visited by Dr. Terence Clifford-Amos from the UK, an expert for Bologna reforms, evaluator and a member of the EURASHE society (The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education).

## **INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS FOR 2007**

### **Collection of applications for external evaluation**

By signing the handover protocol on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2007, the Senate took over the tasks of the National Commission and “inherited” 9 applications for institutional external evaluation of higher education institutions in 2007; six from the University of Ljubljana, two from the University of Maribor and one from the University of Primorska. Those were:

1. Academy of Music at the University of Ljubljana;
2. Biotechnical Faculty at the University of Ljubljana;
3. Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy at the University of Ljubljana;
4. Faculty of Computer and Information Science at the University of Ljubljana;
5. Faculty of Administration at the University of Ljubljana;
6. University College for Health Care at the University of Ljubljana;
7. Faculty of Logistics at the University of Maribor;
8. Faculty of Medicine at the University of Maribor;
9. College of Health Care Izola at the University of Primorska.

After reviewing the applications, Senate’s professional service found that one of them had no enclosures and that all the others were incomplete. In addition to that, the applications by the Faculty of Logistics and the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Maribor had to be rejected as the faculties still had no graduates of their study programmes, which is according to Article 24 a requirement for external evaluation.

A memorandum was sent to seven higher education institutions with the explanation that in accordance with the law the evaluation procedures will be continued by the Senate and the Council. The memorandum also included information on enclosures that the institution would have to submit in accordance with Article 29 of the criteria. The application completion deadline was 10<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

### **Approving evaluators**

At the same time the Senate reviewed documentation on evaluators who were trained by the National Commission or who had participated in the first pilot evaluations. The Senate asked them if they were willing to continue cooperation and in November 2007 it submitted to the Council a proposal for their approval. This way the Senate acquired the first group of 19 approved evaluators; the first decisions on the composition of external evaluation commissions were made at the beginning of December 2007.

### **Reviewed higher education institutions and the procedure until final reports are published**

Article 12 of the Senate’s Rules of Procedure, which regulates the composition of the evaluation commission so that it may not include experts working at the higher education institution, vocational college or study programme under evaluation – caused there to be too few evaluators and no time to train them. So the Senate decided to carry out the 2007 evaluations at two dates: the first at the beginning of 2008; and the second in June of 2008. The first group of higher education institutions included those that best completed their application by the set date. On 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007 they received a notice on commission composition and a review questionnaire which they had to fill out by the end of January 2008. The Senate also asked them to report whether they agreed with the commission’s setup. This

first group was composed of: the Faculty of Computer and Information Science at the University of Ljubljana, the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy at the University of Ljubljana and of the College of Health Care Izola at the University of Primorska.

The end of January saw the start of the final intensive preparations by the external evaluation commission and higher education institutions for the evaluation. On 19<sup>th</sup> January 2008, the Senate organized a meeting of evaluation commissions and representatives of higher education institutions in the rooms of the Veterinary Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. The purpose of the meeting was to train and prepare for institutional external evaluations. The participants were presented with the visit schedule and the set of evaluation instruments that had been taken over from the National Commission and in part modified: the review questionnaire; the protocol of the visit; instructions for preparing the final report; and the structure of the final report. The commissions and the representatives of institutions also set the planned dates for two-day visits and agreed on the measures during the visits; on coordination and planning of the visit schedule; the course of the visit; and the participants. The visits to all three institutions were finished in February and the first days of March.

When the commissions finished their work by submitting the final evaluation reports to the Senate's professional service at the end of March of 2008, the Senate immediately appointed commissions for external evaluation for the remaining two higher education institutions from 2007 (the composition of all external evaluation commissions for 2007 can be found in appendix 1) that adequately completed their applications, as the work had to be finished by the beginning of June. During that time the Senate was simultaneously also preparing for the 2008 evaluations. By 4<sup>th</sup> June, the visits to the Biotechnical Faculty at the University of Ljubljana and the University College for Health Care at the University of Ljubljana had been finished and the final evaluation reports were sent to the Senate's professional service by the end of June 2008.

During that time the Senate's professional service had put together two short questionnaires for the management and the students of the evaluated institution. It wanted to use them to collect information on how satisfied the institution was with the work of the commission and whether there were and suggestions for improving the commission's work... After the chairmen of the commissions submitted them, all five final evaluation reports were sent for review to the evaluated higher education institutions, which were also asked to fill out the remaining questionnaires.

Because the final reports may not be changed, the opinions had to be issued separately. The opinions and the filled-out questionnaires clearly showed that higher education institutions were very satisfied with the visits, as they rated them above average (appendix 3: analysis of review questionnaires). All opinions and completed questionnaires were returned to the Senate's professional service by the beginning of summer 2008.

Two employees of the Senate's professional service attended all the visits as external observers, as this was the only way to assess how to improve the procedure and the set of instruments for further evaluation (especially the protocol of the commission visit and the review questionnaire intended for preparation for evaluation). During the visits, they identified the shortcomings that had to be remedied and came up with concrete proposals for an improved set of instruments during the analysis of evaluation reports and during the simultaneous analysis of ESG. In addition, they found that the questionnaire had to be harmonized with the fields of assessment from the criteria. The Senate's professional service

harmonized the draft for the new review questionnaire - intended for preparation for the evaluation of higher institutions - with the suggestions of the evaluators and the evaluated higher education institutions in the autumn 2008.

## **FINDINGS OF PARTICIPANTS IN INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS**

Institutional external evaluations for 2007 are presented from various viewpoints. First the summaries of contents of all five external evaluation procedures will be presented, followed by examples of recommended set-ups identified by external evaluation commissions, an analysis of completed review questionnaires, the opinions of evaluated higher education institutions and the findings of the Senate's professional service.

### **Content summaries of external evaluation reports**

There are differences between the young higher education institution - the University of Primorska - which is still growing and developing, and the other four institutions who are members of the University of Ljubljana and have a long tradition. Therefore it is understandable that the first one is still endeavouring to establish adequate conditions for unhindered operation, while the others have already developed and established such conditions. The summaries are based on the assessment reports from the criteria, even though individual fields in many reports contain information that does not belong to these.

#### *1. Strategy, organization and operation of the institution, record keeping and care for quality*

All evaluated higher education institutions have a clear mission statement (mission statements of individual departments as well), vision statement and strategy for their operation. However, in some cases the short-term and long-term development goals are not clearly separated and the vision and mission are intertwined. Knowledge of the orientation and goals of the individual higher education institution among its employees and students is better at higher education institutions with long standing operation. The strategy of the most University of Ljubljana members is in accordance with the strategy of the University.

Competences, powers and responsibilities are defined in the regulations of the legislation, university statutes, rules and other internal acts of members and universities. However, in practice, there is often too little cooperation from all sides. Higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff cooperate in forming the learning process and the processes of scientific, research, art and professional activities in the departments and chairs and through managing and administrative bodies. They have representatives in higher education bodies. The students are provided with the opportunity to voice their opinions and have the right of vote.

Higher education institutions do have adequately trained higher education teachers and other employees. The young higher education institution still builds its own cadre and the number of full time employees is improving each year. It is successfully acquiring appropriately trained higher education teachers. One of the institutions is facing serious spatial problems, others have sufficient space for now; three institutions plan to build new (additional)

premises. At almost all institutions the commissions noted concern whether the premises will be sufficient for achieving long-term goals from the strategic plan when all Bologna study programmes will be implemented. Implementation of Bologna programmes will affect the increase of other financial resources required for quality work - and both evaluated health care schools are already facing a lack of financial resources.

All higher education institutions have organized records on their operation; all of them strive to assure quality. Mostly, they have already established a system for assuring quality; however, there is still no comprehensive monitoring of quality everywhere. Cooperation between students and pedagogic staff is insufficient, and stakeholder roles are not fully defined. The commissions have also discovered that the self-evaluation reports do not always reflect whether there are measures for improving quality and if they are being carried out, nor how effective they are.

## 2. *Education – study activities*

The health care colleges' education is based on programmes that were prepared in accordance with the European directives (so called regulated occupations), whose graduate competences or study achievements are comparable on the European level, as is the acquired professional title. However, the old pre-Bologna programmes are a different case. Even the other evaluated higher education institutions show noticeable differences between the old and the new (Bologna) study programmes. The old programmes were not yet formed based on the competences, while the goals and competences in the new programmes are clearly defined and shaped in accordance with the strategy and goals of the institution. Credits were allocated to their study obligations and workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (hereafter: ECTS).

All programmes (old and new) have criteria for awarding scientific and professional titles (at the university and its members), so they are comparable to national and European standards. Higher education institutions continuously monitor the adherence to these criteria.

Higher education institutions collect information on the degree to which interested candidates are in the enrolment to the offered study programmes. HEIs undertake this procedure at every open day, and some even through their web sites. Students are polled by all institutions; the reports show that this is how they assess the quality of carrying out study programmes and the quality of higher education teachers and assistants. Questionnaire findings and student opinions are generally one of the requirements for habilitations. On the other hand, the commissions found that at almost all institutions, the questionnaire findings are not systemically used, or not used enough for improvement of quality and that the students are not informed about how (and if) their views are taken into account.

Only two institutions have information on employability and further studies of their graduates: one of these collates its own and the other operates through professional associations.

Students' study achievements, progression rate and the actual study duration are monitored by all institutions. Most problems arise due to a too long duration of studies, and the progression rate from the first year to the second year must be improved. All evaluated higher education study institutions train for occupations that are in high demand, which is why many students become employed prior to graduation. The institutions systematically approach the question

on how to convince the largest possible number of already employed students to finish their studies as soon as possible.

None of the institutions yet monitors study workload according to ECTS and most of them are currently developing a tutor system.

The ratios between the number of higher education teachers and assistants and the number of students differ from one institution to the other greatly; only one institution has a really bad ratio. Less students per higher education teacher or assistant generally means more genuine contacts and a pleasant study atmosphere.

### *3. Scientific, research, art and professional activities*

While the young institution is still trying to create conditions for research work, the scientific, research and professional activities at the other four institutions are in accordance with the University's strategy, with their own strategies and with the national and European standards. The latter is reflected through international cooperation in projects, publications and various other activities. A number of higher education teachers and assistants are facing problems with their research work due to a too heavy pedagogic workload.

All institutions use modern findings by scientific, research and professional activities in their teaching; the integration of research and pedagogic activities is reflected in the seminar and diploma papers. There is little involvement of undergraduate students in research work; however, this situation changes drastically for post-graduate students.

Higher education management is aware of the importance of research work. They encourage regular publications of scientific, research and professional findings, and keep adequate records of it. Most publications are found in the COBISS database. Scientific, research and professional work are a requirement for habilitations. However, research work is not equally developed everywhere, and there are differences between the departments of individual higher education institutions. The commissions have proposed more projects, more international cooperation and more cooperation among the institutions and their departments. Increasing research work at almost all departments is made more difficult by too much pedagogic workload of higher education teachers and assistants which is why the commissions recommended that they consider the options for reducing workloads. The commissions recommend opening up project offices for efficient administrative help in acquiring projects.

### *4. Higher education teachers and assistants and scientific staff*

Selection procedures, elections and promotions of higher education teachers and assistants are defined by the law and the university statutes. They are carried out in accordance with the set rules for election to titles. The criteria include achievements in scientific, research, art and professional as well as pedagogic work; this kind of integration is necessary. All members of the University of Ljubljana have defined their workload intended for educational, scientific, research and professional activities in their employment contracts, some even in other regulations (e.g. criteria for reducing direct pedagogic workload).

Two of the evaluated higher education institutions have planned education and training of higher education teachers and assistants and scientific staff; all of them encourage it, enable it

and guarantee it. Records are being kept of that. The responsibility of employees to participate in further education is set in the employment contracts.

Higher education institutions promote young higher education assistants by drawing them to pedagogic work at the institution, providing them with post-graduate education and habilitate them to titles. They see problems especially in freeing up work places as according to the current legislation regular professors may stay in their position regardless of whether they have already met their retirement conditions. Most higher education institutions have no strategy for career development counselling for their employees. The commissions recommended that they should systematically plan lifelong learning and professional development of their employees (annual interviews, individual plans); this has to be done in a way that enables comprehensive insight into and influence of the development of employees in accordance with the institution's set goals and strategy.

Cooperation in exchanges of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff at home and abroad needs to be increased; the higher education institutions should systematically monitor and encourage such exchanges, and they should also assess their influence on the development of the institutions and their activities.

#### 5. *Administrative and professional-technical staff*

At all institutions the selection procedures for administrative and professional-technical staff are in accordance with the current legislation; their promotion is mostly regulated as well. Lifelong learning and training is enabled, and in many cases also financed; however, the records on such matters are not well kept. What is lacking the most is counselling in development of employees' careers; therefore they should address this in the same manner as they address pedagogic and research staff. Continuous monitoring of employee satisfaction is important.

#### 6. *Students at the higher education institution*

Providing information for students and enrolment candidates is very well developed at all institutions. This is achieved in various ways: open days; web sites; student departments; brochures; student information systems; and through official media.

Assessment and evaluation of student knowledge is an essential component of the study programme, on which the institutions have rules and regulations. There are, as yet, few measures that would help the students assess their own progress and monitor their own achievement and programme goals.

With regard to general student competences, such as: learning ability, creative problem solving, research, art and professional work, analysis and combination, communication skills, etc., it has been found that by finishing undergraduate studies students have not yet acquired research competences; these are developed during post-graduate studies.

Student mobility (through the Erasmus programme) is encouraged. However, interest in student mobility is increasing slowly. The commissions have found that the students are not sufficiently informed about this, and non-recognition of credits acquired abroad too often presents an obstacle: student obligations are not defined in contracts when they leave to study

abroad, and the amount of allocated credits students receive for finished obligations is not established.

All institutions have student councils and student participation in institutional bodies is guaranteed in accordance with the law. There are problems with full membership of students in commissions for self-evaluation, since most students do not know their representatives in the council well enough, or are insufficiently informed about their work. Concerning the institutions that provide vocational and university programmes the commissions had the impression that only “university” students participate in their respective bodies.

#### *7. Premises and equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities, the library*

Most evaluated higher education institutions are facing spatial problems; even if their premises are adequate at the moment, they will not be for meeting long-term goals. The equipment is modern and well maintained, though some institutions warn of a lack of budgetary provision for physical resources as most of the capital is provided from their own sources.

Higher education institutions provide their employees and students with access to information and communication technologies (access to required data bases, study materials, etc.). They are used for business, education, research and professional activities. Access to those technologies is facilitated in libraries, computer rooms and the institutions have a well developed student-information system. Some institutions provide students with wireless internet connections through laptop computers. Members of the University of Ljubljana informed the commissions on the university’s long-term plan to establish a unified information system for study, personnel, commercial, library, research and development activities. Access to libraries is provided at all institutions, except for one institution; all the other libraries are adequately stocked. Some should adapt their opening hours to suit their users, and increase the number of computer and reading spots. Library personnel are professionally trained in accordance with domestic and European standards; however, some libraries are understaffed.

#### *8. Financing educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities*

All evaluated higher education institutions have provided budgetary resources for their activities; however, these resources do not fully cover the expenses. Especially the two health care colleges - their management are of the opinion that the cause lies in inadequate allocation of the study area in the government Decree on budgetary financing of higher education and other university member institutions - from 2004 till 2009. With the exception of one institution, all others are actively acquiring resources from market activities, through cooperation in domestic research projects, from European tenders and from elsewhere. They strive to increase regular enrolment as this brings in the most budgetary funds.

All institutions plan and allocate resources intended for educational, or study, scientific, research and professional work, in their financial plans and in accordance with the work programme. Some institutions did not have enough information on the use of current resources, or on the efficiency and success of their use based on individual activities. A

unified university information-accounting system will help settle this problem at four institutions.

9. *Cooperation with the social environment*

Cooperation at all institutions is very good on the regional and national level. However, it differs from one institution to the other on the international level.

Both health care institutions cooperate with numerous health care organizations, the so called learning bases that provide students with access to practical training and clinical practice. Three other institutions have developed a strong cooperation with companies, organizations and professional associations and other interested stakeholders in the environment. This was often successful for shaping Bologna study programmes. These institutions also work together with other higher education institutions in Slovenia and abroad. They see numerous opportunities in forming joint study programmes.

**Strengths and examples of recommended set-ups**

The table contains some findings which were listed in the reports by external evaluation commissions as strengths of individual higher education institutions. These are examples of recommended set-ups of individual fields of their operation (somewhere they are best practice cases). The strengths are presented according to assessment fields from the evaluation criteria.

<b>Field of assessment</b>	<b>Strengths and examples of recommended set-ups</b>
Strategy, organization and management of the institution, record keeping and taking care of quality	Assuring the quality of education includes comprehensive monitoring of quality, including the quality of students, graduates, employees as well as the quality of study programmes, education and equipment. Stakeholders' roles are clearly defined.
	Despite its size the higher education institution is well organized, the obligations and responsibilities are clear for everyone and well defined, in addition, the institution is looking for new forms of organization that will bring in even better results.
Education – study activities	When designing the Bologna study programmes, the higher education institution in form of strategic councils attracted the cooperation of representatives of all higher education partners.
	The higher education partner designed a concept of continuous self-evaluation of the education process after each block of lectures.
	New, Europe-comparable programmes guarantee graduate employability in the broader European area.
	The higher education institution analysed student polls and as a result they changed library and student department opening times and the operation of the e-student service.
Scientific, research, art and professional activities	The number of published articles in leading professional magazines is increasing; the number of quoted scientific publications is high.
	The number of groups participating in European projects is increasing as well as the number of researchers and professional

	<p>assistants participating in exchanges.</p> <p>Scientific, research and professional work in addition to the management is monitored by a special commission that reports to the senate about it and, if required, calls researcher theme meetings.</p> <p>The higher education institution founded a research institution in order to encourage and integrate cooperation in scientific and research activities at the institution with other Slovene and international organizations.</p>
Higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff	<p>The higher education institution tries to improve the personnel structure (of employed higher education institutions) also by publishing international bids for tenders.</p> <p>The higher education institution implemented a series of measures which are used to create conditions for promotion and progress of higher education assistants: information on procedures and conditions for promotion, setting criteria for allocation of resources for professional training and participation in scientific meetings, for returning education costs, for implementing the monitoring of own work in the pedagogic, professional, scientific and research fields.</p> <p>Integration of educational, scientific and research work is stipulated, it is being monitored and analysed. The higher education institution plans measures for elimination of problems regarding the too high pedagogic workload of teachers, such as employing new employees, limiting the number of subjects per teacher with Bologna reform of study programmes.</p>
Administrative and professional-technical staff	<p>The higher education institution annually sets resources for education of its employees. These have the possibility to recommend the required courses and as a rule the management supports them in this matter.</p>
Students at the higher education institution	<p>Students have participated in commissions for designing new study programmes as full members.</p> <p>The higher education institution has a well designed student exchange (and practical education) system, the ECTS coordinator enables the students to study abroad with the Socrates/Erasmus programmes and facilitates exchange among the Slovene higher education institutions; practical training and student satisfaction are monitored by a practice coordinator who studies their reports on practical education.</p>
Premises, equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional work, the library	<p>The higher education institution has the wireless network Eduroam in all lecture rooms and halls, which enables the students to connect to the internet with laptop computers.</p> <p>The higher education institution considers student suggestions regarding software and enables the use of licensed software.</p> <p>The library monitors the number of users based on type, the quantity of new units of library materials, the number of materials on loan, the number of trainings for users. The indicators are in accordance with the planned ones.</p> <p>University's long-term goal is to establish a unified information system for study, personnel, commercial, library, research and</p>

	development matters.
Financing the educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities	The higher education institution has established a long-term stable cooperation with guaranteed sources of finance and a beneficial income structure (50% pedagogic activity, 50% research activity and market sales).
	The cost of work per individual is transparently planned with a personal work plan.
	Financial planning and monitoring of use is transparent; project holders have access to fresh data on project costs.
Cooperation with the social environment	Close connections to organizations, institutions and study bases outside the faculty enable good practical education and better graduate quality.
	The higher education institution founded a graduate club for closer cooperation with the users. Strategic councils at the institution take care that study programmes reflect the requirements of the users, which is in turn reflected in the high graduate employability.
	The higher education institution participates in numerous systemic solutions, research and development tasks for the (non-)economy and actively participates in projects for various ministries
	The higher education institution is open to everyone that is interested, each year it organizes numerous conferences, seminars, various additional trainings, theme workshops, courses and other activities.
	The higher education institution participates in international projects with other various international institutions. It also co-organizes international scientific events.

## Analysis of filled out review questionnaires

A comprehensive analysis was made based on the review questionnaires that were filled out by five higher education institutions during the 2007 evaluations. Those were: Faculty of Computer and Information Science at the University of Ljubljana; Faculty of Civil engineering and Geodesy at the University of Ljubljana; Biotechnical Faculty at the University of Ljubljana; University College for Health Care at the University of Ljubljana; and College of Health Care at the University of Primorska.

The analysis only takes into account the tables with statements that may be answered with “yes” and “no”, so the number of positive answers may be calculated. The analysis includes chapters from the review questionnaire for higher education institutions in 2007, except for the last one, which has no tables with statements. (Affirmative) answers express the opinion of the higher education institutions on meeting the criteria requirements. That is why they are not necessarily in line with the findings of the external evaluation commission.

The comparison is structured in the following way:

Left column: statements that are integral part of the review questionnaire.

Right column: number of affirmative answers.

Note: in addition to the caption on the first page there are explanations of notes under each table.

Caption:

ICT information and communication technology

HEI higher education institution

(\*) number of affirmative answers

1 one of the four answers is “partly”

2 one higher education institution did not provide an answer to the statement

3 one of the answers is “note 1”, where it says that spatial capacities vary between the studies

## I. Strategy, Organisation and Management of the Institution, Record Keeping and Quality Assurance

Statement	(*)
The HEI has a mission and vision that express its educational and research goals.	5
The HEI mission and vision statement are available to the public.	5
The HEI has a strategic plan.	5
The HEI has appropriate human resources at its disposal.	4
Employee competences are defined.	5
Employee responsibilities are defined.	5
Employees' decision making processes are defined.	5
Higher education teachers, scientific staff and professional assistants participate in the decision making processes, which pertain to education and research.	5
Students participate in the decision making processes that pertain to education.	5
Students have an opportunity to express their opinion.	5
HEI has appropriate spatial capabilities.	2
HEI has guaranteed financial resources that enable achieving the set goals based on the strategic plan.	3

HEI has guaranteed material resources that enable achieving the set goals based on the strategic plan.	5
HEI has an established system of quality assurance.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## II. Education – study activities

Statement	(*)
HEI offers multiple study programmes that lead to scientific and professional titles in accordance with the set goals and study achievements.	5
Study programmes are comparable to domestic and European higher education study programmes.	5
HEI collects information on candidates' interest for enrolment to study programmes it offers.	5
HEI participates in interuniversity and international exchange of students and pedagogic staff.	5
HEI adopted criteria for awarding scientific and professional titles.	5
Criteria for awarding scientific and professional titles are comparable to national and European standards.	5
HEI monitors adherence to the criteria for achieving scientific and professional titles.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### Student questionnaires

Statement	(*)
HEI periodically polls its students.	5
HEI analyses the student polls.	5
HEI uses results of the student poll analyses to plan its activities.	4
Students are informed about the poll results.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### Polls for students of the 1<sup>st</sup> year

Statement	(*)
HEI periodically polls students of the 1 <sup>st</sup> year.	4
HEI analyses the polls of the 1 <sup>st</sup> year students.	4
HEI uses results of the polls on the 1 <sup>st</sup> year students to plan its activities.	2
Students of the 1 <sup>st</sup> year are informed about the poll results.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### Graduate polls

Statement	(*)
HEI periodically polls graduates.	3
HEI analyses graduate polls.	3
HEI uses graduate poll results to plan its activities	3
Graduates are informed about the poll results.	3

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### Polling of mentors of students doing practical training

Statement	(*)
HEI polls mentors.	2 <sup>1</sup>
HEI analyses mentor polls.	1

HEI uses the periodically collected information on mentors.	1
Mentors are informed about poll results.	2
Students are informed about the poll results.	2 <sup>1</sup>

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 1 – one of four answers is “partly”

### III. Scientific, research, art and professional activities

Statement	(*)
HEI carries out scientific, research, art and professional activities in accordance with the strategic plan and the national and European guidelines and standards.	5
HEI ensures that modern findings by the scientific, research, art and professional activities are used in education.	5
HEI encourages its employees to regularly publish their scientific, research, art and professional activities.	5
HEI ensures transfer of knowledge into practice.	5
HEI keeps proper records on all of the above.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### IV. Higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff and assistants

#### *Higher education teachers and scientific staff*

Statement	(*)
Selection procedures for higher education teachers and scientific staff are regulated and public.	5
Election procedures for higher education teachers and scientific staff are regulated and public.	5
Promotion procedures for higher education teachers and scientific staff are regulated and public.	4
For pedagogic staff these procedures include teaching as well as research skills.	5
HEI takes care of lifelong learning and professional development of higher education teachers and scientific staff.	5
HEI takes care of long-term promotion policy for young higher education assistants.	5
HEI provides its academic staff with access to career counselling.	5
HEI participates in interuniversity and international exchange of higher education teachers and scientific staff, it encourages it and enables it.	4
HEI encourages close integration among higher education teachers and scientific staff.	5
Integration is shown in the criteria for promotion and election to titles.	4
Workload for education and research activities is defined.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

#### *Polls for higher education teachers and scientific staff*

Statement	(*)
HEI regularly polls higher education teachers and scientific staff.	3
HEI analyses the higher education teachers and scientific staff polls.	3
HEI uses periodically collected information on higher education teachers and scientific staff.	3
Higher education teachers and scientific staff are informed about poll results.	3

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## V. Administrative and professional-technical staff

### *Professional assistants*

Statement	(*)
Selection procedures for professional assistants are regulated and public.	5
Promotion procedures for administrative staff are regulated and public.	4
HEI provides the administrative staff with access to lifelong learning.	5
Selection procedures for technical staff are regulated and public.	5
Promotion procedures for technical staff are regulated and public.	4
HEI provides technical staff with access to lifelong learning.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### *Professional assistant poll*

Statement	(*)
HEI periodically carries out polls for professional assistants.	1
HEI analyses professional assistant polls.	1
HEI uses periodically collected information on professional assistants.	1
Professional assistants are informed about poll results.	1

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## VI. Students at the higher education institution

Statement	(*)
Enrolment conditions for HEI programmes are known.	5
Enrolment procedures for HEI programmes are known.	5
Acceptance conditions for HEI programmes are known.	5
Acceptance procedures for HEI programmes are known.	5
Equality of male and female students is ensured.	5
HEI monitors the development of study achievements.	5
HEI monitors stud duration.	5
The ratio staff : students is adequate for ensuring study achievements and goals of the HEI and its organizational units.	2
HEI provides potential students with access to counselling services.	5
HEI provides enrolled students with access to counselling services.	5
HEI provides enrolled students study guidance.	5
HEI takes measures to enable students to assess their personal progression in the programme.	4
During the study process the students acquire basic competences, such as: learning ability, the ability to analyse and combine, communication skills, etc.	5
HEI encourages student mobility.	5
HEI provides students with means to form organized associations.	5
HEI ensures student participation in decision making processes.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## VII. Premises, equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities, the library

Statement	(*)
HEI has adequate premises for achieving medium-term goals.	3 <sup>3</sup>
HEI has adequate premises for achieving long-term goals.	2

HEI is constantly modernizing the equipment required for its activities.	5
HEI provides free ICT access to its employees and students.	5
Employees may use ICT for commercial, educational and research purposes.	5
Students may use ICT for educational and research purposes.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 3 – one of the answers is “note 1”, where it says that spatial capabilities vary between the studies

### The library

Statement	(*)
The library is easily accessible.	5
The library has a reading room.	5
Library premises are adequate for unhindered HEI activities.	5
Library stock enables achieving the set goals.	5
Number of library staff is in accordance with the standards.	4
Library staff training is in accordance with the standards.	4
HEI provides employees and students with access to required databases.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## VIII. Financing the educational/study, research, art and professional activities

Statement	(*)
HEI has guaranteed long-term resources for study, research, art or professional work from various sources.	3
HEI acquires resources for its operation from budgetary sources.	5
HEI acquires resources for its operation from resources of European and other international projects.	5
HEI acquires resources for its operation from resources acquired at the market.	4
HEI systematically allocates resources for study, research, art and professional work.	5
HEI monitors the use of acquired resources.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## IX. Cooperation with the social environment

Statement	(*)
HEI has established successful cooperation on the national level.	5
HEI has established successful cooperation on the international level.	4
HEI encourages cooperation with other HEI.	5
HEI encourages cooperation with companies.	5
HEI encourages cooperation with important stakeholders in the environment.	5 <sup>2</sup>
HEI shows integration of all interested public in its operation.	5 <sup>2</sup>
The study programme and other courses reflect the requirements of the economy and the non-economy.	5
The economy and the non-economy are integrated into planning and monitoring HEI educational work.	5
HEI participates in interuniversity and international exchange of students and higher education teachers, scientific staff and professional assistants.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 2 – one higher education institution did not give an answer to the statement

## X. Study programme implementation and goals

Statement	(*)
Study programmes are offered each year.	5
Study programme goals are in accordance with the HEI vision.	5
Study programme goals are in accordance with the strategic plan.	5
Graduate competences are clearly expressed.	5
Graduate competences are publically accessible.	5
Graduate competences are in accordance with the level of education.	5
Study programme goals are objective and achievable, taking into account the nominal duration of the programme and the initial level of students in the programme.	5
Study programme goals are used to increase understanding of students' achievements in the programme.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## XI. Internal organization and measures for quality assurance

Statement	(*)
The decision processes are defined and everyone involved has been notified.	5
The competences are defined and everyone involved has been notified.	5
The responsibilities are defined and everyone involved has been notified.	5
Conditions have been established for assuring active cooperation of academic staff in the decision making processes, which affect education and teaching.	5
Conditions have been established for assuring active cooperation students in the decision making processes, which affect education and teaching.	5
Conditions have been established for assuring the quality of programmes.	5
HEI monitors its work and uses the results to improve its activities.	5
HEU monitors how well the study programmes are being carried out.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## XII. The syllabus, methods of teaching and education

Statement	(*)
Study programmes are carried out in accordance with the accredited study programmes.	5
The content of study programmes is clearly defined and publicly accessible.	5
Methods of teaching and education contribute to achieving set goals and study achievements.	5
Assessment and evaluation methods are clearly defined and publically accessible.	5
Conditions for acquiring diplomas and academic titles are regulated and publicly accessible.	5
The pedagogic process is carried out by educationally competent staff.	5
The pedagogic process is carried out by academically competent staff.	5
Workload for teaching and research activities is defined.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

**XIII. Students in the study programme (enrolment and studies)**

Statement	(*)
Conditions for enrolment into study programmes have been officially published.	5
Conditions for transfer between study programmes within the HEI are officially published.	4 <sup>2</sup>
Equality of male and female student is ensured.	5
Student mobility is enabled and is being encouraged through mutual recognition of credits among the universities.	4
Student mobility is enabled and is being encouraged through mutual recognition of credits among various disciplines.	4
Measures for ensuring adequate study support have been taken.	5
Measures for student counselling have been taken.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 2 - one higher education institution did not give an answer to the statement

**XIV. Conditions for carrying out study programmes (premises and equipment)**

Statement	(*)
The educational process is being carried out by educationally competent and academically qualified staff.	5
Spatial conditions are adequate for achieving study programme goals.	2 <sup>3</sup>
Spatial conditions are available in the long run.	4 <sup>3</sup>
Material resources are adequate for achieving study programme goals.	4
Material resources are available in the long run.	2
Financial resources for carrying out the programme are guaranteed.	3

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 3 - one of the answers is "note 1", where it says that spatial capabilities vary between the studies

**XV. Scientific, research and art activities***Research and art activities*

Statement	(*)
The current HEI research activities are in accordance with the strategic plan.	5
Current HEI research activities meet the international standards.	5
HEI assures that findings from scientific research are used in education.	5
HEI participates in research projects in cooperation with Slovene universities, institutes and other entities.	5
HEI participates in international research projects.	4
Each year the employees prepare a report on research work for the previous year.	5
Each year the employees prepare a research work programme for the following year.	5 <sup>2</sup>
HEI encourages individual employees and chairs to participate in research work.	5
HEI has established criteria for assessing the success of research work.	5
The employees integrate students in their scientific and research work.	4
Scientific and research work is linked to the professors' educational work.	5
Scientific and research work is linked to development projects for the economy.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 2 - one higher education institution did not give an answer to the statement

**XVI. Professional public**

Statement	(*)
Various HEI professional activities are regulated through contracts.	5
HEI encourages its employees to cooperate with potential clients from the economy and the non-economy.	5
HEI encourages its employees to publish the results of their professional work.	5
HEI has established criteria for assessing the quality of professional work and the effectiveness of implementing the results in practice.	3
Once per year the HEI plans its professional work.	5
Once per year the HEI reports on the results of its professional work.	5

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## ASSESSING EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

### Feedback from evaluated higher education institutions

The higher education institutions have positively assessed the work of external evaluation commissions; they were also mostly satisfied with the final reports.

Most higher education institutions filled out the questionnaire sent to them by the Senate's professional service. The purpose of the questionnaires was to discover how satisfied they were with the evaluation, if they had any suggestions for improving the work of the commission and the review questionnaires and to what extent would the findings from the evaluation reports contribute to the quality of their work. All institutions submitted questionnaires to the professional service, which were filled out by the management and three also sent the questionnaires filled out by the students. The total mark from the questionnaires was above average (see analysis in appendix 3).

Three institutions submitted a longer opinion on the reports. Two had no comments on the reports; both found that the identified strengths and opportunities would be of great help for the future. One institution also stated that it would organize a debate on implementation of the commission's findings while another submitted a list of activities that had been initiated based on the identified opportunities for improvement, included in the report. These included further initiatives for increasing the scope and the quality of scientific and research work, reduction of pedagogic workload for employees working in multidisciplinary research groups, further development of information support and establishment of a joint research project with four related higher education institutions.

The opinion of the third institution differs from the first two, as it, in addition to thanking the commission for services rendered and useful advice on improving the quality, also includes several content-related remarks, which were entitled "corrections to the report on external evaluation". These observations pertain to the occasional contradicting statements on the institution's vision and mission; to the personnel-accounting system; to findings that are not relevant for specific chapters or fields of assessment under which they are written; to inconsistent use of the institution's shortened name and to incorrectly cited name of the study programme; to incorrect names of its internal organizational units; to incorrect findings regarding the premises - the share of institution's own resources for the equipment acquired at the market.

### Findings of the Senate's professional service

#### Visits to the higher education institutions

Visits to all higher education institutions lasted two days, regardless of the size and complexity of institution's operations. It was found that for institutions, which, due to their size can be regarded as small universities, a longer visit should be taken into consideration.

The commissions had mostly prepared themselves well for the visits to the higher education institutions, they had extensively studied the documentation and enclosures to the applications, they had reviewed institutions' web sites; however, their knowledge of higher education legislation and regulations was not as precise. The interviews were not as consistently prepared as they might have been; the questions were occasionally unclear or the

same questions came up several times; the choice of interviewees was not always the most appropriate.

The efficiency and the progress of the visits could be improved through a more consistent preparation of questions, a more efficient moderation of the interviews and better organization of commissions' work. Additionally, the time allocated for individual group of interviewees has to be taken into account. During breaks between individual interviews, the commission had to harmonize its findings and prepare for further work.

### Assessment of the final reports

The reports were prepared from the criteria according to fields of evaluation which pertain to institutional external evaluation. They include about thirty pages and are composed of three parts: the first part includes the summary, the contents and the introduction; the second presents the findings according to individual fields of assessment and its criteria with comments and the identified strengths and opportunities for improvement. The third part contains the conclusion where the commissions endeavoured to sum and conclude on the most important points. Commission chairpersons were responsible for preparation and submission of final reports.

During the preparation of report summaries it was quickly found that the notes and the amount of text differ from each other; that individual fields of assessment or criteria contain findings that do not belong there content-wise; that the findings are often not expressed sufficiently clearly; and that there is often no dividing line between the listed strengths of the higher education institution and its opportunities for improvement. All this made the analysis and writing of summaries much more difficult.

There were also content-related inconsistencies in individual fields of assessment due to the review questionnaire filled out by the higher education institution under review and which the commissions used in evaluation and preparation of the report. The questionnaire was not consistently structured according to the criteria: the contents overlapped and repeated themselves and there were a lot of useless questions.

Some reports also contained contradictory findings of individual commission members, which show a lack of coordination and inefficient cooperation among them. The commissions have to coordinate and harmonize their statements and the chairpersons have to take care that they are noted in the report.

Furthermore, it has to be noted that the knowledge of some evaluators of the higher education legislation is lacking, as occasionally they would praise higher education institutions for implementing things that have to be regulated according to the law and regulations and would list these things as the strengths of the institution. However, these are not strengths but rather requirements in the operation of each institution. On the other hand, the commissions should warn the institutions if they find that they are operating against the regulations and note this warning in the evaluation reports.

It is also unacceptable, that the professional staff and assistants are not familiar with the updated study programmes or study plans, which was discovered at one institution under review. The commission should point out such matters during the evaluation and, in relation to them, comment on its findings in the final evaluation reports.

## **Changes to the set of instruments for evaluation**

In cooperation with higher education institutions and evaluators, the Senate's professional service started preparing a review questionnaire. It prepared a new protocol for the visits and new instructions for writing the final report. The new set of instruments was ready on time for institutional external evaluations in 2008, which were carried out in the autumn of that year.

### New review questionnaire (Appendix 5)

The questionnaire for 2007 included 17 items, the first 9 according to fields of assessment from criteria for institutional evaluation of the institution and the remaining 8 that completed them content-wise. That is why the data often repeats itself and thus why it was presented in various ways. Higher education institutions had a lot of difficulties with filling out the questionnaires; evaluators made many remarks on the dispersion and repeating of the data. As the questionnaire was a basis for preparing the final report, the deficiencies carried over into the report. Under recommendations suggesting improvement, a new review questionnaire was designed, containing only 9 points designed according to the criteria for the fields of assessment. The Senate re-organised the questionnaire into comprehensive units.

### The new visit protocol (Appendix 7)

The new visit protocol is much more precise than the old one. Special emphasis has been put on designing the evaluation schedule, selecting the interviewees and preparing for interviews.

### Instructions for preparing the final report (Appendix 8)

The instructions emphasize that all reports have to be clear and comprehensive according to individual fields of assessment from the criteria and that the review questionnaire is the basis for their formation. After evaluating each field of assessment and the criteria that accompany it, the commission has to identify the strengths and weaknesses and offer the higher education institution clear recommendations for improving its work. Clearly stated weaknesses and recommendations for their elimination represent a step forward in helping the institution improve and develop its quality.

## INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS FOR 2008

In 2008 it was the first time that two evaluations of vocational colleges were carried out in accordance with the law. Despite the fact that education at vocational colleges is carried out outside the higher education institutions and is regulated by separate legislation, they are an important part of tertiary education. That is why the legislature decided that their quality is to be evaluated according to common criteria and that the same body is responsible for external evaluations.

Procedures for external evaluations started on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008, when the Senate submitted and published on its web sites:

- a call for applications for external evaluations; this was sent to all higher education institutions (public as well as private) that already have graduates and also to the Association of Vocational Colleges of Slovenia; and
- a call for new candidates for external evaluations (Senate's professional service received over 60 applications).

For applications relating to institutional external evaluations, the Senate's professional service prepared unified forms with details on what enclosures the higher education institutions and vocational colleges have to submit in accordance with the criteria. This was done in order to avoid problems that surfaced when applications were filled out in 2007. The application submission deadline for institutions and candidates was March 2008.

The Senate processed the applications for institutional external evaluations in April. It decided that, based on the available resources in 2008, 6 institutions (4 higher education institutions and 2 vocational colleges) would be evaluated. It had to reject one application from a higher education institution that did not yet meet the requirements for external evaluation from criteria, as it did not yet have regular graduates from its study programmes. In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Senate decided that each commission for external evaluation would include at least one expert from abroad from acknowledged agencies and, if possible ENQA member agencies.

The Senate decided that the following institutions and colleges would be evaluated:

- Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Maribor;
- ISH, Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis, Ljubljana;
- School of Engineering and Management at the University of Nova Gorica;
- Faculty of Administration at the University of Ljubljana;
- Institute for Business Education, vocational college, Ljubljana;
- Business-Commerce School Celje, vocational college.

All selected institutions received a notification stating that evaluations would be carried out in autumn, that prior to that, the Senate would organize a meeting whose purpose would be to train evaluators and prepare evaluation commissions and institutions for the visits; and that foreign experts would also participate in evaluations of higher education institutions. The higher education institutions also received a notification that summaries of applications should be translated to English.

At the end of August 2008 the Senate's professional service submitted an application to foreign agencies (ENQA members) for cooperation in external evaluation commissions. It included English translations of all important documents: the criteria, explanation of

composition, competences and the decision-making process of the Council and the Senate; the review questionnaire intended for preparation for evaluation; the visit protocol; the instructions for preparing the final report of the external evaluation commission; a notification on which higher education institutions were to be evaluated; and what experts from which fields would be required. The ASIIN agency responded and offered three experts. A renowned independent “Bologna” expert responded as well. As soon as their names were known, the professional service started arranging everything that was required for their arrival, accommodation, unhindered work and payment.

### **Evaluator training**

On 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008 in Hotel Union in Ljubljana the Senate organized a meeting of representatives of higher education institutions and vocational colleges selected for institutional evaluation in 2008 and of evaluators and candidates for evaluators. More than 70 participants were present, representatives of various stakeholders - students, professors, lecturers, employers, quality assurance experts and trained and globally established evaluators.

The first part of the meeting consisted of a presentation of the ESG; the presentation of the higher education and vocational legislation; of the differences between the two types of institutions/schools; and of the criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality in higher education. Following this, the participants discussed the new set of instruments for evaluations, especially the differences between the review questionnaire for higher education institutions and the one for vocational colleges (questionnaires in Appendix 5 and 6). Much attention was given to preparing the commissions and the institutions for the visits; the visit protocols; the schedule; the interviews and the writing of the final report.

### **The Evaluations**

At the end of October on the Senate’s proposal, the Council approved new experts for external evaluations, the Senate appointed the evaluation commissions for evaluation of all six institutions (see Appendix 2). One of the ASIIN agency’s experts cancelled his participation at the last minute, so instead of four only three “international” commissions could be created. These were engaged for evaluation of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Maribor; the School of Engineering and Management at the University of Nova Gorica; and the Faculty of Administration at the University of Ljubljana. For the evaluation of the remaining higher education institution, and the two vocational colleges, the Senate appointed only Slovene experts.

All visits by the external evaluation commissions, the ones to the higher education institutions as well as the ones to vocational colleges, were completed by 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

Commission chairpersons submitted the reports on external evaluations by the end of December 2008, and in January 2009, the reports were sent to the higher education institutions and vocational colleges to add their opinion. At the same time, the Senate’s professional service sent them somewhat modified questionnaires on evaluations for management and students.

## FINDINGS OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS

External evaluations for 2008 were analysed in a similar manner to those for 2007. As it was the first time that vocational colleges were evaluated and due to the fact that, despite many common characteristics, they still significantly differed from the higher education institutions. Different summaries of final reports and the analyses of filled-out review questionnaires (a special review questionnaire for vocational colleges can be found in Appendix 6) had to be made.

### Content summaries of external evaluation reports

#### HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The findings of external evaluation commissions were similar to the ones in 2007. Selected evaluated institutions (2 members of larger universities with long standing traditions, a member of a younger, so called integrated (private) university and an independent (private vocational college) gave us insight into interesting differences among the institutions.

##### *1. Strategy, organization and management of the institution, record keeping and quality assurance*

The mission, vision and strategic plan/strategic development goals, except for one institution, are clearly defined; the individual management teams are familiar with them; however they are not so well known to the employees and students.

The commissions found that competences, responsibilities and the authority of employees as well as the participation of students are defined according to the statute and in other acts of the universities and higher education institutions; and that the employees and students mostly know them well.

All higher education institutions have trained personnel (at one of the institutions the majority of personnel are in a contract-based employment relationship, so there are uncertainties regarding loyalty toward the institution and also the ensuing care and initiative for its development that is inevitable); however, the situation with premises and the financial resources required for achieving long-term development goals is quite different. At the two vocational colleges in particular, the commissions found that spatial capabilities have to be increased and improved, and the evaluation reports included recommendations for acquiring additional financial resources.

Care for quality has been increased in the recent years and the institutions have taken appropriate measures for monitoring and assuring quality of educational and research work. All institutions have adopted regulations on monitoring and assessment of quality (rules, methodologies); however, at two institutions they are not yet being fully carried out. The evaluation commissions found that all institutions have to improve their work in this area, especially through increasing cooperation, and taking into account opinions of students (graduate) and also of administrative and professional-technical staff.

One of the evaluated institutions does not keep adequate records, and due to the lack of particular data, operation in some fields is unclear and not transparent.

## 2. *Education – study activities*

Three of the evaluated institutions already teach according to Bologna study programmes; one of them has even acquired the “European accreditation” for a second-cycle study programme. The Bologna programmes contain goals, general and subject-specific competences and planned study achievements. Professional and scientific titles of the graduates at all institutions are awarded in accordance with the law and the criteria, which is comparable to national and European standards.

The majority of evaluated institutions collect information on candidates for enrolment to their study programmes; two of the institutions also collect information on the employability and further studies of their graduates. And one of the two is paying special attention to the latter, polling the students on the relevance of acquired knowledge in the market and conducting polls three times each year.

The progression rate and the actual study duration is monitored by all institutions (some more and others less successfully); they strive to increase the progression rate, which has already increased with the implementation of Bologna study programmes. Monitoring study achievements shows the most differences (they carry it out regularly only at one institution) and one of the foreign evaluators, the Bologna expert, wrote in his report: ‘It would be proper to keep records of what occupations the graduates take on.’ Pedagogic staff, students, graduates and employers should identify what skills, competences and knowledge the graduate needs in order for the institution to properly adapt and reinvigorate study programmes.

All institutions also regularly poll their students on the implementation and the quality of study programmes and on assessment of pedagogic staff; two institutions stated in the questionnaire that they use polls to assess study programmes, and the students’ department and only one institution stated, that it uses polls to monitor the adequacy of credit allocation of student programmes and mentors for practical training. According to many students, the findings of the polls are not taking their opinions sufficiently into account, or the analyses are not sufficiently in-depth. The commissions have found that the students are often not informed about the polls and do not know about how measures that were implemented were based on them.

The ratio between the number of students and the number of employees, especially pedagogic staff, is explicitly bad at one higher education institution that is why implementation of new forms of work and teaching brought upon by the Bologna process is made particularly difficult. The evaluators find that teaching, learning and assessing is often too traditional, numerous higher education teachers use old methods, such as classic lectures.

At one of the evaluated faculties the commission had difficulties in identifying the number of full-time professors and the ratio between the professors and students. The commission wrote in its report that it is incomprehensible, despite the request for this information, the faculty did not provide adequate data.

Cooperation of teachers and students is good almost everywhere. The students are very satisfied with it, especially at the smaller higher education institutions.

At three of the institutions the Bologna reform of study programmes was good; at one of them it was especially efficient with the actual elimination of surplus contents and addition of new ones, and a broad consent of all employees. At the fourth institution, the commission found that the programmes are being remodelled, so to speak, at the last moment and without an explicitly defined, clear and generally accepted strategy. Moreover, not all employees were familiar with all key aspects of the development of new Bologna programmes.

Second-cycle Bologna programmes that were adopted and accredited before the first-cycle programmes in the same field of study could represent a special problem, especially because the second cycle is an upgrade compared with the first, which has yet to be upgraded. The commissions have warned that when designing the first-cycle programmes the institutions have to review the already adopted second-cycle programmes and consider the goals, competences and study results of graduates from both cycles.

Almost all commissions found that there is too little practical education of students and that it has to be better organized and implemented.

### *3. Scientific, research, art and professional activity*

At three of the evaluated higher education institutions the scientific, research and professional activities were being developed in accordance with a strategic plan. The commissions have found that all three institutions actively stimulate such plans, and that they have established a system for assessing and rewarding this type of planning activity (in the election criteria as well). However, there are numerous discrepancies between individual fields of research and the research activity, which is developing differently in different research units. In some examples there is a lot of it, but elsewhere, almost none).

At one institution, the evaluators were able to assess the quality of scientific and research work predominantly in the quantitative sense. The evaluated institution did not yet assess this work in its self-evaluation procedures.

There is a relatively good record of publications in domestic periodicals but too little in foreign periodicals at three institutions. Two institutions participate in many different international projects; international cooperation (conferences) is very buoyant.

The institution with the best organization of this field shows that the number of international publications is constantly increasing. This institution plans to acquire as many young and pre-doctoral researchers as possible and is constantly striving to participate in new international research networks and projects. Publications are an essential facet of work for all employed teachers and research staff. In publishing they are very successful and the individuals and the whole institution are achieving great and striking results worldwide.

Modern scientific, research and professional findings are used in teaching (research-led teaching). Students participate in research work (especially in post-graduate studies).

At one institution the commission could not establish whether it keeps records on scientific, research and professional work of its employees or whether the knowledge is transferred into

practice. On the other hand, the other three institutions keep precise records. The results are being continuously assessed: knowledge transfer into practice is successful, especially at one institution where cooperation with the economy and the transfer of new technologies to the economy are very well developed.

The commissions' opinion on how well the scientific and research work is in line with the European guidelines and standards is most interesting, as the initial ones believe that it is fully harmonized, while the others believe that this cannot be assessed, as the "conditions at European universities are so different, a comparison is very difficult".

#### 4. *Higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff*

Selection procedures for appointing higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff are regulated and public at all evaluated institutions. The faculties who are members of individual universities have university regulations in this field. The integration of educational and research, scientific and professional work is necessary at all institutions, which can be seen from the election criteria. Lifelong learning and training and professional development of higher education teachers and scientific staff are provided for at all institutions; however, there are important differences between them. Three institutions take care of career development with their employees - workload for pedagogic, scientific, research and professional activities is defined in employment contracts; workload per individual employee is monitored and records about it are kept. One institution has no records in these areas. At two institutions they do not provide pedagogic-andragogic training for the employees; younger higher education employees are not sufficiently familiar with their pedagogic obligations.

None of the evaluated higher education institutions offer systematic career counselling or annual interviews with their employees. Some institutions are solving this problem through individual mentoring, discussions and by having the older higher education teachers counsel the younger ones. The long-term employment policy is similar, as it is being carried out only to a certain extent, or not at all. The commissions recommend stimulating the development of all employees, especially the promising young researchers and higher education teachers, which would help retain the most capable employees and ensure the institution's long-term development.

Commissions recommend that all institutions increase their international cooperation and personnel exchange. The latter is mostly engaged in Slovenia. International exchanges are undertaken as a part of the Socrates-Erasmus programme, or through international projects and bilateral contracts (even guest lectures and mentor exchanges in practical work).

International cooperation and exchanges are often based on the employees' initiatives; for example in case of research projects, there is no systematic planning and stimulation. Two of the evaluated institutions are especially weak in this field.

One of the higher education institutions is facing particular problems as almost all employees have contract-based employment relationships (the review questionnaire shows that only one young researcher is employed there). The commission found that the institution does not keep records on education and training of its employees; it is not even evident if it has policies for this field. The employees said that they have this organized at their parent faculties. The situation regarding international cooperation is similar: the institution keeps no records of

lectures of their teachers at foreign universities. There are no long-term policies for promoting employees; there are no clear guidelines and concrete measures for solving this problem.

One of the evaluated institutions is a phenomenon in the Slovene area as the workload of most higher education teachers and assistants is divided into at least 50% work at one of the institutions research laboratories or at external institutions and up to 50% pedagogic work. Its advantage compared to others lies in more research work, which is also the requirement for the employment (all have contracts related to work at the laboratories) and a weakness is that some younger higher education assistants, especially, are not really excited about pedagogic work.

#### 5. *Administrative and professional-technical staff*

Selection procedures for administrative and professional staff at all institutions are regulated and public, in accordance with the legislation and university regulations if the institution is a university member. The employees of only one institution have good knowledge of the rules and procedures for promotion at the work place. The situation is similar for lifelong learning; the institutions support this. However, only one of them (regular training courses, an adopted set of rules for co-financing the obligations) systematically regulates it. The career counselling situation is no better, as no institution has a systemic regulation of it; usually there are informal agreements between the manager and employees.

One of the higher education institutions has no records on training and education of its administrative and professional-technical staff; their promotion procedures are not set.

#### 6. *Students at the higher education institution*

Providing information for students is mostly good (brochures, open days, web pages), Students at the institutions are satisfied with the work of department for student affairs or student offices and with their cooperation with institution management and professors. Most students complimented the genuine contacts and very good cooperation with professors with regard to the help that they offer regarding studies and their initiative. The latter is especially prominent at the two smaller higher education institutions.

The system for assessing and grading student knowledge is mostly adequate and the conditions for student progression are officially published. The exception is one higher education institution (the only one of the evaluated institutions who still offers only pre-Bologna study programmes), where no detailed description of assessment and grading of student's knowledge could be found – the students improve and self-evaluate their knowledge after consulting with a professor. The commissions find that self-evaluation of knowledge and progression is much better in the case of Bologna study programmes where goals and competences are published as well as the grade composition for each subject.

With regard to the general student competences, the evaluation reports are very general and somewhat modest; the competences that the students acquire during their studies depend on whether it is an undergraduate or post-graduate programme. In the future more attention should be devoted to developing generic competences.

Student exchanges are often carried out in agreement with individual professors; the students do not show enough interest in them. At one of the evaluated institutions, which is otherwise one of the most successful of them, the students are of the opinion that studying abroad yields no added value.

All institutions enable adequate student organizations, their representation, cooperation and participation in decision-making in the institution's bodies. One institution still has to regulate this more convincingly in its regulations. The commissions have found that at the majority of institutions, the students are not adequately informed about the work of student councils or their representatives in institution's bodies, or, that they do not show sufficient interest in these processes. One of the claimed reasons for this situation is inadequate information transfer between students and student functionaries. The commissions recommend that the students more actively participate in assuring and monitoring the institution's quality, in self-evaluation reports, in forming various proposals for decision making in institutions' bodies, and also recommend that the institution should inform them regularly on the findings of student polls and the measures resulting from them.

#### *7. Premises and equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities, the library*

At one of the evaluated institutions the commission found that its premises are not adequate for pedagogic work and that there are no "educational" laboratories for first-cycle students; however it had well equipped research laboratories (the equipment is globally comparable). The premises of two other institutions are not sufficient for achieving medium-range and long-range strategic goals; one of them does not even have rooms or cabinets for its teachers and researchers.

The situation regarding information-communication equipment varies as well; in some cases the equipment is very old, the rooms are not adequate for the use of laptop computers, etc.. However, the basic conditions are met everywhere. The libraries are generally well stocked, are being properly developed and the personnel are adequately trained. The libraries are accessible and their opening times are tailored to the users. Some do not have separate reading rooms or are too small, too noisy and inadequately equipped.

#### *8. Financing the educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities*

All institutions acquire resources for their activities from public sources (for educational activities and research work), from projects, tuition fees, three of them also from the market.

At one of the evaluated higher education institutions, the commission was not given insight into its conduct of financial operations. The documents given to the evaluators did not provide access to income and expenses of the institution. The financial resources should be sufficient currently, but the question arises whether they will be sufficient for Bologna study programmes. The commission also could not find any specific information on resource allocation.

At the other three institutions, the planning, acquiring and monitoring of resource use is regulated, and employee responsibilities regarding their use are defined in the regulations.

Planned use of resources is defined in annual financial plans. Their weakness is that some institutions do not monitor resource use based on cost holders.

Institution managements have pointed out inadequate financing of Bologna study programmes, as the resources allocated by the state are insufficient for quality implementation of the studies.

### 9. Cooperation with the social environment

Evaluation commissions have assessed that the cooperation of higher education institutions with the social environment is good and they recommend that it is developed further within Slovenia as well as on an international level. Higher education institutions that already teach according to the Bologna study programmes have designed those programmes in cooperation with the economy and employers who pay special attention to competences of future graduates. Cooperation in practical training of students is good; proper harmonization in mutual cooperation is reflected in the high employability of graduates.

Some institutions do not sufficiently cooperate with other higher education institutions, municipalities and the local environment; others on the international level have too few student and personnel exchanges (especially exchanges of higher education teachers and assistants) and too few projects. At one of the evaluated institutions the cooperation is not formalized on the institutional level; visits of domestic and foreign professors are based on good mutual contacts among them.

### Strengths and examples of recommended set-ups

The table includes some findings that the external evaluation commissions listed as strengths of higher education institutions. These are examples of recommended set-ups in individual fields of their operation. The strengths are presented according to criteria from the fields of assessment.

Field of assessment	Strengths and examples of recommended set-ups
Strategy, organization and management of the institution, record keeping and taking care of quality	The internal commission for quality regularly analyses key study parameters and improves the quality system (intensive monitoring of exam success, progression rate and study duration that has been significantly shortened by actively encouraging students).
	At the faculty they have developed a pilot model for self-evaluation that enables implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) principles for higher education institutions and takes into account the specifics of the faculty.
	The higher education institution has appointed a head of quality.
	Flexible organization and operation of the institution and integration of certain functions enable lower operation costs and better adaptability to conditions.
Education – study activities	Bologna programmes were prepared in cooperation with the economy, individual teacher have successfully participated in designing individual subjects and harmonization of their contents.

	<p>The faculty acquired European accreditation for Bologna study programme.</p> <p>The higher education institution takes good care of its graduates as it collects information on how adequate the acquired knowledge is for the market. Students are polled three times per year.</p>
Scientific, research, art and professional activities	<p>The higher education institution regularly analyses publications, patents, achievements of laboratories and employees (a good amount of transfers of research achievements into practice; records are kept of all of them).</p> <p>Publications of scientific, research and professional achievements are essential for all pedagogic and research staff of the institution.</p> <p>International researchers participate in important projects run by the institution's researchers.</p> <p>The institution actively encourages scientific, research and development activities with an internal system of assessment and upgrades.</p>
Higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff	<p>The higher education institution provides its higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff with career counselling in developing their professional career through individual mentoring.</p> <p>Individual teachers carry out polls on assessing their pedagogic work.</p>
Administrative and professional-technical staff	<p>Administrative and professional-technical staff are constantly improving their knowledge; the institution has regulations on (co-)financing their education where all rights and obligations are defined.</p>
Students at the higher education institution	<p>Students are satisfied with practice-oriented Bologna programmes; they believe that the studies provide better insight into the link between theoretical knowledge and its practical use; they believe that assessment and grading of knowledge are adequate as well.</p> <p>Faculty management and staff, holders of subjects/modules and students are very connected; there are many personal contacts; the students can individually design their schedule and integrate optional contents from other higher education institutions. The students have no problems with recognition of education acquired elsewhere.</p> <p>The institution has noticeably increased student exchange by forming a special international office that offers support and counselling for travelling and studying abroad.</p>
Premises, equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional work, the library	<p>The institution has a well developed information-communication technology, it has an established information system that enables free flow of study information and access to proper documents.</p> <p>The equipment for research activities is state of the art (globally comparable) and enables work to domestic as well as international researchers.</p>

Financing the educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities	University management discusses with individual members investments into research activities that represent the greatest cost in order to ensure a balanced development of its members and the university as a whole.
	The higher education institution acquires most of its resources for research activities through international projects.
	The higher education institution has a fund for collecting donations which are then used for development, expansion and operation of its activities.
Cooperation with the social environment	The number of experts from the practical field that hold guest lectures at the institution is increasing.
	The higher education institution has an accredited joint international study programme and is preparing another one.
	Good personal contacts with established foreign lecturers enable a later formalization of cooperation on an international level.

## Analysis of filled out review questionnaires

The joint analysis includes review questionnaires that were filled out by four higher education institutions during the 2008 evaluations. These are: Faculty of Administration at the University of Ljubljana; School of Engineering and Management at the University of Nova Gorica; Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis; and the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Maribor.

The analysis only takes into account the tables with statements that may be answered with “yes” and “no”, so the number of affirmative answers may be calculated. The analysis includes all chapters from the review questionnaire for higher education institutions in 2008. Affirmative answers express the opinion of the higher education institutions on meeting the criteria requirements. That is why they are not necessarily in line with the findings of the external evaluation commission.

The comparison is structured in the following way:

left column: statements that are an integral part of the review questionnaire

right column: number of affirmative answers

note: in addition to the legends on the first page there are explanations to notes under each table

### Caption:

ICT information-communication technology

HEI higher education institution

■ answers to this question were not analysed as it does not require yes/no questions

(\*) number of affirmative answers

/ no answers

1 one of the four answers is “yes, partly”

2 one of the four answers is “yes and no, completely”

3 one of the two answers is “yes-employability and no-further studies”

4 one higher education institution did not provide answers to all statements in the table

5 one higher education institution did not provide an answer to the statement

6 two higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement

7 three higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement

8 one of the four answers is “partly”, two higher education institutions did not provide an answer to the statement

9 two affirmative answers; the third one is “no, although it enables”

## I. Strategy, organisation and management of the institution, record keeping and quality assurance

Statement	(*)
HEI has a mission and vision statement that express its educational and research goals.	4
The ways to achieve educational, scientific and research goals are clearly defined.	4
The HEI mission and vision statement are available to the public.	4
HEI has a strategic plan.	4
Competences, responsibilities and the decision making process of the employees are defined and everyone pertinent is familiar with them.	4

Active participation of higher education teachers, scientific staff and professional assistants in the decision making that pertains to education, research and monitoring and assuring of quality is ensured.	4
Active participation of students in the decision making process that affect education and improving of its quality is ensured.	4
HEI keeps organized records of its activities.	4 <sup>1</sup>
HEI has an established system of monitoring and assuring quality.	4 <sup>1</sup>
Each year the HEI writes and publishes a self-evaluation report.	4 <sup>1</sup>
HEI constantly monitors its work and uses the findings to improve its activities and their quality.	4 <sup>2</sup>

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 1 – one of the four answers is “yes, partly”; 2 – one of the four answers is “yes and no, completely”

## II. Education – study activities

Statement	(*)
HEI offers various study programmes that lead to scientific or professional titles in accordance with the set goals and study achievements.	4
Study programmes are comparable to domestic and European higher education study programmes.	4
Study programmes are carried out each year.	4
Study programme goals are in accordance with the HEI vision and strategic plan.	4
Study programme goals are objective and achievable taking into account the planned duration of the study programme and the starting education/knowledge of enrolled students.	4
Study programme goals are used for better understanding of students' achievements.	4
Graduate competences are clearly defined and publicly accessible.	4
Graduate competences are in accordance with the acquired level of education.	4
Study programme contents are clearly defined and publically accessible.	4
Knowledge assessment methods are clearly defined and publically accessible.	4
Conditions for finishing studies and acquiring professional or scientific titles are defined in the regulations and officially published.	4
Criteria for awarding scientific and professional titles are comparable to national and European standards.	4
HEI monitors adherence to criteria for acquiring scientific and professional titles.	4
Implementation of studies is in accordance with the accredited study programmes.	4
Teaching and learning methods contribute to achieving the set goals and study achievements.	4
HEI monitors the development of study achievements and the study duration.	4
HEI collects information on interest of candidates in enrolling into its study programmes.	4
Procedures and conditions for admission and enrolment into HEI programmes are defined according to the law and the regulations and are officially published.	4
Conditions for transfers between study programmes within the HEI are officially published.	4
HEI organizes student polling on the quality of its study programmes.	4
HEI collects information on the employability and further studies of its graduates.	2 <sup>3</sup>
The ratio of higher education teachers, scientific staff and other employees/ students is adequate for ensuring study achievements and the goals of the HEI and its organizational units.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 3 – one of the answers is “yes-employability and no-further studies”

*Types and number of study programmes carried out by the HEI in the academic year 2007/2008*

Types of study programmes	(*)	Nr. of programmes	Total nr. of enrolled students (all years are taken into account)
Pre-reform study programmes			
Higher education vocational study programmes	3		
University study programmes	2		
Specialist study programmes	0		
Master's study programmes	3		
Doctor study programmes	3		
Bologna study programmes			
1 <sup>st</sup> level study programmes	3		
2 <sup>nd</sup> level study programmes	2		
3 <sup>rd</sup> level study programmes	0		

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

*Student polling*

Types of polls	Students of which year	How many times per year	Poll analyses (*)	Use of findings (*)	Informing students of findings and measures (*)
Assessment of study programmes			2 <sup>6</sup>	2 <sup>6</sup>	2 <sup>6</sup>
Assessment of pedagogic staff			4	4	3
Credit allocation for study workload according to ECTS			1 <sup>7</sup>	1 <sup>7</sup>	1 <sup>7</sup>
Assessment of mentors for practical training			1 <sup>7</sup>	1 <sup>7</sup>	1 <sup>7</sup>
Assessment of tutors			/	/	/
Assessment of the department for student affairs			2 <sup>6</sup>	3 <sup>5</sup>	3 <sup>5</sup>

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 5 – one higher education institution did not provide answers to the statement; 6 – two higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement; 7 – three higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement

*Graduate polling*

Poll types	When? (one, two three... years after graduation)	Poll analyses (*)	Use of findings (*)	Informing the graduates of findings and measures (*)
Graduate employability		2 <sup>8</sup>	2 <sup>6</sup>	1 <sup>6</sup>
Assessing the adequacy of acquired		1 <sup>6</sup>	1 <sup>6</sup>	0 <sup>6</sup>

competences				
Further studies		0 <sup>7</sup>	0 <sup>7</sup>	0 <sup>7</sup>

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 6 - two higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement; 7 - three higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement; 8 – one of the four answers is “partly” two higher education institutions did not provide answers to the statement

### III. Scientific, research, art and professional activities

Statement	(*)
HEI carries out scientific, research, art and professional activities in accordance with the strategic plan and the national and European standards.	4
HEI ensures that modern findings by scientific, research, art and professional activities are used for teaching.	4
HEI encourages its employees to regularly publish their findings from scientific, research, art and professional activities.	4
HEI ensures transfer of knowledge into practice.	4
HEI keeps adequate records on all of the above.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

#### Research and art activities

Statement	(*)
HEI participates in research/art projects among the Slovene universities, independent higher education institutions, institutes and other entities.	4
HEI participates in international research/art projects.	4
Each year the employees prepare a report on the research/art work for the previous year.	4
Each year they prepare a programme for research/art work for the following year.	4
HEI encourages individual employees and personnel to participate in research/art work.	4
HEI has established criteria for assessing the success of research/art work.	4
The employees integrate students into their research/art work.	4
Research/art work is linked to the education work of the professors.	4
Research work is linked to development projects for the economy.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

#### Professional activities

Statement	(*)
Various HEI professional activities are regulated through contracts.	4
HEI encourages employees to cooperate with clients from the economy and the non-economy.	4
HEI has established criteria for assessing the quality of professional work and the efficiency of its transfer into practice.	4
Once per year the HEI plans its professional work.	4
Once per year the HEI reports on the results of its professional work.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### IV. Higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff

Statement	(*) <sup>4</sup>
Selection procedures for higher education teachers and scientific staff are regulated and public.	3
Election procedures for higher education teachers and scientific staff are regulated and public.	3

Promotion procedures for higher education teachers and scientific staff are regulated and public.	3
In selection, election and promotion of higher education teachers and assistants pedagogic as well as research skills/knowledge are taken into account.	3
HEI takes care of lifelong learning and professional development of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.	2
HEI has a long-term employment policy of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.	3
HEI provides its academic staff with career counselling.	2
HEI participates in the domestic and international exchange of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff, it encourages it and enables it.	3
HEI encourages close cooperation among higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.	3
Integration is shown in the criteria for promotion and election to titles.	3
Workload for educational and research activities is defined.	3

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 4 - one higher education institution did not provide answers to the statement

## V. Administrative and professional-technical staff

Statement	(*) <sup>4</sup>
Selection procedures for administrative and professional-technical staff are regulated and public.	3
Promotion procedures for administrative and professional-technical staff are regulated and public.	3
HEI provides the administrative and professional-technical staff with access to lifelong learning.	2 <sup>9</sup>
HEI provides career counselling to administrative and professional-technical staff.	1
HEI organizes polling of administrative and professional-technical staff; the findings are used for improving its work.	0

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 4 - one higher education institution did not provide answers to the statement; 9 – two affirmative answers, the third is “no, however it enables it”

## VI. Students at the higher education institution

Statement	(*)
Equality of male and female students is ensured.	4
HEI provides its students with access to counselling services.	4
HEI provides its students with guidance (tutorials) and adequate support in their studies.	4
HEI takes measures to enable students to assess their personal progression in the programme.	4 <sup>1</sup>
During the study process the students acquire basic competences, such as: learning ability, the ability to analyse and combine, communication skills, etc..	4
Student mobility is enabled and is being encouraged through mutual recognition of credits among the higher education institutions.	4
HEI provides students with means to form organized associations.	4
HEI ensures student participation in decision making processes.	4
HEI provides students with accepting and implementing programmes of extracurricular activities.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 1 – one of the four answers is “yes, partly”

## VII. Premises, equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities, the library

Statement	(*) <sup>4</sup>
HEI has adequate premises for achieving medium-term goals.	2
HEI has adequate premises for achieving long-term goals.	2
HEI is constantly modernizing the equipment required for its activities.	3
Material resources are adequate for achieving study programme goals.	3
Material resources are available for a longer time period.	2
HEI provides free ICT access to its staff and students.	3
Employees may use ICT for commercial, educational and research purposes.	3
Students may use ICT for educational and research purposes.	3

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 4 – one higher education institution did not provide answers to all answers in this table

### The library

Statement	(*)
The library is easily accessible.	4
The library has a reading room.	4
Library premises and stock are adequate for unhindered HEI activities.	3
Number of library staff and its training are in accordance with the standards.	4
HEI provides the employees and students with access to web sources.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## VIII. Financing the educational/study, research, art and professional activities

Statement	(*)
HEI has guaranteed long-term resources for study, research, art and professional work from various sources.	4 <sup>1</sup>
HEI acquires resources for its operation from budgetary sources.	4 <sup>1</sup>
HEI acquires resources for its operation from resources of European and other international projects.	4 <sup>1</sup>
V HEI acquires resources for its operation from resources acquired at the market.	3
HEI systematically allocates resources for study, research, art and professional work.	4
HEI monitors the use of acquired resources.	4

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 1 - one of the four answers is "yes, partly"

## IX. Cooperation with the social environment

Statement	(*) <sup>4</sup>
HEI has established successful cooperation on a national level.	3
HEI has established successful cooperation on an international level.	3
HEI encourages cooperation with other HEIs.	3
HEI encourages cooperation with companies.	3
HEI encourages cooperation with important stakeholders from the environment.	3
HEI shows integration of interested public in its activities.	3
Study programmes and other courses reflect the demand of the economy and the non-economy.	3
The economy and the non-economy are integrated into planning and monitoring the HEI educational work.	3
HEI participates in student, higher education teacher and professional assistant exchange in Slovenia and abroad.	3

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 4 - one higher education institution did not provide answers to all answers in this table

## VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

For the first time the Senate carried out evaluations of two vocational colleges, one a private college and the other a public one. Due to their different status there were many differences between them, as the first evaluated college teaches only part-time students, most of whom are already employed, while the other teaches full-time as well as part-time students. The former is financed mostly through tuition fees and the latter through public resources. Both colleges are organizational units of a college centre or institution with different organizational units.

### *1. Strategy, organization and management of the institution, record keeping and quality assurance*

The schools have a mission, a vision and a strategy as well as a long-term development programme; however, mission and vision statement are not public or are only published on the web sites of the college centre or the institution and not on the colleges' web pages. The employees and students at one of the colleges do not know these initiatives and documents well. This college also has a very meagre strategic plan.

The competences, authorities and responsibilities of employees are known, defined by the current legislation and by other schools' regulations; the colleges have bodies that enable them to participate in pedagogic and professional work. At both colleges students are represented in the college's strategic council and commission for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality. At one of the colleges they also have a student council which is otherwise not a mandatory body according to law.

A comprehensive system of quality assurance is being established at both colleges; the evaluation commissions recommend systematic changing and analysing of practical education in companies (also by assessing the participating mentors) and employment of their graduates. Poll results have to be published, as well, since the measures for improving quality that are taken based on the polls. One college does not keep proper records on its activities.

### *2. Education – study activities*

Study programmes are adopted based on professional standards; professional education titles are in accordance with set goals and planned study achievements. One of the colleges participates in a development project with partner French colleges where study programmes are compared. The colleges use different ways to collect information on the candidates for enrolment to their study programmes. Student polling on implementation and quality of study programmes refers only to a part, e.g. to assessing the lecturers and subjects, but there are no polls or systematic monitoring of practical education in companies, even though this is an essential component of higher education programmes (as much as 40%). Informing students with poll findings and any eventual measures is also inadequate.

The colleges do not poll their graduates on the adequacy of acquired competences and have no data on their employability. One college only polls them in regard to their interest for further studies.

The private college only educates part-time students; it has no fictitious enrolment; the other, public college, has problems with fictitious enrolment and intentional procrastination of students' graduation due to the benefits of the student's status. Study achievements, progression rates and study duration are being monitored by both colleges.

At one of the colleges the ratio between the number of students and the number of professional staff is adequate; at the other, the number is improving. The difference between them is also that the first college has the most contractual employees from the market economy; the other has many full-time employees. One college does not have a systemised lecturer/organizer of practical education. This is against the law.

### *3. Professional activity*

Professional activity is in accordance with the strategic plan and the long-term development plan of the colleges and is connected to the quality implementation of study programmes. The colleges participate in domestic as well as international projects; one of the colleges has already opened a project office, and the other intends to employ a coordinator for international projects and development activity.

Cooperation with lecturers from the economy and the practice by itself guarantees that modern professional findings are used in teaching. As much as 40% of the higher education studies are devoted to practical education of students and seminar, diploma and other papers are practically oriented as well. The lecturer/organizer of practical education represents an important link between the school and (non-)economic organizations. One of the schools does not have this appointment. The commission warns that it has to rectify this situation.

The colleges encourage professional staff to regularly publish their professional findings; however, the publications are too few, or they are not publically accessible. Records on professional work of the lecturers are too few as well (or more accurately stated, there are almost none).

### *4. Lecturers, instructors and laboratory workers*

Selection, election and promotion procedures for professional staff are set by the law: the criteria of the Council of Experts of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational and Technical Education; and these are public. Pedagogic as well as professional work is taken into account. The lecturers are appointed for the period of 5 years and may be appointed again if they meet the required conditions. Both colleges take care of education and professional development of their professional staff (pedagogic-andragogic education, lectures, seminars, workshops). At one of the colleges, such education is financed, planned and documented for each academic year. Headmasters of the schools carry out individual interviews with their employees; the commissions did not identify any other forms of career counselling.

Exchanges of professional staff are carried out between the faculty and the economy; many lecturers are simultaneously employed in the companies. There is no exchange yet with lecturers from abroad as the schools do not plan such exchanges.

### 5. *Administrative and professional-technical staff*

Even though promotion of administrative and professional-technical staff is defined at both colleges, only one of them carries it out regularly and in an organized manner; the employees are familiar with the procedures. The colleges encourage education of their employees, in part they also finance it. However, they have no precise education plans. The commissions could not exactly establish whether the colleges carry out regular annual interviews with their employees and offer systematic career counselling. They do not monitor employee satisfaction; they only poll students on how satisfied they are with the work of the department for students. At one of the colleges, the employees are neither informed about poll findings, nor about the decisions of the college bodies, the vision and the mission.

The commissions recommend the preparation of an education plan for employees and systematic monitoring of their satisfaction.

### 6. *Vocational college students*

The colleges inform their students in various ways, the student are most satisfied with the work of the department for students and less so with the web pages and notices on notification boards. One school does not have a tutor system and the other had used the so called professor tutorship system, but chose to eliminate it.

At one of the colleges the students desire more laboratory exercises for individual subjects and smaller and more homogenous groups. The commission found that associated exercises in some subjects are inadequate. Assessment and grading of knowledge is defined by both the study programmes and the regulations on assessment of knowledge in vocational colleges.

The study programmes are very practically oriented; the students participate in 400 hours of practical education outside of the college, giving them the chance to fully develop their communication skills, problem solving skills.

Both colleges have been awarded the ERASMUS charter, which enables practical education of students abroad. The exchange starts with cooperation with foreign schools and is monitored and carried out through study obligations in practical education and also through awarded scholarships. Students of both colleges rarely opt for the exchange. The biggest obstacles are problems regarding the harmonization with other obligations, the foreign language, and at the private school also the fact that it only educates part-time students.

There are also sizeable differences between the colleges regarding how well the students are informed of their rights they have in co-deciding at the college bodies, and their representation in those bodies.

### 7. *Premises and equipment for educational and professional activity, the library*

Premises of both schools are adequate for their activities; the equipment is mostly modern and well maintained, and access to information and communication technologies is good.

The situation with the library is different. At one of the colleges, the opening times are not favourable for the users; they do not order new materials for students; the library is

understaffed; and the staff does not have the requisite education. None of the colleges has a separate reading room.

8. *Financing the educational and professional activities*

The private school is financed mostly through tuition fees and it has no budgetary financing sources. The public school receives most of its resources from budgetary sources. Other sources are sales of goods and services in the market and through projects. However, these sources are relatively meagre.

Planning and allocation of resources is based on the institution as a whole and not for the individual vocational college, so they cannot be studied. The commissions recommend that the colleges should define criteria for resource allocation and procedures for planning and managing the use and acquisition.

9. *Cooperation with the social environment*

Study programmes reflect the actual demand of the economy and the (non)economy, whose cooperation was already necessary in creation of higher education study programmes. The colleges work closely with the economy and the (non)economy due to the mandatory practical training for students and they have entered into several contracts with the companies and other organizations. Both are members of the Association of Vocational Colleges of Slovenia; they form ties with other vocational colleges and some higher education institutions. Many lecturers are regularly employed at the college; cooperation with the (non)economy is close, through faculty bodies and through various projects.

**Strengths and examples of recommended set-ups**

These are described in the tables in a similar manner as the higher education institutions.

<b>Field of assessment</b>	<b>Strengths and examples of recommended set-ups</b>
Education – study activity	A comparison of occupational standards is carried out in the framework of a development project with partner French vocational colleges.
	The college has prepared in advance a very precise plan for individual subjects and other study-related obligations. It is published in the annual work plan.
Professional activity	The college opened a project office whose task is to provide assistance in searching and applying for projects and in preparing reports on finished projects.
	The college has numerous lecturers and instructors with professional experience from the economy.
Lecturers, instructors and laboratory workers	The college terminates the cooperation contract with a lecturer if it finds that his pedagogic work is inadequate.
	Lecturers who are also practical experts ensure good integration of theory and practice and that knowledge that is passed on to the students is up-to-date.
	The college keeps an exact annual record of all professional

	education courses of its professional staff.
Administrative and professional-technical staff	Non-pedagogic staff of the college are familiar with the vision and the mission statement of the vocational college.
	Lifelong learning of non-pedagogic staff is defined and planned.
Vocational college students	The college has an international coordinator who is in charge of student mobility, in cooperation with the headmaster he each year presents the possibilities for exchange and practical training abroad.
Premises and equipment for educational and professional activity, the library	The college is well equipped with information-communication technology and with other multimedia equipment.
Cooperation with the social environment	The college plays an active part in preparation of vocational standards and programmes of vocational and professional education.
	The college has a well established cooperation with the economy and the broader social environment. This is formalized through numerous cooperation contracts.
	The college takes into account the requirements of companies when selecting topics for seminar and diploma papers.

### Analysis of filled out review questionnaires

The joint analysis is done based on the review questionnaires that were filled out by the Institute for Business Education and the Business-Commerce School Celje vocational colleges. The analysis only takes into account the tables with statements that may be answered with “yes” and “no”, so the number of affirmative answers may be calculated. The analysis includes all chapters from the review questionnaire for vocational colleges in 2008. Affirmative answers express the opinion of the vocational colleges on meeting the criteria requirements. That is why they are not necessarily in line with the findings of the external evaluation commission.

The comparison is structured in the following way:

left column: statements that are an integral part of the review questionnaire

right column: number of affirmative answers

note: in addition to the legends on the first page there are explanations to notes under each table

#### Caption:

ICT information-communication technology

VC vocational college

■ answers to this question were not analysed as it does not require yes/no questions

(\*) number of affirmative answers

/ no answers

1 one vocational college did not provide an answer to the statement

2 one vocational college did not provide answers to all statements in this table

### **I. Strategy, organisation and management of the institution, record keeping and quality assurance**

Statement	(*)
VC has a mission and a vision statement that express its educational and development goals.	2
The means to achieve educational and development goals are clearly defined.	2
VC mission and vision statement are accessible to the public.	1
VC has a strategic plan.	2
Competences and responsibilities of the employees are defined and everyone is informed about them.	2
The decision making process of the employees is defined and everyone is informed about them.	2
Active participation of professional staff and assistants in the decision making that pertain education, development and monitoring and assuring quality is guaranteed.	2
Active participation of students in the decision making that affects education and improvement of its quality is guaranteed.	2
VC keeps organized records on its activity.	2
VC has an established system of monitoring and assuring quality.	2
Each year the VC composes and publishes a self-evaluation report.	2
VC constantly monitors its work and uses the findings to improve its activities and their quality.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## II. Education – study activity

Statement	(*)
VC offers various study programmes that lead to professional titles in accordance with the set goals and study achievements.	2
Study programmes are comparable to domestic and European vocational education study programmes.	2
Study programmes are carried out each year.	2
Study programme goals are in accordance with the VC vision statement and strategic plan.	2
Study programme goals are objective and achievable taking into account the planned duration of the study programme and the starting education/knowledge of enrolled students.	2
Study programme goals are used for better understanding of students' achievements.	2
Graduate competences are clearly defined and publicly accessible.	2
Graduate competences are in accordance with the acquired level of education.	2
Graduate competences are periodically evaluated by the employers.	1
Study programme contents are clearly defined and publically accessible.	2
Knowledge assessment methods are clearly defined and publically accessible.	2
Conditions for finishing studies and acquiring professional titles are defined in the regulations and officially published.	2
Implementation of studies is in accordance with current public study programmes.	2
Teaching and learning methods contribute to achieving the set goals and study achievements.	2
VC monitors the development of study achievements and the study duration.	2
VC collects information on interest of candidates in enrolling into its study programmes.	1
Procedures and conditions for admission and enrolment into VC programmes are defined according to the law and the regulations and are officially published.	2
Conditions for transfers between study programmes within the VC are officially published.	2
VC organizes student polling on the quality of its study programmes.	2
VC collects information on the employability and further studies of its graduates.	1
VC informs its professional staff and assistants about the poll findings.	2
The ratio professional staff, assistants and other employees : students is adequate for ensuring the study achievements and goals of the VS and its organizational units.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### Student polling

Types of polls	Students of which year	How many times per year	Poll analyses (*)	Use of findings (*)	Informing students of findings and measures (*)
Assessment of study programmes			1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>	1 <sup>1</sup>
Assessment of pedagogic staff			2	2	1
Credit allocation for study workload			0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>

according to ECTS					
Assessment of mentors for practical training			0	0	0 <sup>1</sup>
Assessment of tutors			/	/	/
Assessment of the department for student affairs			2	2	1

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 1 - one vocational college did not provide an answer to the statement

### Graduate polling<sup>2</sup>

Poll types	When? (one, two three... years after graduation)	Poll analyses (*)	Use of findings (*)	Informing the graduates of findings and measures (*)
Graduate employability		0	0	0
Assessing the adequacy of acquired competences		0	0	0
Career development		0	0	0
Further studies		1	1	1

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 2 one vocational college did not provide answers to all statements in this table.

### III. Professional activity

Statement	(*)
VC carries out its professional activities in accordance with the strategic plan and national and European guidelines and standards.	2
VC assures that modern findings by professional activities are used in teaching.	2
VC encourages its employees to regularly publish their findings from professional activities.	2
Various VC's professional activities are regulated with contracts.	2
VC encourages its employees to cooperate with clients from the economy and (non)economy.	2
VC has established criteria for assessing the quality of the professional work and the efficiency of its transfer into practice.	1
Once per year the VC plans its professional work.	2
Once per year the VC reports on the results of its professional work.	2
VC keeps proper records on all of the above.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### IV. Lecturers, instructors and laboratory workers

#### Lecturers and instructors

Statement	(*)
Selection procedures for lecturers and instructors are regulated and public.	2
Election procedures for lecturers are regulated and public.	2
Promotion procedures for lecturers and instructors are regulated and public.	2
In selection, promotion and election pedagogic as well as professional knowledge is taken into account.	2
VC takes care of lifelong learning and professional development of its lecturers and instructors.	2

VC provides its lecturers and instructors with career counselling.	1
VC participates in domestic and international exchange of lecturers and instructors, it encourages and enables it.	1
VC encourages close cooperation between the lecturers and instructors and professionals doing practical work.	1
Integration is shown in criteria for promotion and election to titles.	0
Workload for educational and developmental/professional activities is defined.	0

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## V. Administrative and professional-technical staff

Statement	(*)
Selection procedures for administrative and professional-technical staff are regulated and public.	2
VC provides the administrative and professional-technical staff with access to lifelong learning.	2
Promotion procedures for administrative and professional-technical staff are regulated and public.	2
VC provides career counselling to administrative and professional-technical staff.	2
VC organizes polling of administrative and professional-technical staff; the findings are used for improving its work.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## VI. Vocational college students

Statement	(*)
Equality of male and female students is ensured.	2
VC provides its students with access to counselling services.	1
VC provides its students with guidance (tutorials) and adequate support in their studies.	1
VC takes measures to enable students to assess their personal progression in the programme.	1
During their studies the students acquire basic competences, such as: learning ability, communication skills, etc..	2
Student mobility is enabled and is being encouraged through mutual recognition of credits among the VCs'.	0 <sup>1</sup>
VC provides students with means to form organized associations.	2
VC ensures student participation in decision making processes.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers; 1 - one vocational college did not provide an answer to the statement

## VII. Premises, equipment for educational and professional activity, the library

Statement	(*)
VC has adequate premises for achieving medium-term goals.	2
VC has adequate premises for achieving long-term goals.	2
VC is constantly modernizing the equipment required for its activities.	2
Material resources are adequate for achieving study programme goals.	2
Material resources are available for a longer time period.	1
VC provides ICT access to its employees and students.	2
Employees may use ICT for commercial, educational and development purposes.	2
Students may use ICT for educational purposes.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

### The library

Statement	(*)
The library is easily accessible.	2
The library has the reading-room.	1
Library premises and stock are adequate for unhindered VC activities.	2
Number of library staff and its training are in accordance with the standards.	2
VC provides the employees and students with access to web sources.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## VIII. Financing the educational/study and professional activity

Statement	(*)
VC has guaranteed long-term resources for study and professional work from various sources.	2
VC acquires resources for its operation from budgetary sources.	1
VC acquires resources for its operation from resources of European and other international projects.	0
VC acquires resources for its operation from resources acquired at the market.	1
VC systematically allocates resources for study and professional work.	2
VC monitors the use of acquired resources.	2

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## IX. Cooperation with the social environment

Statement	(*)
VC has established successful cooperation on a national level.	2
VC has established successful cooperation on an international level.	2
VC encourages cooperation with other VCs'.	2
VC encourages cooperation with companies.	2
VC encourages cooperation with important stakeholders from the environment.	2
VC shows integration of interested public in its activities.	2
Study programmes and other courses reflect the demand of the economy and the non-economy.	2
The economy and the non-economy are integrated into planning and monitoring the VC educational work.	2
VC participates in exchange of students and professional staff at home and abroad.	1

NOTE: (\*) number of affirmative answers

## **ASSESSING THE EXTERNAL EVALUATIONS**

### **Feedback from evaluated higher education institutions and vocational colleges**

On these evaluative occasions, the higher education institutions and vocational colleges were satisfied with the work of the evaluation commissions as well, and mostly satisfied with the final reports.

All of them have filled out the questionnaires of the Senate's professional service that are used to establish how satisfied the institution management and the students were with the visit of the external evaluation commission, and to collect suggestions for improving its work. In comparison to the questionnaire from the previous year, this one is much more precise. Special attention was given to the interviews, selection of interviewees, comprehension and adaptation of set questions. The answers are important for future improvement of external evaluations as the findings of the evaluation reports will help develop and improve the quality of institutions and colleges. Some have already started implementing the recommended measures for improving their work. Among them are the following measures: based on the evaluation commission's recommendations a college management is preparing an action plan for improving quality; it has started to carry out activities for forming an alumni club. The institutions published student poll results on their web pages and they are preparing polls for administrative and professional-technical staff.

In 2008 the total assessment of evaluation commissions' work - based on the questionnaires - was above average as well (analysis in Appendix 4).

Most evaluated higher education institutions and vocational colleges completely agreed with the reports of the evaluation commissions; some institutions especially praised their work. Only one of them had, in addition to the finding that the commission performed its work properly, submitted an in-depth opinion on the report. It contained findings that the institutions did not agree with, or only agreed with in part and explained (substantiated) them by the illustration of certain facts that were "maybe slightly less recognisable" for the commission. The opinion of the institution often stated that the cause for the current state of affairs is the current legislation and the university's regulation and instructions, which are equal for all university members and therefore abrogation is often "outside the faculty's power".

### **Findings of the Senate's professional service**

#### Visits to the higher education institutions and vocational colleges

Just like the previous year, the visits to the three higher education institutions and two vocational colleges lasted two days each, only the visit to one of them, a smaller higher education institution, took merely one day.

Compared to 2007 improvements were identified regarding the preparation of the commissions and the higher education institutions for the visit. This can be attributed to a new review questionnaire and protocol of the visit. The institutions, as well as the commission members, have found the new questionnaire to be much more transparent than the previous one. The questions and answers are assigned according to fields of assessment for institutional external evaluation from the criteria and according to chapters, there are fewer repetitions,

superficial questions and tables have been cut. Despite that, two higher education institutions did not fully fill them out, which made the work of the commissions more difficult. For one of them, we can assume that the institution did not completely fill out the questionnaire intentionally. Two tables were left completely empty due to the lack of proper organisation in the respective fields, as the commission could not acquire the missing data even during the visit.

In case of the two vocational colleges, we found that they did not have any significant problems filling out the questionnaire that was prepared especially for them. The questionnaires, just like the higher education one, will of course have to be improved due to the planned changes to the evaluation criteria.

A new visit protocol also contributed to a more systematic preparation of the commission and the institution/college for the evaluation, especially in respect of the visit and interview schedule. Evaluation observers from the Senate's professional service found that interview moderation was better than the previous year; the choice of interviewees was much better thought out and the questions were clearer, better tailored to the selected interviewee group. Most commissions divided the work among themselves better than the previous year; however, there were still some repetitions during the interviews with representatives of the institutions and some interruptions from other members, which have to be avoided in the future. The recommended 45-minute duration of the interviews contributed to more efficient work of the commissions. Most of them also had short pauses for a quick exchange of opinions prior to the next interview.

At the institutions, where foreign experts participated as members, the chairpersons organized the interviews by dividing the commission into two groups and the group with the foreign expert posed questions in English. The evaluations proceeded without incident. Only at one institution there were some problems due to lacking English skills of one of the commission members and some representatives of the institution.

Some evaluators still have a lacking knowledge of the legislation and the regulations, even though their training in 2008 also included a presentation of the higher education and vocational legislation with special emphasis on the differences between them.

#### Assessment of final reports

The final evaluation reports have improved as well. They are still composed similarly to the ones from the previous year and prepared according to chapters and fields of assessment from the criteria regarding the institutional external evaluation; but they are more specific in their second part where the commission listed their findings and comments according to individual criteria and added the strengths and weaknesses of the institution/college and recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses (SWOT analysis).

The final reports are now much more systematic and transparent, there are fewer differences between introductions, summaries and conclusions. The amount of text does not differ so much from one chapter to another as it did in 2007. The most important improvement of the evaluation reports was achieved through consistent separation of strengths, weaknesses and the commissions' recommendations for the elimination of weaknesses, which enables the evaluated institution to improve its activities sooner and more efficiently.

The evaluation commissions mostly adhered to the instructions for writing the final report with the exception of the recommendation that they should set deadlines for eliminating the institution's weaknesses (only one commission did that). Some contents and findings, although less often now, are still being repeated in the reports and listed in different chapters. The reports occasionally look like a collage of written records from individual commission members. The chairmen will have to do a much better job of editing the final reports in the future, and if necessary, correct them and harmonize individual chapters content-wise with each other.

The Senate's professional service discovered that there were differences between how the commissions wrote down their findings for individual fields of assessment. Some have retained the recommended structure by adding their findings to individual criteria from an individual field; others left those criteria out. For better transparency and for easier assessment of whether the commission evaluated the institution according to all evaluation criteria, it is better that the commissions retain the recommended structure of the final report. This is also important because the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for their elimination do not necessarily show whether all criteria from an individual field of assessment were taken into account during the evaluation.

There are also differences between reports of the commissions with foreign evaluators. Two reports are completely written in Slovene, while one of the reports contains the findings of the foreign expert in English as well.

Some reports, among the strengths of the higher educational institution or the vocational college, contain certain elements that are mandatory by the law and the regulations and that represent the foundation for the institutions/colleges operation. On the other hand, the commissions often do not counsel or warn the institution/college management if their activities are against regulations. It has been established that all evaluators will have to improve their knowledge of this field.

## **Foreign evaluators' responses**

Foreign evaluators were satisfied with the evaluations and the unanimous verdict was that internationally they are among the better ones. They have praised the organisation, the set of instruments, as well as the visits to the higher education institutions. They sent written assessments of the evaluations to the Senate's professional service where they also suggested some improvements and pointed out some weaknesses. They found it of key importance that the Senate invited foreign experts to participate in the evaluation commissions.

Their assessments are summarized in 4 points: preparation for the visit to the institution, visit to the institution, final evaluation report and concluding observations.

### Preparation for the visit to the institution

Foreign experts have praised the work of the Senate's professional service and pointed out in the assessment that they had received English versions of applications and the set of instruments as soon as they confirmed their participation. They have praised the help in organizing their trip to Slovenia and in finding and booking the accommodation. They were very satisfied with the chairpersons of the commissions who, during the visits to the

institutions, provided them with the visit schedule and all required information for successful work. Other commission members were also described as friendly and professional.

Foreign experts have a high opinion of the set of instruments for evaluation, especially of the visit protocol and the review questionnaire. They were less satisfied with the Council's and Senate's web pages.

### Visit to the institution

The evaluators have stated that visit schedules precisely followed the standards defined in the visit protocol and that the latter are well in accordance with the international evaluation standards. Following this the individual assessments diverged. Below are summaries of opinions of each individual foreign evaluator:

The first evaluator pointed out that he had no opportunity to meet the other members of the evaluation commission, as there was no introductory meeting prior to the official visit to the institution. He described the visit to the institution in most detail:

All interviewee groups have been interviewed at separate meetings; the commission inspected everything that was necessary (offices, lecture rooms, laboratories, the library...). The interviews were moderated well; he was very impressed that no one had problems with communication in English (neither the commission members, nor the employees and the students). The commission chairperson was efficient in leading the evaluation procedure and closely observed the visit schedule. He allowed enough time for a debate so every commission member could voice his or her opinion. Commission members creatively complemented each other; they posed questions from various angles in order to cover all required elements of the evaluation. This way they could simultaneously define strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for elimination of weaknesses.

The commission met after each interview so the members could quickly exchange impressions and repeat their findings. The commission also met during the work lunch and at the end of the day. The chairperson collected and summarized its findings. At the final meeting on the next day the commission composed a draft/summary of the report. This part of the visit was on a very tight schedule. The commission could engage the help of the Senate's professional service in this matter. A draft of the report could be prepared in advance into which the commission could enter its findings. At the end of the visit, the chairperson presented a short summary of the report to the commission members and gave the participants the opportunity to voice their opinions.

Before submitting the final report to the Senate for Evaluation, the commission chairperson sent a harmonized version of the report to all members via e-mail and the final version took into consideration comments from all members. The chairperson of the commission completed his work very well.

Similarly to the first, the second evaluator was satisfied with communication and with English skills of everyone else, especially the students; early stage researchers and associates, of which he reports were on a very high level.

He also writes that at the preparation meeting, held by the commission a day prior to the visit to the institution, more emphasis should have been put on consistent cooperation of all

commission members, or at least their roles should have been clarified and defined. The commission, or the interviewer, could have (during the interview of the individual interviewee group at the institution) more consistently insisted that all commission members actively participate in order to avoid one-sided (political) answers by the group leader or speaker appointed by the group.

The third evaluator had the most comments regarding the visit to the institution as, opposed to the other two. He was dissatisfied with his role in the evaluation commission as well as with the interviews.

First he pointed out that foreign as well as domestic experts should participate in all activities, so he found it important to participate in the preparation meeting. This way he could meet other commission members prior to the visit to the institution. All members of the evaluation commission should be equal, even experts should not play a special role. He believed that this was the intent of the commission as well; however, on occasion he had the feeling that there were higher expectations of him than from the other members of the commission.

The most remarks he had concerned the language. He believed that there should be clear rules on the use of a common language set by the agency, if the foreigner does not speak or understand the Slovene language. He lists two options: either a foreign expert is found who speaks Slovene (or maybe even one of the former Yugoslav languages) or the complete visit is carried out exclusively in English. All communication (including the communication with the institution's management, students) should therefore be in English. No one should be surprised when they find out that English is the "official" language of the visit. Similarly, Slovene evaluators should be fluent in English. This question is equally important for writing the final report. Only if the report is written in English do all commission members have equal opportunities to participate and communicate their comments. The evaluator points out that he did not see the commission's report, so he could not voice his suggestions and comments. He was also not informed which of his opinions were taken into consideration.

### Concluding observations

Common concluding observations are summarized in short sentences:

- the criteria for evaluation and the procedures are in accordance with international standards, the evaluation procedure is comparable to the ASIIN agency's procedure,
- the commission's visit was well organized, exceptionally carried out; members were experts,
- the higher education institution was generally helpful to the commission in its work;

Suggestions for improvement:

- the commission should, especially when it includes foreign experts, hold a separate meeting a day prior to the visit of the higher education institution;
- the agency (Senate) has to adopt and implement a clear decision on the use of English as this would make the work easier for everyone, including foreign experts. This decision should be included into the criteria or rules of operation of the evaluation commissions;
- the Council and the Senate should improve their web pages;
- at the meeting with the management questions should be posed to everyone (dean, vice-dean, secretary) in order to better judge the nature of their cooperation;

- the evaluation of and insight in study programmes of the institution should be deeper in order to be able to evaluate the actual composition of the programmes (descriptions of study goals and competences, meeting programme goals, didactic concepts etc.);
- there should be maximum “remoteness” of commission members, as far as this is possible in such a small county as Slovenia, in order to avoid appointing evaluators that have personal contacts with the evaluated institution;
- help from the Senate’s professional service in writing the report should be anticipated (unified reports of all commissions with systematic and repeated composition).

## **ANALYSIS OF SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS BY THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND VOCATIONAL COLLEGES FOR THE YEAR 2007**

Self-evaluation reports of higher education institutions and vocational colleges represent a basis for external evaluations; therefore analysing these reports and helping improve monitoring and assuring of quality are important tasks of the Senate. The professional service received 98 self-evaluation reports from higher education institutions and vocational colleges.

Analysis of these reports focused on:

- to what extent and how do reports take into account the recommended fields of assessment from the criteria;
- how self-critical the institutions and colleges are in identifying their strengths and weaknesses;
- the extent and the type of carried out activities in procedures for assuring the quality of their operation in regard to the identified strengths and weaknesses in the previous years;
- what measures have been taken to further improve the quality under consideration of identified weaknesses.

The goals of the analysis are:

- recommendations for improving self-evaluations of higher education institutions and vocational colleges and improving procedures due to comparability of self-evaluation reports;
- preparation of institutions and colleges for external evaluation;
- establishing a best practice system.

The methodology of the analysis is predominantly based on comparison of submitted annual reports on carried out self-evaluations of the institutions and colleges with the criteria from the fields of assessment. Self-evaluation reports are divided according to groups (universities, independent higher education institutions and vocational colleges). With the help of the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, suggestions for eliminating the weaknesses) and by taking into account the best practice cases the Senate has formed recommendations for improving the self-evaluation reports.

### **SELF-EVALUATION REPORTS OF THE UNIVERSITIES**

University of Ljubljana, University of Primorska and University of Nova Gorica have submitted comprehensive joint self-evaluation reports for each university as a whole, which also contain the (summaries of) self-evaluation findings of all their members.

The joint self-evaluation report of the University of Maribor is short, enclosed with self-evaluation reports of all members; the rector's office; student dorms; University Library Maribor; and the INTER-ES organisation. From member reports, it is evident that they observed the common indicators for quality assurance set by the University of Maribor, even though individual reports differ from each other in their composition.

**Strengths:**

- all universities and their members have adopted and officially published strategies, vision statements and work plans and are striving to constantly strengthen and develop their quality;
- all universities have a unified methodology for preparing self-evaluation reports of their members. These reports adhere to fields of assessment from the criteria, to their own indicators and to European Standards and Guidelines;
- all universities have adopted their own criteria for quality assurance which are in accordance with the criteria and the European Standards and Guidelines;
- all universities have commissions for assessing quality, as well as most members and some members have coordinators for monitoring and assuring quality;
- they are aware of the importance of quality assurance and improvements while taking into account the assessed weaknesses;
- all universities and their members poll students;
- the questionnaires and their contents are equal for all members;
- self-evaluation procedures or procedures for assuring quality in higher education are periodically carried out;
- in the procedures for assuring quality at all four universities, students mostly participate as well (co-determination in member and university bodies – the senate, the academic assembly, governing board, participation in commissions for assessing quality, filling out student questionnaires);
- students are provided with the options to participate in the design of educational processes and to voice their opinions;
- most universities and their members officially publish their self-evaluation reports;
- universities harmonise their self-evaluation reports with reports of their members;
- there is in evidence a successfully implemented student mobility system, mostly a tutorship and mentorship system as well.

**Weaknesses:**

- most members and universities still have no polls for students that would be used for measuring and analysing their actual workload in regard to the ECTS for a specific study programme;
- they have not yet developed procedures for successful measuring of learning outcomes;
- some universities and their members still do not poll pedagogic staff on changes and suggestions for improving the pedagogic work;
- some institutions use a very small representative sample of polled students (10 % of all enrolled students);
- mentorship and tutorship are not implemented everywhere; or are unsuccessful (“they did not take root”);
- there is no data on organized career counselling for pedagogic and non-pedagogic staff;
- most university members report an inadequate ratio between the number of pedagogic staff and the number of students (higher education teacher overload);
- the polls filled out by the students are rather informative (formal) in nature, their findings have no actual consequences or are not linked to recommendations for improving quality (eliminating the weaknesses);
- there is no data that universities or their members would have regularly employed experts that would deal exclusively with internal quality assurance;

- not all universities have commissions for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality at all members.

### **Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses:**

- self-evaluation reports should include elements of the SWOT analysis. At the end of each field of assessment there should be an analysis of the actual state of affairs in comparison to the previous year: strengths, weaknesses, recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses and for further operation;
- students should actively participate in the educational process, not only by participating in polls (for example at the end of every semester), but also by presenting suggestions which could contribute to changes and improvement of the study programme and to any eventual content-related changes and changes to ECTS credit allocation;
- student polling should be carried out at the right time, when most of them are present at the lectures and exercises (e.g. several weeks before the end of the semester or before the beginning of the exam period);
- student polls should be used to assess student workload according to ECTS. This enables a better insight into the success of Bologna study programmes; the mobility; national comparability and mutual recognition of carried out study obligations (polls should include questions on actual workload at lectures, seminars, exercises and on the contents of subjects, teaching, understanding the presented contents, methods of knowledge assessment, comments and suggestions for improvement, etc.);
- better participation of students in activities for quality assurance (including commissions for assuring quality at individual university members);
- better cooperation with other stakeholders in providing adequate learning outcomes;
- learning outcomes (knowledge, competences, skills) and collecting information from employees, labour market representatives and others (for example through poll questionnaires);
- systematic organisation of career counselling for employees;
- systematic organisation of student counselling regarding their career and further studies;
- it would be good if the commissions for monitoring, assessing and assuring the quality of universities or their members would employ experts for quality assurance, that would be full-time employees of the university or its members, not merely one of pedagogic staff who seem to be overburdened with pedagogic and research work.

### **INDEPENDENT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

14 independent higher education institutions submitted self-evaluation reports as well. This group contains the most differences between individual reports regarding their scope as well as the contents. This seems to be connected with the age of the institution and its size. Only a handful of reports include the required components of a self-evaluation report and are comparable content-wise to those submitted by the universities and their members. Other reports can be compared to those submitted by the Association of Vocational Colleges i.e. the reports that are mostly based on the findings of the student polls and pedagogic staff polls. This group's self-evaluation reports did not enable a joint analysis like the university reports did, so the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for elimination of weaknesses listed below are not typical of only the group. Tracking guidelines can be extracted from the other two groups (self-evaluation reports of the universities and their members on the one hand and vocational colleges on the other).

## VOCATIONAL COLLEGES

The Association of Vocational Colleges has submitted self-evaluation reports of 29 public and concession-based vocational colleges and 31 of private vocational colleges. The reports are mostly short and based on the findings of filled out poll questionnaires.

### **Strengths:**

- all vocational colleges have commissions for monitoring and assessing quality, some have ISO certifications that shows a tendency to assure quality;
- most colleges in their short reports mention very successful cooperation with the economy and the transfer of knowledge into practice and vice-versa;
- some reports mention polls that the colleges use to assess the acquired competences of their graduates at employers;
- most colleges participate in the POKI project (offering quality education to adults);
- most of them monitor employability and progress of their graduates (career development system);
- there is a tendency to encourage students to continue their studies;
- they attract employers, graduates and the broader social environment to self-evaluation procedures;
- individual colleges in their reports mention cooperation among colleges in order to improve their quality based on best practice cases;
- at some colleges poll findings are processed by the students as well as lecturers, based on discussions they prepare measures for improvement, the respondents participate in preparation of poll questionnaires.

### **Weaknesses:**

- there are no universal self-evaluation criteria, most colleges have their own internal set of rules for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality, which is why there are such great content-related differences between individual self-evaluation reports;
- self-evaluation reports are mostly very short and too general (on the average 2 to 3 pages long), they mostly contain a short presentation of student poll findings without an in-depth analysis or proper – concrete recommendations (measures, opportunities) for improvement of quality. In addition, they lack the measures that have been adopted in the past based on the completed self-evaluation reports;
- the reports do not contain all fields of assessment from the criteria (strategy, mission statement, education and study activity, development work, professional staff and assistants, administrative and professional-technical staff, students, premises and equipment, financing, cooperation with the social environment);
- most of the reports do not mention student and pedagogic staff mobility and tutorship;
- there are no polls based on which ECTS student workload could be monitored;
- there are no traces of systematic career counselling for college employees;
- student progression and measures connected with it are not mentioned anywhere;
- only a few reports contain data on international cooperation;
- almost all reports merely contain statements of successful operation and cooperation and only a few of them contain general measures for improving quality.

### **Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses:**

- self-evaluation reports should contain a comprehensive analysis of the actual state of affairs from all chapters/fields of assessment required by the criteria. They should be treated with the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, recommendations for elimination of weaknesses);
- filled out poll questionnaires have to be better analysed as this is the only way for them to be an efficient tool for preparation of concrete proposals for improvement;
- tutorship should be developed;
- career counselling for employees and students should be implemented;
- colleges should strive to develop mobility (at home and abroad) of students as well as professional staff and assistants; international cooperation should increase (open new international offices);
- an efficient system for measuring learning outcomes has to be set up;
- polls have to be designed that will be able to measure the actual student workload according to ECTS;
- best practice examples at individual vocational colleges should be taken into account and used by colleges that still do not use certain procedures and methods.

### **Summary**

There are substantial differences between the individual self-evaluation reports for 2007; the range includes adequately prepared comprehensive reports that contain all the elements and observe the fields of assessment from the criteria and ESG and even best practice cases, including short “notice” strategies that ensure the institution takes care of quality. Differences can be noticed even between individual members of one university; and those differences become larger between different universities, independent higher education institutions and vocational colleges.

Self-evaluation reports of the universities and their members are prepared based on a uniform methodology; they mostly follow the criteria, and in some cases, even ESG and best practice cases, which cannot be said for the reports by independent higher education institutions and vocational colleges.

The reports by vocational colleges are interesting to look at. Despite the fact that they are short and not well written, most of them contain examples of best practice that could be seen as opportunities for improving quality assurance procedures and self-evaluation of public as well as private higher education institutions. This especially pertains to close cooperation with the economy, assessing learning outcomes (polls for mentors, graduates and employers) and considering best practice examples at self-evaluations of successful vocational colleges in Slovenia.

Quality assurance and the self-evaluation of college or institution that is connected with it, is a procedure that is constantly changing, adapting and being upgraded; therefore cooperation and exchange of best practice examples are of key importance in the vocational as well as higher education at home and abroad. The self-evaluation reports for 2007 show that the differences between institutions/colleges are what drives forward the development of new self-evaluation procedures that lead to a more successful and efficient assuring of quality in the higher education area.

## CONCLUSION

The Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia, Senate for Evaluation, is a nationally independent professional body created by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia in accordance with the Higher Education Act. Its mission is systematic monitoring, assessing and assuring of quality of the Slovene higher and vocational education as a part of the common European higher education area. As concern for quality is the basic condition for mutual trust of all stakeholders in this area, the senate especially strives to encourage and develop the culture of quality and its constant improvement – for its own development and for the development of all participants in the process of education.

It is clear that evaluation procedures will have to be constantly improved by all sides: by the council and the senate, by higher education institutions and vocational colleges and by external evaluation commissions. The basic goal is to:

- become a recognizable and vital part of the European higher education area while still retaining an own tradition and special characteristics;
- exchange best practice examples with other foreign and domestic higher education partners;
- ensure recognition of Slovene diplomas (degrees);
- ensure student and professor mobility;
- participate as an equal member in the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education – ENQA;
- be entered into the European Quality Assurance Registry – EQAR.

Therefore the main tasks of the Senate will continue to be:

- improving the universal criteria, standards and recommendations for enhancing quality;
- developing and establishing of efficient tools for constant improvement of self-evaluation and external evaluation procedures;
- counselling and cooperation with higher education institutions and vocational colleges and providing assistance for self-evaluations;
- educating employees of the Senate's professional service, evaluators, evaluation commissions, higher education institutions and vocational colleges;
- developing and improving the quality of higher education institutions, vocational colleges, study programmes, teaching and study as well as scientific, research, art and professional activities through systematic external evaluations of programmes and institutions;
- publishing annual national evaluation reports, informing the public, teachers, researchers, students, employers and other stakeholders about the quality of higher and vocational education.

Self-evaluation reports of the higher education institutions and vocational colleges represent a foundation for all external evaluation procedures. It is therefore recommended that they are prepared based on the criteria from the fields of assessment in order to facilitate the work of the evaluation commissions on the one hand and the preparation of the institutions and colleges for evaluation on the other. As the foreign experts have pointed out, the criteria are in accordance with the European Standards and Guidelines for assuring quality of higher and vocational education.

A comparison of external evaluation procedures from 2007 and 2008 shows that much progress has been made towards their improvement. Higher education institutions' applications for external evaluations in 2008 are much better, among other matters, due to a universal form that was designed by the Senate's professional service. By adopting a new set of evaluation instruments, the visits to the higher education institutions and vocational colleges were better prepared, and the final evaluation reports became more systematic. In the reports the conclusion of every field of assessment contained a more clearly defined and useful presentation of strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses. Furthermore, organized training of evaluators contributed to better work of the commissions.

In 2009 the Senate will be even more active in forging contacts with various foreign experts and agencies for quality assurance. In addition to institutional external evaluations, it will start preparing a set of instruments for evaluations of study programmes that are scheduled to be carried out at the end of the year. And the Senate will strive to achieve ENQA and EQAR memberships.

## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX 1: Composition of commissions for institutional external evaluations in 2007

#### 1. Faculty of Computer and Information Science at the University of Ljubljana

- Aleksander Janeš, chairperson
- Dr. Borut Bohanec, member
- Marko Pukšič, member
- Nevenka Bandelj, member
- Andreja Jesenko, member

#### 2. Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geodesy at the University of Ljubljana

- Dr. Boštjan Gomišček, chairperson
- Dr. Juš Kocijan, member
- Dr. Danica Železnik, member
- Mag. Majda Kralj, member
- Katja Kamšek, member

#### 3. College of Health Care Izola at the University of Primorska

- Dr. Marinka Drobnič Košorok, chairwoman
- Dr. Dušan Krnel, member
- Mag. Karmen Kern Pipan, member
- Bojan Kurež, member
- Mag. Jasna Kržin Stepišnik, member

#### 4. Biotechnical Faculty at the University of Ljubljana

- Dr. Marjan Mernik, chairperson
- Dr. Danica Železnik, member
- Dr. Mirko Soković, member
- Andreja Jesenko, member
- Bojan Kurež, member

#### 5. University College for Health Care at the University of Ljubljana

- Aleksander Janeš, chairperson
- Dr. Boštjan Gomišček, member
- Nevenka Bandelj, member
- Mag. Jasna Kržin Stepišnik, member
- Marko Pukšič, member

## **APPENDIX 2: Composition of commissions for institutional external evaluations in 2008**

### **1. Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of Maribor**

- Dr. Marinka Drobnič Košorok, chairwoman
- Dr. Jože Vižintin, member
- Dr. Polona Kovač, member
- Dr. Klaus Jurgen Wilhelm, member
- Dejan Jeraj, member

### **2. Faculty of Administration at the University of Ljubljana**

- Dr. Boštjan Gomišček, chairperson
- Dr. Juš Kocijan, member
- Dušanka Kotnik, member
- Tine Janežič, member
- Bastian Baumann, member

### **3. School of Engineering and Management at the University of Nova Gorica**

- Dr. Mirko Sokovič, chairperson
- Dr. Bojan Dolšak, member
- Dr. Danica Železnik, member
- Dr. Kruno Hernaut, member
- Žiga Schmidt, member

### **4. Institutium Studiorum Humanitatis**

- Dr. Dušan Krnel, chairperson
- Dr. Anton Gosar, member
- Dr. Matej Makarovič, member
- Nevenka Bandelj, member
- Vanja Perovšek, member

### **5. Institute for Business Education, Vocational College Ljubljana**

- Mag. Majda Kralj, chairwoman
- Aleksander Janeš, member
- Andreja Jesenko, member
- Miha Pauko, member
- Andrej Tacer, member

### **6. Business-Commerce school Celje, Vocational College**

- Mag. Jasna Kržin Stepišnik, chairwoman
- Dr. Anita Goltnik Urnaut, member
- Mag. Janja Meglič, member
- Mag. Bojan Kurež, member
- Miroslav Sarkičevič, member

### **APPENDIX 3: Analysis of the Senate's professional service's questionnaires on institutional external evaluations in 2007**

A sample of 8 questionnaires (5 for the management, 3 for the students)

- CHCI UP institution management
- CHCI UP students
- CHCI UL institution management
- FCIS UL institution management
- FCEG UL institution management
- FCEG UL students
- BF UL institution management
- BF UL students

Methodological explanations:

a) The questionnaire is divided into two parts. In the first part the respondents assessed the general satisfaction with the visit of the evaluation commission, while in the second they list comments and suggestions for improving its work.

b) Point 1: General satisfaction with the visit of the external evaluation commission was graded with marks 1 to 5, where 1 meant "extremely dissatisfied" and 5 "very satisfied". In items one and four the questions for institution management and students differ; that is why the questionnaire sample is divided into three (students submitted three copies) plus five (institution management submitted five copies). Regarding other items student and institution management questionnaires are analysed together.

c) Point 2: In items one and four the questions for institution management and students differ; that is why the questionnaire sample there is divided into three (students submitted three copies) plus five (institution management submitted five copies) questionnaires. Regarding other items student and institution management questionnaires are analysed together.

#### **1. Average general satisfaction with the visit of the external evaluation commission (grades: 1 – 5)**

- Planning the visit and coordination between the commission and institution/college management (*institution management, sample = 5*): 4.8 (96 %)
- Knowledge of students' problems (*students, sample = 3*): 4 (80 %)
- Type of interviews and how they were carried out (*sample = 8*): 4.75 (95 %)
- Duration of the visit by the expert commission for external evaluations (*sample = 8*): 4.875 (97.5 %)
- How well were the members of the expert commission familiar with the activities of your institution (*institution management, sample = 5*): 4.4 (88 %)
- Commission's efforts to discover current problems faced by the students of the institution (*student, sample = 3*): 4.333 (86.66 %)

- Presentation of the final report at the final meeting (*sample* = 8): 4.75 (95 %)
- Final findings of the expert commission in regard to your institution/college (*sample* = 8): 4.625 (92.5 %)
- General assessment of the external evaluation of your institution/college (*sample* = 8): 4.75 (95 %)

## 2. Suggestions for improving the work of the expert commission

### (a – no suggestions, b – suggestions)

- Planning the visit and coordination between the commission and institution/college management (*institution management, sample* = 5):  
a – 4 (80 %);  
b – 1 (20 %): suggestion: **1**) Two meetings with the commission are unnecessary.
- Knowledge of students' problems (*students, sample* = 3):  
a – 2 (66.66 %);  
b – 1 (33.33 %) suggestion: **1**) The commission was not aware of the problems regarding clinical exercise and student workload.
- Type of interviews and how they were carried out (*sample* = 8):  
a – 6 (75 %);  
b – 2 (25 %) suggestions: **1**) Sometimes the interviews were too general and not concrete enough. **2**) Question order could be more consistent.
- Duration of the visit by the expert commission for external evaluations (*sample* = 8):  
a – 7 (87.5 %);  
b – 1 (12.5 %): suggestion: **1**) The visit of the expert commission should last at least three days or more.
- How well were the members of the expert commission familiar with the activities of your institution (*institution management, sample* = 5):  
a – 2 (40 %);  
b – 3 (60 %): suggestions: **1**) Knowledge of the members depends on the answers to the questionnaire, which is not the best, therefore it should be modified; evaluation criteria should be modified as well. **2**) The commission's notice to the institution in which it requests the required documentation should be composed more clearly. **3**) Due to the faculty's size, the commission could only familiarize itself with the central objects.
- Commission's efforts to discover current problems faced by the students of the institution (*students, sample* = 3):  
a – 2 (66.66 %);  
b – 1 (33.33 %): suggestion: **1**) Commission has to better prepare for the specifics of the individual institution.
- Presentation of the final report at the final meeting (*sample* = 8):  
1 unanswered question (not valid) (12.5 %);  
a – 6 (75 %);

b – 1 (12.5 %): suggestion: **1)** A PowerPoint presentation would contribute to better presentation of strengths and weaknesses.

- Final findings of the expert commission in regard to your institution/college (*sample = 8*):  
a – 8 (100 %).
- General assessment of the external evaluation of your institution/college (*sample = 8*):  
a – 7 (87.5 %);  
b – 1 (12.5 %): suggestion: **1)** The commission could provide a few more concrete suggestions on how to improve the situation in certain fields.

**3. In your opinion what are the strengths and weaknesses of institutional evaluation of your institution/college? (*sample = 8*)**

Strengths:

no answer – 1 (12.5 %);

answer – 7 (87.5 %): **1)** Assessment of the current state and guidelines for improvement. **2)** Institution's opportunity to familiarize itself with an external and independent view of its operation and the possibility for corrections and improvements. **3)** Confirming that the college's competences are the best. **4)** Good experience due to identified opportunities for improvement. **5)** Independent evaluation by foreign experts. **6)** Encouragement for internal initiatives for establishing criteria and procedures for quality at the faculty. **7)** Objective criticism.

Weaknesses:

no answer – 6 (75 %);

answer – 2 (25 %): **1)** A lot of work with filling out a poorly prepared questionnaire and postponing pedagogic obligations due to the commission's visit. **2)** External evaluation procedures in Slovenia are still in their infancy stage and have not yet achieved proper importance.

**4. Will institutional evaluation contribute to improving the quality assurance at your institution and if so, in what way? (*sample = 8*)**

no answer – 1 (12.5 %);

answer – 7 (87.5 %): **1)** Yes, because now we are aware of the weaknesses and strengths that can be better used. **2)** Yes, because the criticism was taken into consideration. **3)** Yes, because it points out the fields that are not fully developed yet. **4)** Yes, in reformation of the faculty, in establishing criteria and evaluating work, in monitoring the rationalisation of work and in employing experts. **5)** Yes, because the planned changes at the faculty are a step toward improving the quality of work at the faculty. **6)** Yes, because measures will be taken for at least a part of the improvements. **7)** Yes, because it is easier to adopt improvements in places where they are necessary.

**5. Who suggested the external evaluation of your institution/college? (*sample = 8*)**

the university – 3 (37.5 %)

faculty management – 3 (37.5 %)

invalid (unanswered) – 2 (25%)

## APPENDIX 4: Analysis of the Senate's professional service questionnaires on institutional external evaluations in 2008

Sample 11 questionnaires (6 for institution/college management, 5 for students)

- PTF UNG institution management  
PTF UNG students
- ISH institution management  
ISH students
- FERI UM institution management  
FERI UM students
- FU UL institution management  
FU UL students
- PKŠ Celje college management  
PKŠ Celje students
- CPU college management

Methodological explanations:

a) In the first part of the questionnaire the respondents assessed their satisfaction with the work of the evaluation commission (point 1) and in the second part they noted eventual suggestions for improving the commission's work (point 2). All evaluated higher education institutions and vocational colleges (hereafter institution/college) have submitted filled out questionnaires – the managements as well as the students. The sample contains 11 questionnaires because one students' questionnaire is invalid. When a question was not answered by all of them the sample is smaller (for example 10). Some questions are only intended for institution/college management or only for students, so in those cases the sample is split into 6 (management) + 5 (students).

b) Point 1: General satisfaction with the visit of the external evaluation commission could be assessed with grades 1 to 5, where 1 means extremely unsatisfied and 5 means very satisfied.

c) Point 2 contains recommendations for improving the work of the external evaluation commission that are literally copied from the questionnaires.

d) The absolute values from the analysis have been changed to relative for the purposes of easier comparison. The percentages were rounded to two decimals.

### 1. Average general satisfaction with the visit of the external evaluation commission (grades: 1 – 5)

- Planning the visit and coordination between the commission and institution/college management (*college management, sample = 6*): 4.5 (90 %)
- Informing the institution/college of the purpose of evaluation at the introductory meeting (*sample = 11*): 4.55 (91 %)
- Adequacy of the visit schedule and duration of individual interviews (*sample = 11*): 4.36 (87.2 %)

- Type of interviews and how they were carried out (*sample = 11*): 4.27 (85.4 %)
  - Interviewee selection (*sample = 10*): 4.5 (90 %)
  - Selection and sequence of questions (*sample = 11*): 4.36 (87.2 %)
  - Relevance of the set question to the interviewees (*college management, sample = 6*): 4.17 (83.4 %)
  - Relevance of the set questions to the students (*students, sample = 5*): 4 (80 %)
  - Comprehensibility of set questions (*sample = 11*): 4.36 (87.2 %)
  - Opportunity for objective expression of interviewees' opinions (*college management, sample = 6*): 4.5 (90 %)
  - Opportunity for objective expression of students' opinions (*students, sample = 5*): 4.8 (96 %)
  - Interviewer (commission member) efficiency (*sample = 11*): 4.64 (92.8 %)
  - Efforts by the commission members to identify the current students' problems (*students, sample = 5*): 4.8 (96 %)
  - How well were the members of the commission familiar with the organization and the legal status of your institution/college (*college management, sample = 6*): 3.77 (75.4 %)
  - How well were the members of the commission familiar with the activities of your institution/school (*sample = 11*): 3.91 (78.2 %)
  - How well were the members of the commission familiar with the specifics of your institution/school (*sample = 11*): 3.82 (76.4 %)
  - Presentation of the final report at the final meeting (*sample = 10*): 4.7 (94 %)
  - Final findings of the commission regarding your institution/college (*sample = 10*): 4.3 (86 %)
  - Duration of the commission's visit (*sample = 11*): 4 (80 %)
  - General assessment of the external evaluation of your institution/college (*sample = 11*): 4.55 (91 %)
- 1. Suggestions for improving the work of the external evaluation commission**  
**(a – no suggestions, b – suggestions)**
- Planning the visit and coordination between the commission and institution/college management (*college management, sample = 6*):  
a – 5 (83.33 %);

- b – 1 (16.67 %): suggestion: **1)** The commission’s work plan should be harmonised with the schedules of planned interviewees.
- Informing the institution/college of the purpose of evaluation at the introductory meeting (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 10 (90.91 %);
    - b – 1 (9.09 %): suggestion: **1)** Notice, purpose and goals of the evaluation. For what purpose is the evaluation carried out and how will the data be used. Goals of the evaluation.
  - Adequacy of the visit schedule and duration of individual interviews (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 6 (54.55 %);
    - b – 5 (45.45 %): suggestions: **1)** Some interviews were longer than planned in the schedule. The commission should adhere to the planned schedule of the visit. **2)** The interviews could last longer. **3)** Considering that many interviews took longer than planned, the planned duration of the interviews should be slightly extended. **4)** Too long. **5)** Evaluation duration was too long for our institution.
  - Type of interviews and how they were carried out (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 7 (63.64 %);
    - b – 4 (36.36 %): suggestions: **1)** Occasionally it bothered us that we, the students, were separated. **2)** We recommend better structured moderation of interviews. **3)** Optimisation of interviews. **4)** Better knowledge of the internal administrative structure of the institution.
  - Interviewee selection (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 9 (81.82 %);
    - b – 2 (18.18 %): suggestions: **1)** Occasionally we would “jump” too fast from one topic to the other. **2)** Deeper understanding of the insider view.
  - Selection and sequence of questions (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 9 (81.82 %);
    - b – 2 (18.18 %): suggestions: **1)** We think that some fields need additional sub-questions. **2)** A more relaxed atmosphere, collective coordination. Human spontaneity is called for.
  - Relevance of the set question to the interviewees (*college management, sample = 6*):
    - a – 5 (83.33 %);
    - b – 1 (16.67 %): suggestion: **1)** In a specific case respecting the highest level of discourse.
  - Relevance of the set questions to the students (*students, sample = 5*):
    - a – 3 (60 %);
    - b – 2 (40 %): suggestions: **1)** The interviewers were not informed about the work of the student council. **2)** The questions posed were mostly about Bologna programmes, although most students still study according to the old programmes.
  - Comprehensibility of set questions (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 9 (81.82 %);

- b – 2 (18.18 %): suggestions: **1**) In regard to the specifics of institution's operation some questions were ambiguous. The commission should study the specifics of individual colleges in more detail. **2**) Theoretically demanding questions are not a problem, but at times they were too trivial.
- Opportunity for objective expression of interviewees' opinions (*college management, sample = 6*):
    - a – 5 (83.33 %);
    - b – 1 (16.67 %): suggestion: **1**) Better communication skills.
  - Opportunity for objective expression of students' opinions (*students, sample = 5*):
    - a – 4 (80 %);
    - b – 1 (20%): suggestion: **1**) It would make more sense if we could express ourselves subjectively.
  - Interviewer (commission member) efficiency (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 10 (90.91 %);
    - b – 1 (9.09%): suggestion: **1**) Better rhetorical skills.
  - Efforts by the commission members to identify the current problems of the students (*students, sample = 5*):
    - a – 5 (100 %);
    - b – 0 (0 %): suggestions: /
  - How well were the members of the commission familiar with the organization and the legal status of your institution/college (*college management, sample = 6*):
    - a – 4 (66.67 %);
    - b – 2 (33.33 %): suggestions: **1**) Commission members that do not come from higher education institutions should study the organization and legal situation of vocational colleges in detail. **2**) More preparation work.
  - How well were the members of the commission familiar with the activities of your institution/school (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 8 (72.73 %);
    - b – 3 (27.27 %): suggestions: **1**) A more detailed study of the act on the institution's foundation. **2**) Maybe a collective meeting with a more open debate in the broader context on the institution's position. **3**) The commission should assess the economic situation and college's activities from the viewpoint of reasonable use of public resources, the extent of resources allocated for 1 ECTS.
  - How well were the members of the commission familiar with the specifics of your institution/school (*sample = 11*):
    - a – 6 (54.55 %);
    - b – 5 (45.45 %): suggestions: **1**) Individual ambiguities were cleared during the interviews. **2**) The commission should study the work of our university in advance. **3**) Better preparation, study of the documents, talks with the management. **4**) The size of our college affected the opinions. **5**) It would be reasonable if the commission would (directly) prior to the visit request of the faculty to submit any specifics, achievements that would familiarize the commission with any eventual problems.

- Presentation of the final report at the final meeting (*sample = 11*)
  - a – 10 (90.91 %);
  - b – 1 (9.09 %): suggestion: **1**) Absent. It was not mandatory.
  
- Final findings of the commission regarding your institution/college (*sample = 11*)
  - a – 9 (81.82 %);
  - b – 2 (18.18 %): suggestions: **1**) Not knowing the work of the student council within the framework of the university led to false conclusions. **2**) Placement of the institution in a real space and context, a more precise comparison of conditions and results.
  
- Duration of the commission's visit (*sample = 11*):
  - a – 9 (81.82 %);
  - b – 2 (18.18 %): suggestions: **1**) The visit was maybe slightly too short, which is understandable all things considered. If it was longer it might have been more efficient. **2**) Too long. Optimization.
  
- General assessment of the external evaluation of your institution/college (*sample = 11*):
  - a – 10 (90.91 %);
  - b – 1 (9.09 %): suggestion: **1**) Better transparency during the presentation of evaluation's goals.

**2. In your opinion what are the strengths and weaknesses of institutional evaluation of your institution/college? (*sample = 11*)**

Strengths:

no answer – / (0 %);

answer – 11 (100 %): **1**) We received a confirmation of proper operation of our faculty and the development concept. **2**) The quality of the institution is visible, even from the viewpoint of an outside observer. The institution/college is aware of its situation/eventual weaknesses. **3**) The external evaluation's strength is that it provides an objective opinion of a neutral group of people. **4**) Evaluation of a faculty at an integrated university is content-wise as well as organisation-wise very demanding, despite that in our estimate it was carried out in a manner which took the specifics fully into consideration. **5**) An external view of the internal affairs is of key importance for improving the institution. **6**) The main strength is that we receive an external view on the condition of our faculty, as well as useful suggestions for improving the quality of our faculty. **7**) We see the strength of the external evaluation especially in that it stimulated us to rethink our long-term and medium-term goals, to identify our external and internal limitations that could significantly affect our further development. **8**) The strength is the external independent assessment. The recommendations will serve our college as a good starting point for future assurance of quality. **9**) According to my opinion and the opinion of students the external evaluation was properly carried out. **10**) It gave the faculty a better insight into our own operation. **11**) Commission's objectivity, willingness to listen and to provide assistance through suggestions.

Weaknesses:

no answer – 8 (72.73 %);

answer – 3 (27.27 %): **1**) It does not affect the financing and recognisability of the faculty among similar/competing faculties. **2**) The weakness is that most weaknesses identified

by the commission are outside the faculty's influence. **3)** The purpose, use of data. What are the (direct) benefits for the faculty.

**3. Will institutional evaluation contribute to improving the quality assurance at your institution and if so, in what way? (sample = 11)**

no answer – / (0 %);

answer – 11 (100 %): **1)** The evaluation will contribute to improving quality. All planned, started and implemented activities in line with the development of quality will be carried out consequently and exemplary. **2)** It will, the college has to become better, the assessment of the current state of affairs and the weakness factors will contribute to achieving a higher level of excellence. **3)** We will try to improve the SC's operation in accordance with recommendations and criticisms from the report. **4)** Yes, it will contribute to improving the practical implementation of the written system in accordance with the commission's recommendations. **5)** Definitely. **6)** External evaluation will definitely contribute to improving quality assurance at our faculty, as the commission contained experts from the field of quality that provided instructions on what our weaknesses were and how we should eliminate them. **7)** External evaluation has and will significantly contribute to improving quality. College management is also preparing an action plan that will be used to improve the situation in certain fields. The action plan will be presented to the senate of the university. The commission for quality assessment has already initiated some activities that the reports mentioned as weaknesses (for example establishing an alumni club, student poll results were published on the web site of the commission for quality assessment, we are preparing a poll for administrative and professional-technical staff). **8)** We will try to eliminate all weaknesses from recommendations in the shortest possible amount of time. **9)** As this was our first time dealing with external evaluation I cannot give an opinion how this will affect us. **10)** I hope. If the opinions, position statements and suggestions of students and student representatives will be taken under consideration. **11)** Yes, the commission submitted an evaluation report that gives us a lot to think about and stimulates ideas for better efficiency.

**4. Who suggested the external evaluation of your institution/college? (college**

management, *sample = 6*):

the university – 2 (33.33 %)

college/institution management – 2 (33.33 %)

Senate for Evaluation – 1 (16.67 %)

invalid (unanswered) – 1 (16.67 %)

## APPENDIX Nr. 5: Review Questionnaire for Higher Education Institutions – Preparation for External Evaluation

### Caption:

AD	Assistant with a Doctorate Degree
AM	Assistant with a Masters Degree
ARP	Applied Research Programme
AS	Assistant
CRP	Target Research Project
FTE	Full Time Equivalent (equivalent to full time employment or studies)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LdV	Leonardo da Vinci
ESR	Early Stage Researcher
ESRE	Early Stage Researcher in the Field of Economy
MHST	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
PG	Programme Groups
BRP	Basic Research Project
HEI	Higher Education Institution

### Definition and Explanation of Terms:

Higher education teachers: assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, in higher education programmes also lecturers and senior lecturers (Article 52 of the Higher Education Act (henceforth: HEA)); also lector

Higher education assistants: assistant, librarian, expert advisor, senior expert assistant, expert assistant and instructor (Article 54 of the HEA)

Scientific staff: scientific assistant, higher scientific assistant and scientific councillor (Article 53. of the HEA)

Researchers: natural persons involved in research or development activities (Article 5 of the Research and Development Act)

All sums (also for years 2005 and 2006) are to be listed in Euro.

### **I. Strategy, Organisation and Management of the Institution, Record Keeping and Quality Assurance**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
The HEI has a mission and vision that express its educational, scientific and research goals.		
The means of achieving the educational, scientific and research goals are clearly defined.		
The HEI mission and vision are available to the public.		
The HEI has a strategic plan.		
The competences/responsibilities and decision procedures of the employees are clearly defined and everyone involved is familiar with		

them.		
There is a guaranteed active participation of higher education teachers, scientific workers and expert associates in decision making, which applies to education, research, quality assurance and quality control.		
There is a guaranteed active participation of students in the making of decisions that affect education and the improvement of its quality.		
The HEI keeps records of its activities.		
The HEI has an established system for quality assurance and quality control.		
Each year the HEI prepares and publishes a self-evaluation report.		
The HEI constantly monitors its work and uses the findings to improve the quality of its activities.		

*The number of all HEI employees on 31 December 2007 and the employment plan for 2008 based on tariff groups*

Level:	V.	FTE	VI.	FTE	VII.	FTE	VIII.	FTE	IX.	FTE
Number of employees on 31 December 2007										
Number of new recruitments in 2008										

*Number of promotions in 2008*

Promotions	Higher education teachers and assistants	Scientific staff	Administrative and technical staff
Regular promotions at the workplace			
Extraordinary promotions at the workplace			
Average monthly promotion value			

## II. Education – Study Activities

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI offers several study programmes, which lead to scientific or professional degrees according to the goals and study achievements.		
Study programmes are comparable to other domestic and European higher education study programmes.		
Study programmes are offered and carried out each year.		
Study programme goals are consistent with the HEI vision statement and strategic plan.		
Study programme goals are real and attainable, taking under consideration the required programme duration and starting level of education/skills of enrolled students.		
Study programme goals are used to better understand student achievements.		
Graduate skills and competences are clearly defined and available to public.		
Graduate skills and competences are in accordance with the acquired		

education level.		
Study programme content is clearly defined and available to public.		
Evaluation methods are clearly defined and available to public.		
Requirements for finishing the studies and for acquiring professional or scientific degrees are clearly set by rules and regulations and are officially published.		
Evaluation criteria for awarding scientific and professional degrees are comparable to national and European standards.		
HEI observes the criteria for acquiring scientific and professional degrees.		
Implementation of studies is in accordance with accredited study programmes.		
Teaching and learning methods contribute to reaching of set goals and study achievements.		
HEI monitors the study achievement progress and duration of the studies.		
HEI collects information on candidate interest in study programmes offered by the HEI.		
Enrolment requirements and procedures to enter HEI programmes are set in accordance with the law and the regulations and are officially published.		
Requirements to switch between study programmes within the HEI are officially published.		
HEI organizes polls asking students about HEI study programme quality.		
HEI collects information on employment options and further study options for its graduates.		
The ratio between higher education teachers and assistants, scientific staff, other staff and students is adequate for assuring study achievements and goals of the HEI and those of its organisational units.		

*Type and number of study programmes offered by the HEI in the academic year 2007/2008*

Types of study programmes	Yes/No	Number of programmes	Total number of enrolled students (all students are included)
Study programmes prior to the reform			
Higher education professional study programmes			
University study programmes			
Special study programmes			
Masters study programmes			
Doctorate study programmes			
Bologna study programmes			
1st level study programmes			
2nd level study programmes			
3rd level study programmes			

*Analysis of enrolment into the 1st year (considering all students in all graduate study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of open spots			
Number of candidates who enrolled			
Number of students who were accepted			
Number of students accepted according to their 1st choice			
Number of students accepted in the 2nd enrolment			
Number of students accepted in the 3rd enrolment			
Middle school grade average of accepted students			
Number of students enrolled in study programmes prior to the reform			
Number of students enrolled in Bologna study programmes			

*Analysis of enrolled students in the academic year 2007/2008 according to gender (all students from all years are taken into account)*

Number and percentage of students		Female		Male		Total
		Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)	Number
Study programmes prior to the reform						
Graduate programmes	Full-time					
	Part-time					
Postgraduate programmes						
Bologna study programmes						
1st level study programmes	Full-time					
	Part-time					
2nd level study programmes	Full-time					
	Part-time					
3rd level study programmes						

*Analysis of enrolled students with special needs (considering students in all study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students with special needs			

*Education (considering students in all study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Average number of times a student took an individual exam			
Average number of exam board exams for individual subjects			
Average mark for taken exams			

*Analysis of student transition and duration of studies (students from all study programmes are taken into account)*

Academic year	Number of students		Percentage of repeaters		Transition (percentage)		Number of graduates	Study duration in years		
	1 <sup>st</sup> year	All years	1 <sup>st</sup> year	All years	From 1 <sup>st</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	All years		All years	1 <sup>st</sup> year	All years
2005/2006										
2006/2007										
2007/2008										

*Graduate analysis (taking into account graduates from all study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of enrolment spots per graduate			
Average mark of finished diplomas			
Percentage of graduates that finished on regular schedule			

*The ratio between higher education teachers, assistants and students (taking into account the FTE)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students per higher education teacher			
Number of students per higher education assistant			

*Student polling*

Types of polls	Students from which year	How many times per year	Poll analyses Yes/No	Use of findings Yes/No	Informing students of the findings and measures Yes/No
Study programme evaluation					
Teaching staff evaluation					
Evaluation of studies according to ECTS					
Evaluation of practical training instructors					
Evaluation of tutors					
Evaluation of the department for student affairs					

*Graduate polling*

Types of polls	When? (year, two, three ... after graduation)	Poll analyses Yes/No	Use of findings Yes/No	Informing students of the findings and measures Yes/No
Graduate employability				
Adequacy evaluation				

of acquired skills and competences				
Further studies				

### III. Scientific, Research, Artistic and Professional Activities

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI performs scientific, research, artistic and professional activities in accordance with the strategic plan and with national and European policies and standards.		
HEI guarantees that modern findings acquired through the scientific, research, artistic and professional activity are integrated into education.		
HEI stimulates its employees to periodically publish their findings acquired through scientific, research, artistic and professional activities.		
HEI guarantees transfer of knowledge into practice.		
HEI keeps adequate records of all of the above.		

#### *Research and artistic activities*

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI participates in research/artistic projects of Slovene universities, independent higher education institutions, other institutions and other bodies.		
HEI participates in international research/artistic projects.		
Each year the employees prepare a report on research/artistic work for the previous year.		
Each year the employees prepare a research/artistic work programme for the following year.		
HEI stimulates individual employees and chairs to cooperate in research/artistic work.		
HEI has set criteria for evaluation the success of research/artistic work.		
Employees integrate students into their research/artistic work.		
Research/artistic work is linked to education work by the professors.		
Research work is linked to development projects for the economy.		

#### *Professional activities*

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI professional activities are regulated through contracts.		
HEI stimulates employees to cooperate with service customers from the economy and other sectors.		
HEI has established criteria for quality assessment of professional work and on whether it was successfully transferred into practice.		
HEI plans its professional activities annually.		
HEI publishes reports on results of its professional work annually.		

#### *Research programmes and other projects funded by MHST funds*

Indicator	2005		2006		2007	
	Applied	Approved	Applied	Approved	Applied	Approved
Programme groups						

Basic projects						
Applied projects						
Target research projects						
Post-doctorate projects						
Other projects						

*Programme groups (PG) at the HEI*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of approved PGs per number of researchers (in FTE)				
Number of employees working in PGs				
Total value of resources acquired for PGs				
Percentage of PG resources compared to all acquired scientific and research funds				

*Basic research projects (BRP) at the HEI*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of approved BRPs per number of researchers (in FTE)				
Number of employees working on BRPs				
Total value of resources acquired for BRPs				
Percentage of BRP resources compared to all acquired scientific and research funds				

*Applied research projects (ARP) at the HEI*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of approved ARPs per number of researchers (in FTE)				
Number of employees working on ARPs				
Total value of resources acquired for ARPs				
Percentage of ARP resources compared to all acquired scientific and research funds				

*Target research projects (TRP) at the HEI*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of approved TRPs per number of researchers (in FTE)				
Number of employees working on TRPs				
Total value of resources acquired for TRPs				
Percentage of TRP resources compared to all acquired scientific and research funds				

*International projects*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of projects from the 5 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> framework programme				
Number of bilateral research projects				

Number of other international projects			
Number of employees working on international projects			
Total value of resources acquired for international projects			
Percentage of international project resources compared to all acquired scientific and research resources			

*Projects in the economy*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of contracts entered into with the economy				
Number of research done for the economy				
Number of employees working in projects for the economy				
Total values of acquired resources for economy projects				
Percentage of economy project resources compared to all acquired scientific and research resources				

*Scientific and research cooperation*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of researchers with membership in international scientific associations				
Number of researchers with membership in domestic scientific associations				
Number of researchers participating in international projects				
Number of projects with more than one participating research groups				
Number of scientific meetings organized by the HEI				
Number of participations in scientific conferences				

*Employees participating in scientific and research work*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of all researchers				
Number of employees participating in research work				
Number of possible mentors for doctoral students				
Number of technical and professional staff members for research activities				
Number of early stage researchers (ESR)				
Number of early stage researchers in the field of economy (ESRE)				
Number of research groups				

*Integration of research and education*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of researchers participating in the educational process				
Number of student participating in research work				
Number of doctorate students				
Number of mentors for post-graduate students				

Number of ESRs participating in the educational process			
Number of guest researchers - lecturers			
Research activity minimum for higher education teachers			

*Number of publications*

Indicator	Year		
	2005	2006	2007
Number of published original scientific articles			
Number of published scientific papers at conferences			
Number of published scientific monographs			
Number of publications in indexed publications			
Number of citations			
Citation index (total)			

**IV. Higher Education Teachers and Assistants and Scientific Staff**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Selection procedures for higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff are defined and public.		
Election procedures for higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff are defined and public.		
Promotion procedures for higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff are defined and public.		
When choosing, promoting or electing higher education teachers and assistants, pedagogic as well as research skills/knowledge are considered.		
HEI ensures lifelong learning and professional development of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.		
HEI provides a long-term employment policy for higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.		
HEI provides career counselling to its academic staff.		
HEI enables, promotes and participates in domestic and international exchange of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.		
HEI promotes integration and close cooperation among higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.		
The integration is presented in promotion and election criteria for new academic titles.		
The workload for educational and research activities is defined.		

*Number of employed higher education teachers on 31 December 2007*

Employment type	Full professor		Associate professor		Assistant professor		Senior lecturer		Lecturer	
	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE
Regular employees										
Part-time employees										
Full-time employees										
Contract workers										
TOTAL										

*Number of employed higher education teachers, plan for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

Employment type	Full professor		Associate professor		Assistant professor		Senior lecturer		Lecturer	
	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE
Regular employees										
Part-time employees										
Full-time employees										
Contract workers										
TOTAL										

*Number of employed scientific staff members on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and plan for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

Employment type	Scientific staff members on 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2007		Scientific staff members on 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2008	
	Number	FTE	Number	FTE
Regular employees				
Part-time employees				
Full-time employees				
TOTAL				

*Number of employed assistants and early stage researchers on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007*

Employment type	Assistant		AM/AS		AD		ESR	ESRE
	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	No.
Regular employees								
Part-time employees								
Full-time employees								
Contract workers								
TOTAL								

*Number of employed assistants and early stage researchers, plan for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

Employment type	Assistant		AM/AS		AD		ESR	ESRE
	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	FTE	No.	No.
Regular employees								
Part-time employees								
Full-time employees								
Contract workers								
TOTAL								

*Number of elections in 2007 and plan for 2008*

Title	Number of employees whose title expired in 2007	Number of all elections in 2007	Number of employees whose title will expire in 2008	Planned number of all elections for 2008
Full professor				
Associate professor				
Assistant professor				
Scientific worker				
Senior lecturer				

Lecturer				
Assistant with a doctorate degree				
Assistant with a masters degree				
Assistant				
Lector				

*Indicators of higher education teacher and assistant exchange*

Indicator	Academic year	Graduate studies			Postgraduate studies		
		2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Number of visiting higher education teachers participating in the HEI education process							
Number of HEI higher education teachers participating in educational processes abroad as visiting professors							
Number of higher education assistants training abroad							

**V. Administrative and Professional-Technical Staff**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Selection procedures for professional-technical staff are defined and public.		
Promotion procedures for professional-technical staff are defined and public.		
HEI provides administrative and professional-technical staff with access to sustainable education.		
HEI provides counselling to administrative and professional-technical staff regarding their career.		
HEI organizes polling of administrative and professional-technical staff and uses the poll findings to improve its operation.		

*Number of administrative and professional-technical staff members according to level of education and employment type on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007*

Employment type	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	FTE
Regular employees										

*Number of administrative and professional-technical staff members according to level of education and employment type, plan for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

Employment type	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	FTE
Regular employees										

*Number of educations of administrative and professional-technical staff members in 2008*

	Acquiring level VI. Education	Acquiring level VII. education	Postgraduate education	Professional training	Shorter trainings and courses
TOTAL					

**VI. Students at the Higher Education Institution**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Equality of male and female students is guaranteed.		
HEI provides its students with access to counselling services.		
HEI provides its students with tutorials or other adequate forms of support with their studies.		
HEI takes measures to enable students to evaluate their own progress in the programme.		
During the study process the students acquire basic skills and competences, such as: learning skills, analysing and synthesizing skills, communication skills, etc.		
Student mobility is provided and promoted through use of established credit point systems in cooperation with other HEIs.		
HEI enables organized associations of students.		
HEI provides student codetermination.		
HEI provides students with the power to accept and implement extracurricular activity programmes.		

*Students participating in HEI bodies*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students on the management board			
Number of students in the senate			
Number of students on the academic board			
Number of students in commissions			
Number of students in other bodies			

*Student mobility analysis*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students at other HEIs in Slovenia			
Number of students from other HEIs in Slovenia			
Number of students at foreign HEIs			
Number of foreign students finishing a part of their studies at the HEI			
Number of foreign students at the HEI			
Number of approved foreign certificates (or study obligations done abroad) at the HEI			
Number of students acquiring practical experience abroad			
Number of students from abroad acquiring practical experience in Slovenia			

*Mobility resources acquired from international programmes*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Erasmus – student mobility				
Erasmus – professor mobility				
LdV – mobility/student practice				
TOTAL				

**VII. Premises, Equipment for Scientific, Research, Artistic and Professional Activities, the Library**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI has adequate premises for achieving medium-term goals.		
HEI has adequate premises for achieving long-term goals.		
HEI constantly modernizes the equipment required for its activities.		
Material resources are adequate for achieving study programme goals.		
Material resources are available for a longer period of time.		
HEI provides its employees and students with access to ICT.		
Employees may use ICT for business, education and research purposes.		
Students may use ICT for education and research purposes.		

*Premises*

Indicator	Academic year	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of square meters intended for lecture rooms, per student				
Number of square meters intended for practice, per student				
Number of square meters intended for research work				

*Library*

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Library is easily accessible.		
Library has a reading room.		
Library premises and stock are adequate for proper implementation of HEI activities.		
Library staff size and their training comply with the standards.		
HEI provides employees and students with access to web sources.		

*Library stock and lending*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of HEI students per number of books in the library			
Number of HEI students per number of magazines in the library			
Average student visits to the library			
Average number of books lent per student			
Number of students per number of books published at the HEI			
Number of times the data banks were accessed			
Number of own data banks			

*Use of information technology*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students per computer			
Number of higher education teachers/assistants per computer			
Number of researchers per computer			
Number of students applying for exams or communicating with the HEI through e-mail			

*Purchase and/or development of computer programs in 2007 and plan for 2008*

Program	Year 2007	Plan for year 2008

**VIII. Funding for Education/Study, Research, Artistic and Professional Activities**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI has guaranteed long-term funding for study, research, artistic or professional work from different sources.		
HEI obtains funding for its operation from budgetary sources.		
HEI obtains funding for its operation from European and other international project sources.		
HEI obtains funding for its operation from resources acquired on the market.		
HEI systematically allocates resources for study, research, artistic and professional work.		
HEI monitors the use of acquired resources.		

*Research funding*

Indicator	Year		
	2005	2006	2007
Acquired budgetary resources			
Acquired resources from work on the market			
Average research project value			
Number of different funding sources			

**IX. Cooperation with the Social Environment**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
HEI has established successful cooperation on the national level.		
HEI has established successful cooperation on the international level.		
HEI promotes cooperation with other HEIs.		
HEI promotes cooperation with companies.		
HEI promotes integration with important stakeholders in the environment.		
HEI demonstrates integration of interested public in its activities.		
Study programmes and other forms of education reflect the demands of the economic and other sectors.		
The economy and other sectors are integrated in planning and monitoring of HEI educational work.		
HEI participates in exchange of students, higher education teachers, science staff and expert assistants in Slovenia and abroad.		

## APPENDIX 6: Review Questionnaire for Vocational Colleges – Preparation for External Evaluation

### Caption:

FTE	Full time equivalent
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LdV	Leonardo da Vinci
MES	Ministry of Education and Sports
VC	Vocational College

### Definition and Explanation of Terms:

Expert employees: lecturers and instructors (Article 33 of the Post-secondary Vocational Education Act (hereafter PVES)); also including the librarian

Expert assistant: laboratory assistant (Article 33 of the PVEA)

All sums are to be listed in Euro.

### **I. Strategy, Organisation and Management of the Institution, Record Keeping and Quality Assurance**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
The VC has a mission and vision, which express its educational, scientific and research goals.		
The means of achieving educational and developmental goals are clearly defined.		
VC mission and vision are available to the public.		
The VC has a strategic plan.		
The competences/responsibilities of employees are clearly defined and everyone involved is familiar with them.		
Decision procedures of the employees are clearly defined and everyone involved is familiar with them.		
There is a guaranteed active participation of expert employees and associates in decision making which applies to education, research, quality assurance and quality control.		
There is a guaranteed active participation of students in making of decisions that affect education and improving the quality thereof.		
The VC keeps records of its activities.		
The VC has an established system for quality assurance and quality control.		
Each year the VC prepares and publishes a self-evaluation report.		
The VC constantly monitors its work and uses the findings to improve the quality of its activities.		

Number of all VC employees on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and the employment plan for 2008 based on tariff groups (taking into account the hours of everyone working at the VC and convert them to FTE)

Level:	V.	FTE	VI.	FTE	VII.	FTE	VIII.	FTE	IX.	FTE
Number of employees on 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2007										
Number of new employees in 2008										

Number of promotions in 2008 (all promotions are to be taken into account)

Promotions	Expert employees and associates	Other administrative and expert technical staff
Regular promotions at the workplace		
Extraordinary promotions at the workplace		
Average monthly promotion value		

## II. Education – Study Activities

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
The VC offers several study programmes leading to scientific or professional degrees according to the goals and study achievements.		
Study programmes are comparable to other domestic and European higher education study programmes.		
Study programmes are offered and carried out each year.		
Study programme goals are consistent with the VC vision statement and strategic plan.		
Study programme goals are real and attainable, taking under consideration the required programme duration and starting level of education/skills of enrolled students.		
Study programme goals are used for better understanding of student achievements.		
Graduate competences are clearly defined and available to the public.		
Graduate competences are in accordance with the acquired education level.		
Graduate competences are periodically reviewed by the employees.		
Content of study programmes is clearly defined and available to the public.		
Knowledge assessment methods are clearly defined and available to the public.		
Requirements for finishing the studies and for acquiring professional or scientific degrees are clearly defined by rules and regulations and are officially published.		
Implementation of studies is in accordance with publically valid study programmes.		
Teaching and learning methods contribute to achieving the set goals and study achievements.		
VC monitors the development of study achievements and the duration of studies.		

VC collects information on how interested candidates are in the study programmes it offers.		
Enrolment requirements and procedures to enter VC programmes are set in accordance with the law and regulations and are officially published.		
Requirements for transfer between study programmes within the VC are officially published.		
VC organizes polls asking students about VC study programme quality.		
VC collects information on employment options and further study options for its graduates.		
VC informs expert employees and associates with questionnaire findings.		
The ratio expert employees, experts associates and other employees : students is suitable for ensuring study achievement and goals of the VC and its organizational units.		

*Number of study programmes carried out by the VC in the academic year 2007/2008*

Study programmes	Number of programmes	Total number of enrolled students (all students)
Vocational study programmes		

*Analysis of enrolment into the 1st year (considering all students in all graduate study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of open spots			
Number of candidates who enrolled			
Number of students who were accepted			
Number of students accepted according to their 1st choice			
Number of students accepted in the 2nd enrolment			
Number of students accepted in the 3rd enrolment			
Middle school grade average of accepted students			
Number of students enrolled in study programmes prior to the reform			
Number of students enrolled in post-reform study programmes			

*Analysis of enrolled students in the academic year 2007/2008 according to gender (all students from all years are taken into account)*

Number and percentage of students		Female		Male		Total
		qty.	percentage (%)	qty.	percentage (%)	qty.
Pre-reform study programmes	Full-time					
	Part-time					
Post-reform study programmes	Full-time					
	Part-time					

*Analysis of enrolled students with special needs (considering students in all study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students with special needs			

*Education (considering students in all study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Average number of times a student took an individual exam			
Average number of exam board exams for individual subjects			
Average mark for taken exams			

*Analysis of student transition and duration of studies*

Academic year	Number of students		Percentage of repeaters		Transition (percentage)	Number of graduates	Study duration in years		
	1 <sup>st</sup> year	Both years	1 <sup>st</sup> year	Both years			1 <sup>st</sup> year	Both years	1 <sup>st</sup> year
2005/2006									
2006/2007									
2007/2008									

*Graduate analysis (taking into account graduates from all study programmes)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of enrolment spots per graduate			
Average mark of finished diplomas			
Percentage of graduates that finished on regular schedule			

*The ratio between lecturers, instructors, laboratory assistants and students (taking into account all expert employees and associates regardless of type of employment)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students per lecturer			
Number of students per instructor			
Number of students per expert associate			

*The ratio between lecturers, instructors, laboratory assistants and students (taking into account the FTE)*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students per lecturer			
Number of students per instructor			
Number of students per expert associate			

*Student polling*

Types of polls	Students from which year	How many times per year	Poll analyses Yes/No	Use of findings Yes/No	Informing students of the findings and measures Yes/No

Study programme evaluation					
Teaching staff evaluation					
Evaluation of studies according to ECTS					
Evaluation of practical training instructors					
Evaluation of tutors					
Evaluation of the department for student affairs					

*Graduate polling*

Types of polls	When? (year, two, three ... after graduation)	Poll analyses Yes/No	Use of findings Yes/No	Informing students of the findings and measures Yes/No
Graduate employability				
Adequacy evaluation of acquired skills and competences				
Career development				
Further studies				

**III. Professional activities**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
The VC performs professional activities in accordance with the strategic plan and with national and European policies and standards.		
The VC guarantees that modern findings acquired through professional activities are integrated into education.		
The VC stimulates its employees to periodically publish their findings acquired through professional activities.		
Various VC professional activities are regulated with contracts.		
The VC stimulates its employees to cooperate with clients from the economy and the non-economy.		
The VC has established criteria for assessing the quality of professional work and the effectiveness of its transfer into practice.		
The VC annually plans its professional work.		
The VC annually reports on the results of professional work.		
The VC keeps adequate records of all of the above.		

*Domestic projects*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of development projects				
Number of interdisciplinary projects				
Number of programme groups				
Number of employees participating in domestic projects				
Total value of resources acquired for domestic projects				
Percentage of domestic project resources in comparison to total acquired resources				

*International projects*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of bilateral projects				
Number of other international projects				
Number of employees participating in international projects				
Total value of resources acquired for international projects				
Percentage of international project resources in comparison to total acquired resources				

*Projects in the economy*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Number of contracts signed with the economy				
Number of completed projects for the economy				
Number of seminar/diploma papers and projects prepared by the students				
Number of students in practical training in the economy				
Number of employees participating in projects for the economy				
Total value of resources acquired for economy projects				
Percentage of economy project resources in comparison to total acquired resources				

**IV. Lecturers, instructors and laboratory assistants**

*Lecturers and instructors*

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Selection procedures for lecturers and instructors are regulated and public.		
Appointment procedures for lecturers and instructors are regulated and public.		
Promotion procedures for lecturers and instructors are regulated and public.		
In selection, appointment and promotion pedagogic as well as professional knowledge and skills are taken into account.		
VC provides lifelong learning and professional development of lecturers and instructors.		

VC provides career counselling to its lecturers and instructors.		
VC enables, promotes and participates in domestic and international exchange of lecturers and instructors.		
VC promotes integration and close cooperation among lecturers, instructors and professionals from the field.		
Integration is presented in promotion and election criteria for new academic titles.		
The workload for educational and development/professional activities is defined.		

*Number of employed lecturers and instructors on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and plan for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

Employment type	31. 12. 2007				31. 12. 2008			
	lecturer		instructor		lecturer		instructor	
	QTY.	FTE	QTY.	FTE	QTY.	FTE	QTY.	FTE
Regular employees								
Part-time employees								
Full-time employees								
Contract workers								
TOTAL								

*Number of employed laboratory assistants on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 and plan for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008*

Employment type	Laboratory assistant 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2007		Laboratory assistant 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2008	
	QTY.	FTE	QTY.	FTE
Regular employees				
Part-time employees				
Full-time employees				
TOTAL				

*Number of elections to lecturer title in 2007 and plans for 2008*

Title	Number of employees whose title expired in 2008	Number of all elections in 2008	Number of employees whose title will expire in 2009	Planned number of all elections for 2009
Lecturer				

*Exchange indicators*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Number of visiting lecturers participating in the VC education process			
Number of VC's lecturers participating in educational processes abroad as visiting professors			
Number of expert employees and/or associates studying abroad			

## V. Administrative and Professional-Technical Staff

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Selection procedures for professional-technical staff are defined and public.		
VC provides administrative and professional-technical staff with access to sustainable education.		
Promotion procedures for professional-technical staff are defined and public.		
VC provides career counselling to administrative and professional-technical staff.		
VC organizes polling of administrative and professional-technical staff and uses the poll findings to improve its work.		

*Number of administrative and professional-technical staff members according to level of education and employment type on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007*

Employment type	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	FTE
Regular employees										
Others										

*Number of administrative and professional-technical staff members according to level of education and employment type, plan for 31 December 2008*

Employment type	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.	VII.	VIII.	IX.	FTE
Regular employees										
Others										

*Number of educations of administrative and professional-technical staff members in 2008*

	Acquiring level VI. Education	Acquiring level VII. education	Postgraduate education	Professional training	Shorter trainings and courses
TOTAL					

## VI. Students at the vocational college

	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Equality of male and female students is guaranteed.		
VC provides its students with access to counselling services.		
VC provides its students with tutorials or other adequate forms of support with their studies.		
VC takes measures to enable students to evaluate their own progress in the programme.		
During the studies the students acquire basic competences, such as: learning skills, communication skills, etc.		
Student mobility is provided and promoted through use of established credit point systems in cooperation among VCs.		
VC enables organized associations of students.		
VC provides student codetermination.		

*Students participating in VC decision-making bodies*

Indicator	Academic year	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students in the school council / strategic council				
Number of students in commissions				
Number of students in other decision-making bodies				

*Student mobility analysis*

Indicator	Academic year	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students at other VCs in Slovenia				
Number of students from other VCs in Slovenia				
Number of students at foreign VCs				
Number of foreign students finishing a part of their studies at the VC				
Number of foreign students at the VC				
Number of approved foreign certificates (or study obligations done abroad) at the VC				
Number of students acquiring practical experience abroad				
Number of students from abroad acquiring practical experience in Slovenia				

*Mobility resources acquired from international programmes (in Euro)*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Erasmus – student mobility				
Erasmus – lecturer mobility				
LdV – mobility/student practice				
TOTAL				

**VII. Rooms and equipment for educational and professional work, the library**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
VC has adequate premises for achieving medium-term goals.		
VC has adequate premises for achieving long-term goals.		
VC constantly modernizes the equipment required for its activities.		
Material resources are adequate for achieving study programme goals.		
Material resources are available for a longer period of time.		
VC provides its employees and students with access to ICT.		
Employees may use ICT for business, education and research purposes.		
Students may use ICT for education and research purposes.		

*Premises*

Indicator	Academic year	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of square meters intended for lecture rooms, per student				
Number of square meters intended for practice, per student				

Number of square meters intended for research work			
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*The Library*

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
Library is easily accessible.		
Library has a reading room.		
Library premises and stock are adequate for proper implementation of VC activities.		
Library staff size and their training comply with the standards.		
VC provides employees and students with access to web sources.		

*Library stock and lending*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of VC students per number of books in the library			
Number of VC students per number of magazines in the library			
Average student visits to the library			
Average number of books lent per student			
Number of students per number of books published at the VC			
Number of data bank accesses			
Number of own data banks			

*Use of information technology*

Indicator	Academic year		
	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008
Number of students per computer			
Number of lecturers, instructors per computer			
Share of students using the school's e-portal			
Share of students using the electronically aided education system			

*Purchase and/or development of computer programs in 2007 and plan for 2008*

Program	2007	Plan for 2008

**VIII. Funding for education/study and professional activities**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
VC has guaranteed long-term funding for studies and professional work from different sources.		
VC obtains funding for its operation from budgetary sources.		
VC obtains funding for its operation from European and other international sources.		
VC obtains funding for its operation from resources acquired on the market.		
VC systematically allocates resources for studies and professional work.		
VC monitors the use of acquired resources.		

*Development funding*

Indicator	Year	2005	2006	2007
Acquired budgetary resources				
Acquired resources from work on the market				
Average development project value				
Number of different funding sources				

**IX. Cooperation with the social environment**

Statement	Yes/No	Enclosure/Page
VC has established successful cooperation on the national level.		
VC has established successful cooperation on the international level.		
VC promotes cooperation with other VCs.		
VC promotes cooperation with companies.		
VC promotes integration with important stakeholders in the environment.		
VC demonstrates integration of interested public in its activities.		
Study programmes and other forms of education reflect the demands of the economic and other sectors.		
The economy and other sectors are integrated in planning and monitoring of VC's educational work.		
VC participates in exchange of students and expert employees in Slovenia and abroad.		

## APPENDIX 7: Protocol of the external evaluation commission's visit

Explanation of terms:

commission: external evaluation commission

institution: the visited higher education institution of vocational college

questionnaire: review questionnaire – preparation of the institution for external evaluation

institution management: rector, dean, director or headmaster

### ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO THE VISIT TO THE INSTITUTION

#### Preparation of the commission for the visit to the institution

1. Commission members review the application and analyse the enclosed materials (they may prepare a draft of the report, taking into account the report preparation form, the questionnaire, the self-evaluation report of the institution, submitted materials and, after a detailed review of the contents, the institutions web site as well).
2. The commission specifies what it will review in detail during the visit (e.g. when some statements or data are not clear or are not coordinated (application – self-evaluation report – web sites) or would even contradict the current laws and regulations).
3. Commission members divide the roles and tasks among each other by taking into account the professional competences of individual evaluators (it is best if they are divided according to chapters from the questionnaire), **compose questions** and harmonise them with each other.

- *After a thorough review of the application and the enclosures the commission composes comprehensive questions (general and concrete) that should serve as a guideline for interviews.*
- *The purpose of the questions is to assess the actual state of affairs at the institution. They contain all fields defined in the criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality and in the questionnaire.*
- *The questions should also pertain to the specifics of the higher education institution (regulated occupations, mandatory practical training, field training, laboratories, integration into the Slovene higher education area, tradition, etc).*
- *The questions should be in part tailored to the interviewees (management, pedagogic staff, scientific staff, researchers, administrative-technical staff and students).*
- *It is important to ascertain if the information received from the questionnaire, self-evaluation report, other documentation (application) and web sites are harmonised with each other.*

4. Commission chairperson establishes contact with the institution's management or the person responsible for institution's evaluation (the contact person listed in the application).
5. A **detailed schedule of the visit and a list of persons to be interviewed** are prepared.

- *The duration of the visit to the institution should be planned for at least two to three days during the regular lecture period. The commission should be divided into two groups.*
- *When designing the schedule the following should be taken into consideration: equal representation of interviewees (student representatives, pedagogic, scientific, research and non-pedagogic staff and management).*
- *The individual interview should last 45 minutes. There should be 15-minute breaks between the interviews intended for analysis of the findings.*
- *The schedule should be coordinated with the institution management in advance.*
- *The schedule should provide for the time intended for conversations with random students of all years (a total of 45 minutes).*

### **Preparation of the institution for the visit by the commission**

1. The institution provides a contact person that explains anything that might be unclear prior to the visit, if required even during the visit.
2. The institution should place at the commission's disposal all documentation it requires for carrying out the external evaluation.
3. The institution should provide the commission with the help of the management.
4. The institution should provide the commission with adequate rooms for work and meetings (a smaller conference room equipped with a computer and a projector).
5. The institution should enable the commission members an unhindered inspection of the premises (the library, lecture rooms, laboratories, etc.).
6. The institution should provide beverages (coffee, juice, water...) and business lunch.

### **VISIT TO THE INSTITUTION**

#### **Introductory meeting of the commission with the institution management (it is recommended that employee representatives and students are present as well)**

1. Welcome address of the commission chairperson and an introduction of commission members (a short presentation of their competences).
2. Explanation of the purpose and the planned schedule of the visit.
3. Explanation of what expectations the institution management and the commission each have.

#### **Interviews with institution representatives and inspection of premises**

1. Commission members are divided into two groups that carry out interviews individually.
2. The interviews are carried out with the representatives of the self-evaluation commission, all employee groups, students and their representatives, institution secretary, dean, vice-deans, etc.. Separate interviews with individual groups are recommended. Individual interviews should not last longer than 45 minutes.
3. At the beginning of the interview commission members introduce themselves to the interviewees; explain the purpose of the visit and invite them to introduce themselves as well (first and last name; their position at the institution; how they are satisfied with the work at the institution and similar). It is very important that the interviewees feel that they may express their opinions and feelings without reserve.

4. The interview should start off with questions that enable the interviewee to present his or her view of the state of affairs at the institution and continue with questions that help the commission to assess the actual state of affairs.
5. The same questions are posed to various groups of interviewees; however, having individual commission members posing the same questions to the same persons should be avoided.
6. The commission inspects the premises and equipment of the institution: lecture rooms, laboratories, the library, student council premises, student's club, department for students, the restaurant, computer rooms.
7. During the inspection of the premises commission members should engage random students and employees in conversation (if possible).

#### **Exchange of findings between commission members during the visit**

1. It is recommended that each 45-minute interview is followed by a short 15-minute break intended for exchange of the findings.
2. The work plan may change if required.

#### **Commission meeting at the end of the day**

1. Commission members exchange information and impressions and summarize them to findings.
2. Commission members design a draft of the report and
3. discuss further tasks and the next day of the visit.

#### **Report at the end of the evaluation commission's visit**

1. Commission members harmonise their opinions and write a summary of the final report on the external evaluation of the institution.
2. A meeting of the commission with institution management is called. The following should be present: chairperson of the self-evaluation commission, representatives of individual employee groups and students.
3. Chairperson of the commission presents the summary of the report.
4. Chairperson of the commission should give the participants of the meeting the chance to explain any eventual inconsistencies or inaccurately understood matters.
8. The commission thanks all participants for their cooperation.

#### **PREPARATION OF A REPORT ON THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTION**

1. The evaluation report in written form is to be finished at the latest one month after the visit to the institution.
2. Commission chairperson turns the evaluation report over to the Secretariat of the Council for Higher Education of the RS.
3. Secretariat of the Council for Higher Education of the RS informs the institution management about the report.
4. The management submits a separate opinion on the report to the Secretariat at the latest 15 days after receiving the report.

## **APPENDIX 8: Short instructions for writing external evaluation reports and the structure of the report**

The reports should be clear and transparent. When writing the reports we have to observe the criteria for monitoring, assessing and assuring quality and the questionnaire.

**The basic guideline for composing the reports should be the review questionnaire for higher education institution or vocational college – preparation for external evaluation.** It also serves as a base for the report preparation form.

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The summary should be brief and concise.

Content: the index should be based on the questionnaire items (9 items); each item is a complete whole.

The introduction should include: purpose of the visit by the external evaluation commission; date and location of the visit; course of the visit; duration of the visit (use the evaluation schedule); how many employees and students participated; which documents were presented to the commission (in addition to those included in the application).

Following that the commission writes down its findings according to individual items and criteria connected to the items. The descriptions should be comprehensive content-wise and not infringe upon other areas (covered in other items or criteria).

At the end of each item the commission lists:

- strengths,
- weaknesses and
- recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses.

It is very important that the strengths and weaknesses are clearly separated, unambiguous, brief and indented.

Recommendations for elimination of the weaknesses: it should be clear that a reasonable date is set for this (under consideration of the legal deadline, according to which every institution or study programme must be reaccredited (every 7 years) or re-evaluated).

In conclusion the commission lists concise findings (according to items from the questionnaire).

## REPORT ON INSTITUTIONAL EXTERNAL EVALUATION

Higher education  
institution:  
Dean:

Date and time of the visit:	Date	Time
	Day 1	
	Day 2	

Members of the commission were appointed by the  
Senate for Evaluation on:

Members of the commission:	Name and last name	Representative of the organisation
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	
	4.	
	5.	

Report submitted to the Secretariat of the Council for Higher Education of the RS (hereafter:  
Secretariat)

Signature of the chairperson of the commission for external evaluation:

Secretariat received the report on:

The report was sent to the rector or dean on:

The higher education institution issued its opinion to the report and sent them to the Secretariat  
on:

## **SUMMARY**

### ***KEY POINTS***

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

**Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **Contents**

## **Introduction**

## **1. Strategy, organisation and management of the institution, record keeping and quality assurance**

Evaluation criteria:

- The higher education institution has an officially published mission and vision statement, a strategic plan and a quality policy that clearly define its educational, scientific and research goals and the means to achieve them.
- Employee competences, rights and responsibilities are set. Higher education teachers and assistants and scientific staff participate in designing the teaching processes and the scientific, research, art and professional activities. Students participate in designing the process that affect education and have the possibility to express their opinions.
- The higher education institution has a trained staff, spatial capabilities and guaranteed financial and material resources that will enable it to achieve the goals set in its strategic plan.
- The higher education institution keeps organized records of its activities and has established a system of care for quality.

### **1.1 Strengths**

### **1.2 Weaknesses**

### **1.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **2. Education – study activities**

Evaluation criteria:

- The higher education institution carries out single and multiple level study programmes that lead to scientific or professional titles in accordance with the set goals and planned study achievements. It has also specified criteria for awarding scientific and professional titles so they are comparable to national and European standards and it constantly monitors the adherence to these criteria.
- The higher education institution collects information on the interest of candidates for enrolment in its study programmes, it organizes student polling on the implementation and the quality of its study programmes and collects information on the employability and further studies of its graduates.
- The higher education institution monitors study achievements, progression rate of the students and their study duration.
- In order to ensure the study achievements and goals of the higher education institution and its organizational units the higher education institution has adequate ratios between the number of higher education teachers and assistants, scientific staff, administrative and professional-technical staff and the number of students.

### **2.1 Strengths**

### **2.2 Weaknesses**

### **2.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

### **3. Scientific, research, art and professional activities**

Evaluation criteria:

- Carrying out the scientific, research, art and professional activities of the higher education institution is in accordance with its strategic plan and national European guidelines and standards.
- The higher education institution guarantees that modern findings of the scientific, research, art and professional activities are used in teaching.
- The higher education institution:
  - encourages its employees to regularly publish their findings from scientific, research, art and professional activities,
  - ensures the transfer of knowledge into practice,
  - keeps adequate records on all of the above.

#### **3.1 Strengths**

#### **3.2 Weaknesses**

#### **3.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

#### **4. Higher education teachers and assistant, scientific staff and assistants**

Evaluation criteria:

- Selection, election and promotion procedures for higher education teachers and assistants are defined and public. For higher education teachers and assistants the criteria for promotion contain achievements in scientific, research, art and professional work.
- The higher education institution enables lifelong learning and training as well as career development for its higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.
- The higher education institution has a long-term employment policy for higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.
- The higher education institution ensures career counselling for its higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff.
- The higher education institution participates in exchange of higher education teachers, assistants and scientific staff in the Republic of Slovenia and abroad, it enables it and encourages it.
- Higher education teachers and assistants do educational as well as scientific, research, art and professional work. The integration of these activities is shown in the criteria for promotion and election to titles. Workload for educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities is defined.

##### **4.1 Strengths**

##### **4.2 Weaknesses**

##### **4.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **5. Administrative and professional-technical staff**

Evaluation criteria:

- Selection and promotion procedures for administrative and professional-technical staff are defined and public.
- The higher education institution provides all employees with access to lifelong learning.
- The higher education institution provides career counselling for its administrative and professional-technical staff.

### **5.1 Strengths**

### **5.2 Weaknesses**

### **5.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **6. Students at the higher education institution**

Evaluation criteria:

- The higher education institution provides potential and already enrolled students with access to information and to counselling services regarding the studies.
- The higher education institution has an adequate system of assessing and grading students' knowledge that provides students with assessing their own progress and achievement of goals from the programme.
- During the studies the students acquire general skills and competences, such as: learning ability, creative problem solving, scientific, research, art and professional work, analysis and combination, communication skills, etc.
- The higher education institution encourages student mobility.
- The higher education institution facilitates adequate student organisation and ensures their participation in decision making.

### **6.1 Strengths**

### **6.2 Weaknesses**

### **6.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **7. Premises and equipment for educational, scientific, research, art and professional activities, the library**

Evaluation criteria:

- The higher education institution has adequate premises for achieving its goals.
- The higher education institution has the required, modern and well maintained equipment for carrying out its activities.
- The higher education institution provides its employees and students with access to information-communication technology and uses it for its operation as well as for educational, scientific, research, art and professional purposes.
- Library premises are adequate for unhindered operation of the higher education institution and for achieving the set goals. The library is adequately stocked with books and scientific and professional periodicals and is accessible to public.
- The number of library staff and its training are in accordance with the domestic and European standards.
- The higher education institution provides its employees with access to the required databases.

### **7.1 Strengths**

### **7.2 Weaknesses**

### **7.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **8. Financing the educational/study, scientific, research, art and professional activities**

Evaluation criteria:

- The higher education institution has guaranteed long-term resources for educational, scientific, research, art and professional work from various sources. The sources are budgetary resources, resources from European and international cooperation and project and resources acquired at the market.
- The higher education institution plans and allocates resources intended for educational/study, scientific, research, art and professional work.
- The higher education institution regularly monitors the use of acquired resources and its efficiency according to individual activities.

### **8.1 Strengths**

### **8.2 Weaknesses**

### **8.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **9. Cooperation with the social environment**

Evaluation criteria:

- The higher education institution has established successful cooperation on the regional, state and international level. It facilitates cooperation with other higher education institutions, companies, organisations, professional associations and other interested stakeholders in the environment.
- The higher education institution shows integration of everyone who is interested in its activities in the field of education as well as scientific, research, art and professional fields.
- Study programmes and other activities of the higher education institution reflect the needs of the economy and the non-economy; both are participating in planning and monitoring of the higher education institution's educational work.

### **9.1 Strengths**

### **9.2 Weaknesses**

### **9.3 Recommendations for eliminating the weaknesses**

## **Conclusion**