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**STRATEGY**

**of the**

**UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

**VELIKA GORICA**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**2010 – 2015**

**Velika Gorica, 2010**

## Introduction

The University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica is a private higher education institution founded in 2003 which provides education in five professional study programmes and three specialist graduate professional study programmes of technical orientation. The founders of the University of Applied Sciences are the Town of Velika Gorica and the College of Safety.

The need for professional and specialist study programmes has been indicated by the analyses of the market of human resources which have found that there is a shortage of professionals in some technical professions. The University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica provides the students with the possibility of acquiring knowledge which will enable them to find employment on the labour market and to get on in their careers, as well as to keep improving in life-long learning.

In compliance with the Regulations on Scientific and Artistic areas, fields and branches of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica covers the areas of technical science. The University of Applied Sciences provides three-year professional study programmes and one-year and two-year specialist graduate professional study programmes. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is:

- for education (3+1):  $180+60 = 240$  ECTS credits
- for education (3+2):  $180+120 = 300$  ECTS credits.

The capacities for the education of students are as follows:

- at professional study programmes, 450 full-time and 450 part-time students,
- at specialist study programmes, 100 full-time and 100 part-time students.

Five professional study programmes are:

Computer Systems Maintenance,  
Management in Crisis Conditions,  
Motor Vehicle Maintenance,  
Aircraft Maintenance,  
Eye Optics.

Three specialist graduate professional study programmes are:

Crisis Management,  
Information Systems,  
Management of Logistic Systems and Processes (Logistics).

By-standing is the study of Pyrotechnology which can be activated in accordance with the shown interest of the government and private institutions. By completing the professional studies the students acquire the knowledge of the baccalaureus / baccalaurea engineer / bacc.ing. of the respective profession, and by completing the specialist graduate study the candidates acquire the title of professional specialist engineer / prof.spec.ing. of the respective profession.

The total number of full-time and part-time students in the current academic year 2010/11 at all the study programmes amounts to **1016** students. By February 2010 the professional study programme was completed and the diploma theses were defended by **371** students,

which represents a direct contribution of the University of Applied Sciences to the development of local and Croatian economy.

Taking into consideration the implementation of the Bologna Process, with the flexibility of the teaching process, by introducing mentor approach and new technologies in performing the teaching process, the University of Applied Sciences is continuously proving its quality in higher education.

During the year 2010 the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica with 20 fully employed lecturers and 58 external lecturers and associates from Croatia and abroad, represents a modern higher educational institution, competitive on the national and European knowledge market. The majority of external teaching staff members have acquired their elective title by participating in the teaching process at the studies of the university of applied sciences and through nomination procedures performed at the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica. In this manner, the University of Applied Sciences has formed a profile of external teachers in compliance with the criteria and the teaching technology. The teachers of various spectrum of scientific and professional qualities, allocated to departments and sections perform professional education and participate in the scientific and research work. The teaching staff pay special attention to continuous work with students, motivating them to work independently and to participate in the professional work. The partner cooperation with regional economy insures advanced level of technology and student practice.

The University of Applied Sciences cooperates with national and foreign academic institutions, organizes regularly every year the international Conference "Dani kriznog upravljanja" (*Crisis Management Days*). The teachers of the University of Applied Sciences have published a significant number of scientific and technical papers and books.

In compliance with the organization of the University of Applied Sciences, the management bodies are: Managing Council, the Dean, Professional Council, Vice-deans, Heads of the study programmes and Heads of the organizational units. The Managing Council of the University of Applied Sciences takes care of the realization of the VVG activities, the legal aspects of operation, rational use of material and personnel resources and gives consent to certain decisions of the Dean and the Professional Council in compliance with the Law and the Statute of the University of Applied Sciences and the founders of VVG.

### **Mission and vision of the University of Applied Sciences**

The Mission of the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica is continuous implementation of professional study programmes, specialist graduate professional study programmes, life-long education study programmes and the realisation of the professional and scientific activities. The University of Applied Sciences cooperates actively with the academic and economic partners in the Republic of Croatia and abroad and provides the possibilities for internal and external mobility both of its students and the lecturers, as well as the development of multidisciplinary scientific and academic activities.

The vision of the University of Applied Sciences is permanent modernisation in delivering the professional and specialist study programmes oriented to sustainable development in the area of technical sciences. With the application of advanced technologies in the educational process VVG will assure quality. Apart from academic activities, the new organisational units at VVG, the Centre for Education and Improvement and the Centre for Scientific and Professional Activities will provide life-long education of the adults and realise scientific and professional activities, respectively. Through active cooperation with the partners from the industry, the University of Applied Sciences will maintain the level of organisation of the technical education, improve the quality and competitiveness. The University of Applied Sciences wants to be a dynamic institution which stimulates professional and scientific knowledge with direct implementation in the industry and cooperation with EU partners. Such

a vision of the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica is the projection of the future development which shall be realised by successful strategy.

### **Strategy of the University of Applied Sciences**

The University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica has harmonised its strategy and development objectives in the following mid-term period. The VVG Strategy functions as the implementation plan of the universities of applied sciences and colleges in the Republic of Croatia.

The Strategy of the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica includes:

- Strategic objectives and tasks of the University of Applied Sciences,
- Documents on strategy implementation,
- Carriers of activities / responsibilities,
- Measures of monitoring and advancing in the strategy implementation.

Starting from the mission and vision of the development of the University of Applied Sciences the strategic objectives have been defined, and these have been used to develop the tasks, the realisation of which is monitored by measurable indicators of performance and successfulness (benchmark indicators) up to the year 2015.

The strategic objectives of the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica include:

1. Development of one's own teaching staff,
2. Application of advanced teaching technologies,
3. Assurance of the teaching process quality system,
4. Life-long learning of the adults,
5. Scientific and professional activities,
6. Cooperation with the economy and local community,
7. International cooperation,
8. Sustainability of the University of Applied Sciences.

Rare are those private educational institutions that have their own teaching staff from the beginning. There are several reasons for that. Regarding the criterion of the number of enrolled students, certain study programmes can lose their accreditation, so that there is high risk in employing the teaching staff members before even insuring the study sustainability. On the other hand, one of the conditions that have to be met by a higher education institution that delivers professional study programmes in order to be granted accreditation is a minimum of 1/3 of the number of fully employed teachers with minimal qualification of lecturers. Besides, some of the study programmes, *Eye Optics*, *Management in Crisis Conditions*, *Aircraft Maintenance* and the specialist study programme *Management in Logistic Systems and Processes* are unique and delivered for the first time in the Republic of Croatia so that for specific subjects at these study programmes either there are no available or there are no teachers in Croatia. Therefore, part of the teachers teaching at the University of Applied Sciences comes from abroad and from external cooperation institutions of the University of Applied Sciences. This is precisely one of the reasons why part of the vision of the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica is to form one's own teaching staff who will use advanced teaching technology in actual environmental conditions to provide the students with high-quality transfer of professional knowledge. However, in order to form, i.e. educate one's own teaching staff for a completely new profession in Croatia, such as e.g. optometrist, minimally 6 to 7 years are required, and this is one of the key reasons that there are not more employed teachers at the University of Applied Sciences. By developing and educating one's own teaching staff in compliance with the requirements of workplaces, the University of

Applied Sciences will provide the associates and teachers with the necessary high professional specific education and the implementation of life-long learning programme.

In compliance with the Law on Scientific Activities and Higher Education and the Regulations on the Measures and Criteria for assessment of the quality and efficiency of higher education institutions and study programmes, the VVG quality system has been harmonised with the Law on Quality Assurance in science and higher education and with the international standard for the introduction of the ISO 9001:2008 quality system for the organisation and realisation of higher education of professional study programmes (recertification No. HR07/0025, of 09 July 2010) and is specially oriented in accordance with the ESG guidelines (ENQA "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the Higher Education European Area") and ISO/IWA 2 – guidelines for the implementation of ISO standards at educational institutions. Direct measuring of the quality of studying is based on the annual assessment of the quality system of the teaching process.

*The Centre for Scientific and Professional Activities* will carry the research projects in theoretical and practical economic requirements, from reviews, studies, expertise, and investigation to project revisions, organisation of symposia, seminars to other activities. *The Centre for Education and Improvement* will take care of the implementation of the life-long education, qualification and improvement of the adults in the areas of information technology, protection, pyrotechnology, rescue, maintenance of motor vehicles, aircraft, logistics and other areas within the scope covered by the University of Applied Sciences.

By cooperating with the industry as part of the educational process, the University of Applied Sciences has become a flexible educational institution ready for constant adaptation to the industrial requirements. The awareness about the significance of the cooperation with entrepreneurs and of the transfer of professional knowledge has been supported by study programmes. The contents of the professional study programmes constantly follow the market needs and adapt to its requirements. In this way, upon completing the study programme, the professional baccalaureus / baccalaurea have sufficient theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to solve the set tasks in practice. Maintaining the number of enrolled students and attracting new ones to enrol increases the satisfaction of students and employers which insures the sustainability of the University of Applied Sciences.

The University of Applied Sciences has been recognised as a significant higher education and professional institution and a desirable partner in solving the issues in the area of scientific and professional research, higher education, qualification and life-long improvement. Therefore, there are many from Croatia and abroad who have signed agreements or contracts on business, scientific, professional and educational cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences.

### **Measurable performance (benchmark) indicators**

The realization of the indicated objectives is measurable through the development of 71 tasks defined by a five-year plan. The annual reviews are performed to monitor the success in realizing the strategy. The review is performed based on the analyses and annual reports for all the activities. The number of tasks is adjusted through the annual plans in accordance with the actual environmental conditions and other obligations. The tasks are determined quantitatively and qualitatively depending on the possibility of monitoring and evaluation. The completion of tasks will be monitored by a larger number of indicators that can be measured in such a way. For external comparisons and assessments of education successfulness eleven relevant tasks and their indicators have been selected.

1. employment of high-quality teachers,
2. provision of premises and equipment required for the teaching process,

3. assurance of the teaching process quality system,
4. introduction of new teaching technologies and subjects,
5. increase of publishing activities, coursebooks, books and manuals,
6. raising of the quality of the implementation of practical work,
7. development of life-long learning programs,
8. development of scientific and research activities,
9. expanding cooperation with economy and local community,
10. expanding of international cooperation,
11. raising the quality of student standard.

University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica is a distinguished and technologically modern higher education institution with unique study programmes in the Republic of Croatia. The presented ambitious strategic plan over the five-year period will intensify the internal and external activities that will realize major performance of the professional higher education of the students. In this way the University of Applied Sciences Velika Gorica will contribute to the development of the professional education, science and economy of the Republic of Croatia.

Velika Gorica, 02 June 2010

Prof. Ivan Toth, M.Sc.  
**the Dean**

Prof. Vjera Krstelj, D.Sc.  
**President of the Managing  
Council**