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Nacionalna agencija Republike Slovenije
za kakovost v visokem šolstvu

s·q·a·a

Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME REVIEWS: TOWARDS NEW COMBINATIONS

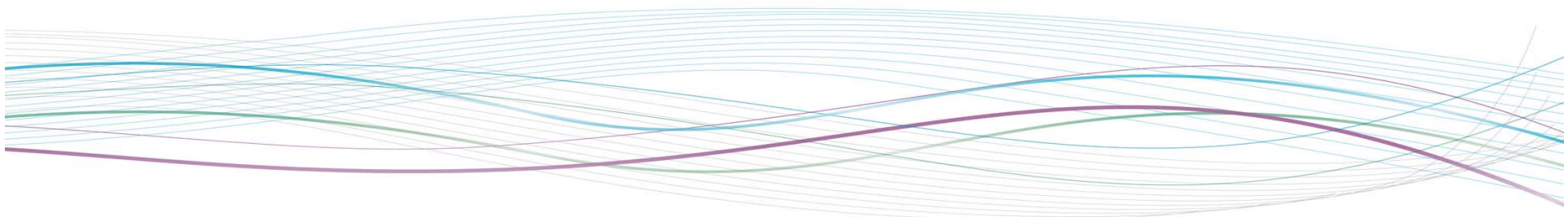
1ST February 2018

CHALLENGES IN THE TRANSITION FROM PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION TO INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

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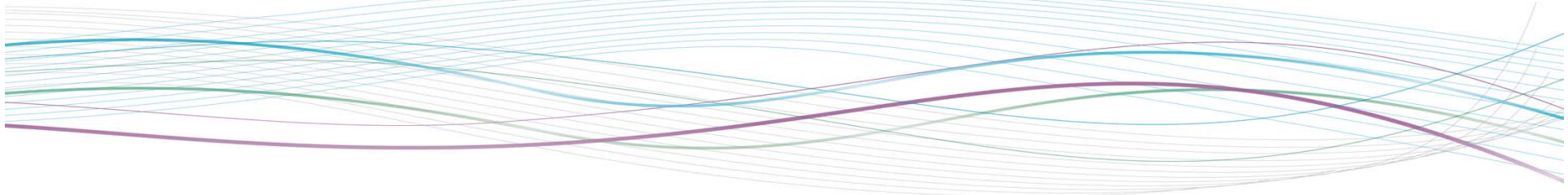
The reform of external quality assurance in Slovenia

1. Amendments to the HEA (December 2016)
2. Transition to institutional evaluation/re-accreditation
3. European approach and internationalisation



Reasons for amending legislation:

- first cycle of re-accreditation procedures of study programmes (and HEIs) has been finished,
- introduction of practice - preparation of action plans in line with the recommendations of expert groups,
- overloading institutions with procedures (instant preparation of HEI for the re-accreditation of study programmes),
- participation of the Agency in the training of internal auditors (helping strengthening internal QA at HEIs),
- combined procedures – repeating findings,
- short site-visits (approx. 1-2 days),
- validation of accreditation: 7 years



The reform of external quality assurance in Slovenia

Some facts:

- *915 accredited study programmes*
- *47 „independent“ HEIs*
- *6 universities (UL-26 members, UM-18, UP-8, UNG-7, NU-3, UNM-5)*
- *1 International association of universities – EMUNI*

Before the reform:

- *Validation of accreditation is 7 years*
- *Validation of re-accreditation 7 years/3 years or less (in case of detected irregularities)*
- *Extraordinary evaluation of HEI and study programme*
- *Cross-border education/TNE*
- *Re-accreditation of universities and independent HEI*

The reform of external quality assurance in Slovenia

New HEA

Accreditation:

- *Initial and Re-accreditation of HEIs only (longer and more thorough procedures), validation 5 years,*
- *the accreditations (initial) of study programmes, joint study programmes and study programmes for training/upgrading; validation of accreditation: unlimited*
- *accreditation of transformations/changes of HEIs:*
 - *transformation to another type of higher education institution (from College to Faculty) – shorter procedure;*
 - *merger by acquisition, merger by the formation of a new entity or division of higher education institutions;*
 - *changing the location in Slovenia*

Criteria for assessment

ACCREDITATION OR RE-ACCREDITATION OF A HEI

INITIAL ACCREDITATION (11 STANDARDS) = application assessment + short site-visit

1. operation of the higher education institution
2. human resources
3. material conditions

DECISION = ACCREDITATION GRANTED YES/NO

RE-ACCREDITATION WITH A REGULAR OR EXTRAORDINARY EVALUATION (17 STANDARDS) = application assessment + 2 site-visits

1. operation of the higher education institution
2. human resources
3. students
4. material conditions
5. internal QA and improvement, changes, update and implementation of study programmes

DECISION = ACCREDITATION GRANTED YES/NO

ACCREDITATION FOR SHORTER PERIOD (3 YEARS OR LESS)



PROCEDURE

ACCREDITATION OR RE-ACCREDITATION OF A HEI

INITIAL ACCREDITATION (10 MONTHS)

1. Nomination of experts
2. site-visit
3. Preparation of the report
4. Comments on the report
5. Final report
6. Decision of the SQAA Council

RE-ACCREDITATION WITH A REGULAR OR EXTRAORDINARY EVALUATION (15 MONTHS)

Procedure with few exceptions:

- *2 multi-days site-visits (the number of experts and the duration of the visit depends on the size of HEI and number of study programmes)*
 - *FIRST SITE-VISIT (preliminary report with recommendations for the second site-visit)*
 - *COUNCIL DECISION (which fields of HEI operations and which study programmes should be double checked) + nomination of additional field/programme specific experts*
 - *SECOND SITE-VISIT*
 - *EVALUATION REPORT – COMMENTS – FINAL REPORT - DECISION*

Criteria for assessment

ACCREDITATION OR EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF A STUDY PROGRAMME

ACCREDITATION (5 STANDARDS) = application assessment

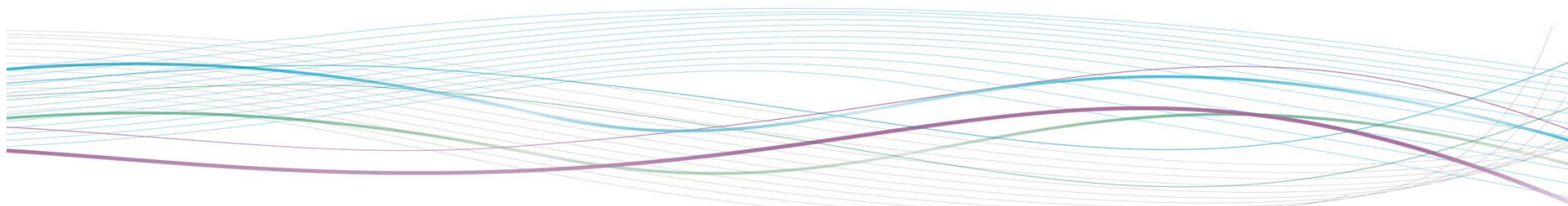
1. composition and content of a study programme
2. concept of the implementation of a study programme

DECISION = ACCREDITATION GRANTED YES/NO

EXTRAORDINARY EVALUATION OR EVALUATION OF A SAMPLE OF STUDY PROGRAMMES (5 STANDARDS) = application assessment + site-visit

1. internal QA and improvement of study programmes
2. changes and update of a study programme
3. implementation of a study programme

DECISION EXTRA. ACCR. = ACCREDITATION GRANTED YES/NO



Evaluation of study programme

Evaluation of study programme:

- *after accreditation is granted*
- *part of HEI re-accreditation process*

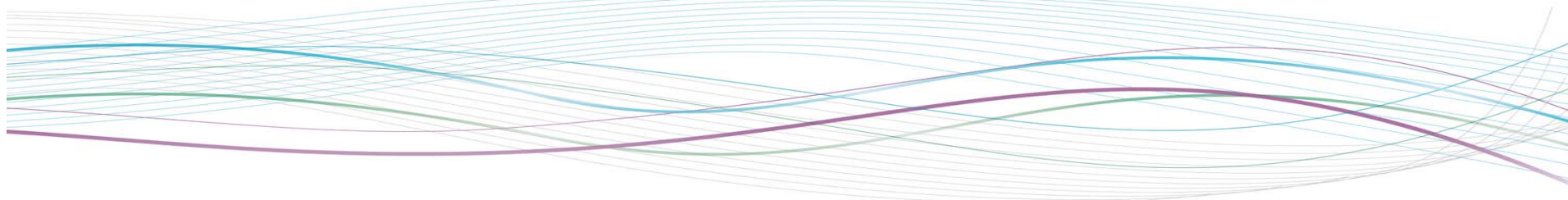
Evaluation of a sample of programmes (The purpose is to advise in developing self-evaluation and improving the quality of study programmes):

Evaluation of a sample of study programs is set out in the Agency's annual plan, so that at least 2% of the accredited study programmes held in HEI each year, are in the sample.

Extraordinary evaluation of a study programme

SQAA Council:

- *determine the compliance of the implementation of the study programme*
- *determine partial compliance of the implementation of the study programme*
- *withdraw the accreditation from a study programme*



Open questions and future challenges:

- **Big vs. small HEIs**
- **2x site-visits could be very time-consuming**
- **Accreditation (initial) of University members?**
- **Accreditation of dislocated units/branch campuses abroad?**
- **Selection of the study programmes**
- **Status of the SQAA in the future?**
 - **The draft law on public Agencies**
 - **due to the reduction of public administration**
 - **reinforcing the role of supervision**
 - **HR plan adopted by the Government**
 - **Council members are appointed by the Government**
 - **on the proposal of the Minister, Agency's Director is appointed by the Government**
 - **financially dependent on the Ministry**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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