

Report on the Follow-up Phase of the Internal Periodic  
Assessment of the Quality Assurance System  
Academic Year 2022-2023

August 31, 2024.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Internal Periodic Assessment of the Quality Assurance System at RIT Croatia (Audit) is defined by the RIT Croatia Quality Assurance Policy and the RIT Croatia Quality Assurance System *Rulebook* from 2022. Internal periodic assessment is implemented annually starting with 2022. Based on the abovementioned Policy and Rulebook, the Internal Periodic Assessment of the Quality Assurance System is conducted annually by the Internal Periodic Assessment Committee consisting of five (5) members independent in their work. The Committee is elected for a period of three (3) years:

- Ivona Labaš, M.S., Director of Strategic Development, Facilities and ITS, coordinator and member
- Besim Agušaj, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer, member
- Evelina Miščin, Ph.D., College Professor with Tenure, member
- Kristina Šorić, Ph.D., College Professor with Tenure, member
- Marija Šušak Mišetić, M.S., Academic Affairs and Student Services Manager, member

Upon completion of the Internal Periodic Assessment of the Quality Assurance System for the Academic Year 2022-2023, RIT Croatia's Quality Assurance Council has developed a comprehensive Action Items Implementation Plan. This plan has been approved by the Academic Senate at their session on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Following the approval of the plan, the Internal Periodic Assessment Committee was charged with tracking the execution of the Action Plan and collecting the necessary documentation needed for this report.

## 2. ACTION PLAN REPORT

### 2.1. Student-centered learning, teaching and assessment

*2.1.1 Increase awareness about available training programs for faculty in the domain of e-learning and work on strategies to continuously improve available training based on the latest trends. This should cover not only the technical aspects but also effective online teaching strategies, engagement techniques, and assessment methods. It should also ensure they stay updated with the latest best practices.*

Status: Completed, annual implementation

Description: The recommendation has been noted by Associate Deans and will be reflected on annually as part of the regular process of activity planning.

*2.1.2. Encourage faculty to use a variety of interactive teaching methods to keep students engaged during online sessions. This could include group discussions, polls, breakout rooms, and collaborative activities.*

Status: Completed, annual implementation

Description: The recommendation has been noted by Associate Deans and will be reflected on annually as part of the regular process of activity planning.

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*2.1.3. Enhance the design of online course syllabi to include clear instructions and expectations for students. Educate students on minimum requirements that are needed for online courses to ensure they have all the prerequisites needed to attend online courses (quiet space, min internet connection, working camera and microphone, etc.). Students need to understand the prerequisites before enrolling in an online class.*

Status: Completed, annual implementation

Description: The recommendation has been noted by Associate Deans and will be reflected on annually as part of the regular process of activity planning.

*2.1.4. Consider offering recorded lectures for all online delivered courses, as they have proven to be beneficial for students. This helps with content review and accommodates various learning preferences.*

Status: Completed, annual implementation

Description: The recommendation has been noted by Associate Deans and will be reflected on annually as part of the regular process of activity planning.

*2.1.5. Consider ways to optimize class sizes for online courses, ensuring that students can actively participate and engage in discussions.*

Status: Completed

Description: The recommendation has been noted by Associate Deans and discussed with department heads for future reference.

*2.1.6. Address students' concerns about time constraints during online exams by considering strategies that balance exam integrity and student well-being. This could include providing sufficient time for reading questions, enabling question review, and clearly communicating time expectations for each section of the exam.*

Status: Completed

Description: Faculty have been informed and instructed to keep this recommendation in mind when delivering online exams.

*2.1.7. Continue to invest in upgrading and improving the technology infrastructure for online course delivery. Address issues related to the availability of extra camera and microphone equipment, and hardware problems that affect the online class experience. Consider limiting faculty to deliver classes only from designated rooms where technical capabilities are suited for online delivery.*

Status: Completed, annual implementation

Description: Additional microphones and cameras purchased as per faculty actual needs.

*2.1.8. Continue providing students with the option of using available classroom space to attend online classes while on campus in order to provide them with a quiet space for better concentration without surrounding distractions.*

Status: Completed

Description: All available space is allocated for student needs. Sign up sheet for open spaces is available at the student services desk.

*2.1.9. Recognize the unique needs of freshmen students and consider ways to enhance their online learning experience. Provide opportunities for them to connect with faculty and peers, fostering a sense of community and belonging.*

Status: Completed

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Description: The recommendation has been noted by Associate Deans and as a result we have moved towards only experienced faculty members teaching online courses to ensure they are well equipped and used to creating an engaging setting regardless of the class delivery model.

*2.1.10. Consider additional approaches to collecting feedback from students and faculty about their online teaching and learning experiences. Use this feedback to make iterative improvements to the online education delivery model.*

Status: Completed

Description: Because of this recommendation, Week 5 surveys were implemented for feedback of new courses and new faculty. Also, end of semester surveys are completed for each course and they are thoroughly reviewed and acted on based on student feedback. Students are able to share their concerns with the Ombudsman directly at any time but also with the Deans at Coffee with the Deans.

*2.1.11. Polycom video conferencing equipment phasing out could be considered. Zoom technology is working perfectly as a standalone and no third party solution is needed for the current online delivery models.*

Status: Completed

Description: Assessment has been completed and it showed that the existing equipment satisfies all the current program needs. However, due to existing equipment age, adequate replacements have been identified allowing for a faster and smoother transition if needed in the future.

*2.1.12. Evaluate establishing a hiring model for online courses. Identify top-quality faculty experienced in online delivery and use the opportunity to hire them to work remotely. This also contributes to the overall internationalization goals of our Strategic Plan.*

Status: Completed

Description: This topic has been discussed with department heads that are in charge of hiring and will be taken into consideration for future hiring processes.

## **2.2. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification**

*2.2.1 Analyze the connection between the high school final grades and students leaving RIT Croatia to potentially identify patterns that can indicate gaps in the enrollment process. If necessary, consider introducing new Boot camps/summer schools for English, mathematics, IT, etc. for prospective students of lower academic standing to prepare them for their freshman year.*

Status: Completed

Description: A thorough exit analysis is completed for all students that includes a review of their grades. Students requiring additional support upon entering RIT Croatia are flagged by faculty for additional support, which their advisors then define through the academic success report.

*2.2.2 Improve communication with students on available COOP options by using a variety of platforms in order for them to be better informed.*

Status: Completed

Description: Several different communication platforms were used in both Careers courses and during career advising processes.

*2.2.3. There is a perception that we need to work on being more realistic and transparent when promoting our study programs (recruitment/enrollment process). Analyze current narratives in*

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*enrollment processes and share details with faculty and staff, to ensure everyone understands the narrative that goes out to prospective students.*

Status: Completed

Description: Meetings with all relevant departments were organized prior to enrollment season to introduce changes and program expectations. All new employees undergo a structured onboarding program to ensure consistency in communication and narratives.

*2.2.4. In both locations, students are struggling to find adequate student accommodation. RIT Croatia provides help and guidance in the process but not all students seem to be aware of the opportunities. Work on increased communication and continue providing support with finding appropriate accommodation for students.*

Status: Completed

Description: The support process is in place, list of available housing is prepared before the start of every academic year and international students receive additional logistical support.

*2.2.5. Consider organizing workshops for students on improving their time management, lean management, waste elimination, how to reduce/deal with stress, how to be more efficient and effective, how to improve communication skills, how to work in teams, and essential study techniques. Include Student Government in these initiatives.*

Status: Completed

Description: The following workshops were organized: Communication skills (11/2023); Study techniques & Time management (10/2023); Setting goals (11/2023); Mental health & resilience (2/2024); Motivation (4/2024).

*2.2.6. Continue providing support to foreign students with socializing (special events, integration into the community, student clubs)*

Status: Completed

Description: Support to International student club meetings; Museum and Heritage tours; Field trips to local islands; Pizza and movie nights every semester; Croatian language courses.

*2.2.7. Ensure that student feedback always receives a response and that students understand the changes that have been a result of their feedback. Continue to involve the students (Student Government) in all change processes as partners and not only stakeholders.*

Status: Completed

Description: This recommendation was implemented in all relevant activities.

*2.2.8. In Consider organizing workshops for faculty on improving their soft skills (communication as a priority), to align their behavior with the American way of teaching and behaving (more relaxing, more respectful, more available, more open). Investigate opportunities for collaborating with RIT main campus on this topic.*

Status: Completed

Description: The Associate Deans addressed the communication standards during 1:1 with all faculty.

*2.2.9. Establish a formal onboarding workshop or have precise instructions (formal procedure) for "mentors" who will help new faculty to get in line with our mission and values.*

Status: Completed

Description: Area Heads provide training during official onboarding procedure and on ad hoc (as needed) bases.

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2.2.10. *Faculty seems to be unaware of scheduling operations and restraints. Consider ways to increase awareness of academic processes (scheduling and advising) and improve collaboration and communication between faculty and staff.*

Status: Completed

Description: The communication on this topic has been intensified and is included in the onboarding processes.

2.2.11. *Formalize a more efficient framework for supporting students' clubs (more efficient procedure for establishing clubs, better and more consistent communication, closer collaboration, more space for students to share their thoughts). Establish simpler budget procedures when it comes to student clubs' plans and programs. Work on transparency and clear timelines for all student club processes*

Status: Completed

Description: A simpler and more efficient process for club funding was implemented and club representatives share activities on a monthly basis to ensure consistency in communication.

2.2.12. *Ensure the students are aware of the proper point of contact for SG and for all active student clubs and administrative support for club activities. Consider publishing student club/student life contact list on campus notice boards and on the web*

Status: Completed

Description: RIT Croatia website was updated with info on SG and club leaders.

2.2.13. *Since RIT works on the principle of fairness, priority to choose class schedules early cannot be given selectively. Work on increasing awareness of requirements needed to successfully complete online courses (tech and space requirements), look into possibilities to restrict online course selection without prior consultation with advisors or similar.*

Status: Completed

Description: Students receive their schedules and open sections well in advance now to make informed choices on courses with their advisors.

2.2.14. *Work with Student Government to enhance campus life for students by organizing more/more diverse social events for students on campus (student suggestions: pet day, hobby day). Reevaluate existing social events and consider changes such as gala dinner (with food, music, dancing) for all the students, not only for senior students, as well as movie day, sports day.*

Status: Completed

Description: As a result of this recommendation, we have introduced movie nights, sports tournaments, community service event, and pub quiz nights

2.2.15. *Explain better the purpose of tutoring. Motivate the students to ask for help and to learn how to benefit from tutoring more. Organize events where students can meet tutors and talk to them. Support more tutors and promote more tutoring. Explain to the students that tutoring sessions are not organized to solve their problems one day before an exam, the tutoring sessions should be attended regularly.*

Status: Completed

Description: Tutors now visit all classes they tutor for at the beginning of each semester. They are also working more closely with faculty to better plan their sessions and assist students.

2.2.16. *Talk more about the fact that RIT Croatia students are part of a bigger community, RIT community. Continue working on raising awareness about the fact that RIT has several Global*

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*Campuses. Organize more online events where the students from all the campuses could meet and talk and share experiences. Consider organizing Dubai day, American day, and similar.*

Status: Completed

Description: Introduced a new online Global Scholars event, along with more networking opportunities among SA and local students.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Based on the monitoring of the RIT Croatia's progress in terms of QAS improvement since the Internal Periodic Assessment of the Quality Assurance System, the Internal Periodic Assessment Committee concludes the following:

- During the follow-up period, RIT Croatia has intensified its activities regarding the Quality Assurance System at all levels. Immediately after the submission of the Report on the Internal Periodic Assessment of the Quality Assurance System (for the AY 2022-2023), a comprehensive action plan was drawn up by the Quality Assurance Council and approved by RIT Croatia's Academic Senate unanimously.
- The Internal Periodic Assessment Committee has received all documents that serve as evidence in the follow-up process. In a very short time, the management of RIT Croatia has managed to eliminate the deficiencies and implement changes as recommended in the process.
- The Internal Periodic Assessment Committee is of the opinion that the quality assurance system is currently in a developed phase.

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