

Summary report on the modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of the location and the change of language for two study programmes of Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna

Upon the application for modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna (hereafter: SFU Vienna) from 11th December 2017, AQ Austria conducted the accreditation procedure of Ljubljana as a new location and thereof the Bachelor and Master study programme Psychology to be conducted in a new language according to para. 24 Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (HS-QSG) in conjunction with para. 2 Private University Act (PUG) and in conjunction with the Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (PU-AkkVO). In line with para 21 HS-QSG AQ Austria publishes the following summary report:

1 Accreditation decision

At its 49. meeting on 11th September 2018 the Board of AQ Austria (Board) decided to grant accreditation to the modification of the administrative decision on the accreditation of the two above mentioned study programmes according to para. 24 Act HS-QSG section 4 and 5 in conjunction with para. 2 in conjunction with para. 9 section 1 PU-AkkVO subject to the following condition, because the criteria according to para. 17 PU-AkkVO are fulfilled except for criterion para. 14 section 5 lit d: *The Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna is demonstrably responsible for the selection of teaching and research staff. The Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna submits a concept within nine months after the decision enters into force, from which it can be deduced, in what kind of responsibilities regarding teaching and research staff (selection / appointment / teaching assignments / research) between the Faculty of Psychotherapy of Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana and the Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna are regulated.*

The fulfilment of this condition must be documented in writing within nine months dated from legal force of the decision (30th August 2018) and is subject to assessment by AQ Austria. In case of non-fulfilment, the accreditation will be withdrawn according to para. 24 section 9 HS-QSG.

The decision was approved by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Research on 6th November 2018. The decision entered into force on 30th November 2018.

2 Short information on the application for accreditation

Information on the applicant institution	
Applicant institution	Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna
Legal status	Company with limited liability (German: GmbH)
Initial accreditation	2005
Date of last extension of accreditation	2015
Site(s)	Vienna, Linz, Berlin, Milan, Paris, Ljubljana
Number of (active) students	3.581 ¹
Accredited degree programmes (including certificate university programmes for further education; some of the Bachelor/Master programmes are provided at more than one location)	17
Information on the study programmes	
Programme	Psychology
Kind	Bachelor / Master
Academic Degree	Bachelor of Science (BSc) Master of Science (MSc)
ECTS Credits	180 ECTS-Credits (Bachelor) 120 ECTS-Credits (Master)
Duration	6 Semester (Bachelor) 4 Semester (Master)
Form of organisation	Full-time
Maximum offered study places as per location	50 / per study year (25 intake per Winter semester)
Site(s) / Location of offering BA/MA Psychology	Vienna (since WS 2007/08) Linz (Bachelor since WS 2012/13; Master since WS 2014/15) Berlin (Bachelor since SS 2013, Master since WS 2014/15) Milan (since WS 2013/14) <i>Paris (Bachelor/Master Psychotherapie seit 2009)²</i>

¹ Data as of Statistic Austria April 2018; the data refer to the winter semester 2017/18. According to the data provided by Statistic Austria the SFU Vienna has reported 1.330 graduates and 659 beginners. All data refer to the winter semester 2018/19.

² At the location Paris in 2009 a Bachelor and Master programme in Psychotherapy Sciences have been accredited (formal procedure – *change of location and change of language*). However, in order to be better in line with national legal requirements the SFU Vienna applied for a change of name of the study programme resulting as well from a change in the

To be applied language(s)	German, Italian, <i>French</i>
Submission of application	11 th December 2017
Relevant version of application for external assessment	As of 18 th April 2018 (received on 19 th April 2018)
Information on the study programmes subject to changes	
Accreditation application for the modification of the administrative decision on the accreditation	Changes relevant to accreditation pursuant para. 12 section 1 lit 8 PU-AkkVO 2015: Application for Ljubljana as an additional location for two study programmes (consecutive Bachelor/Master in Psychology) Changes relevant to accreditation pursuant para. 12 section 1 lit 10 PU-AkkVO 2015: Application for a new language – Slovenian – for the additional location for for two study programmes (consecutive Bachelor/Master in Psychology)

3 Short information on the accreditation procedure

The accreditation application was submitted by SFU Vienna on 11th December 2017. As per resolution of 5th June 2018 the Board has appointed the following experts for the evaluation of the application:

Name	Function and institution	Role within the review panel
Dr. Joseph Dodds	University of New York in Prague	Expert with scientific qualification
Dr. Paul Jiménez	Occupational, organizational, and environmental psychology Karl-Franzens University Graz	Expert with scientific qualification (acting chair of review panel)
Carla Harold	Student of Psychology and American Studies at the University of Vienna.	Student expert

In addition the Board decided to adapt the focus of the review activity according to the demands of the procedure. The experts were asked to evaluate and assess the implementation of the two study programmes at the new location Ljubljana according to the criteria pursuing para. 17 PU-AkkVO, including para. 14 section 5 lit d and e. The curricula of the study programmes were not focus of this evaluation since they were already reviewed during the initial accreditation procedure and are not subject to change for the delivery at the location at SFU Ljubljana.

curricula/academic degree- the name of the programmes is since 2015- *Psychologie (Bachelor) and Psychologie clinique et psychothérapie (Master)* (AQ Austria Board decision as of 5th November 2015; final notice number GZ 1/A06-143/2015).

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The expert panel had to address explicit questions, which consequently had to be reflected evidence based in their joint report. Prior to the site-visit AQ Austria issued based upon its pre-screening task two requests to revise the application in certain areas. By doing so, AQ Austria aims to provide the expert panel with a complete and comprehensive application document addressing all areas of assessment in a meaningful way. The revised version as of 19th April 2018 built the written evidence for the preparation and briefing of the expert panel.

On 20th July 2018 the expert panel and the representative of AQ Austria conducted a site visit of the premises at the location of the Faculty for Psychotherapy Sciences of the Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana (SFU Ljubljana)³.

The review panel submitted its final review report by 8th August 2018. The applicant institution was asked to submit its formal statement on the review report within a given periode. The SFU Vienna submitted its statement by 20th August 2018.

After the Boards' decision in its 49. meeting on 11th September 2018 the final notice was submitted to the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research by 25th September 2018. The decision was approved by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Research on 6th November 2018. The decision entered into force on 30th November 2018.

4 Grounds for the accreditation decision

The review report (8th August 2018) was comprehensive and the assessments were consistent with the findings. The review report reflected the written evidence provided prior and after the site-visit and as well the oral evidence provided during the site-visit in the various scheduled interview sessions.

The Board based its decision on the application (19th April 2018) by SFU Vienna, the review report (8th August 2018) and the formal statement of the applicant institution (20th August 2018) to the review report.

Summarizing the results from the assessment of the expert panel:⁴

[1] Have the accountability and responsibilities of the main institution (Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna) and the other location (Faculty for Psychotherapy Science of the Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana) been clearly defined and are they adequate?

³ SFU Ljubljana is formally an accredited independent higher education institution according to Slovenian legislation. The Faculty was institutionally accredited by the National Accreditation Agency in Slovenia (NAKVIS) in 2013. In 2020 SFU Ljubljana has to undergo an institutional reaccreditation according to the Slovenian legislation. The procedure will be conducted by NAKVIS. Since 2013, the Psychotherapy study programmes offered by SFU Vienna have been implemented in SFU Ljubljana. SFU Ljubljana offers only cross-border study programmes (as an implementer of transnational higher education programmes - TNHE) – and currently SFU Ljubljana has no NAKVIS accredited national Slovenian study programmes.

⁴ Excerpts from the review report.

Expert panel review report: "(...) It was clearly stated during the site visit that the Vice Dean of the psychology faculty in SFU Vienna is in charge of the implementation of the study programmes at the *Faculty for Psychotherapy Sciences of SFU Ljubljana*. This was explained clearly and satisfactorily, that the ultimate accountability and responsibilities lies with SFU Vienna. This includes clear statements that SFU Vienna is responsible for the study programme at SFU Ljubljana. This is also supported in the application document, which states for example that the final proof of all staff and student applications are handled by SFU Vienna.

However while in theory this was very clear, the panel felt that not all processes by which this should work in practice were formalized in an explicit manner, for example it seemed that at least some of the documents submitted for the accreditation process had not been properly checked by staff at SFU Vienna, including details of a teaching appointee. On the other hand, the SFU Vienna liaison person for the future psychology programmes in Ljubljana is already experienced in managing a similar responsibility for SFU Milan⁵. The fact that he has successfully managed this position previously made the panel confident in his ability to continue such work in Ljubljana effectively. The liaison person also agreed with the panel that there were a number of informal aspects of the process which needed to become more explicit and formalised, and aspects of the educational culture at SFU Vienna which for the programme to be effective in other locations needed to become more explicit. This includes for the panel a need to be clear over the process by which SFU Vienna monitors and deals with new staff appointments at SFU Ljubljana, and methods of conflict resolution. During the site visit these issues were addressed effectively with the clear statements that in such conditions the final decision lies with SFU Vienna.

The panel has assessed the criteria as *met*.

Recommendation: The panel recommends for further developing the formalization of practices and processes discussed above in addition to statement in Transnational Higher Education cooperation agreement (TNHE cooperation agreement), especially that the responsibility for personnel and staff at SFU Ljubljana belongs in the end to SFU Vienna."

[2] Is Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna able to assert the quality of its study programmes in Ljubljana and exercise its responsibilities?

Expert panel review report: "This section of the report has two aspects. It depends first of all on the current location, site and facilities, and secondly on the clear plan to acquire a new location and improved facilities. (...) As stated in the application and then seen by the panel in the site visit, SFU Ljubljana currently rents a building (...). The application stated that the rental agreement here is coming to an end this year, but the site visit stated that this has now been extended until 2021. In addition, SFU Ljubljana has use of rooms, including a larger lecture hall, at High school Šentvid (...). Detailed plans of the requirements for this were provided during the site visit including two options, one more ambitious than the other, both of which would be a marked improvement on current conditions. The site visit clarified the issue that the Masters programme will not begin until the first cohort of Bachelor psychology students have graduated. The panel therefore needs to assess these future plans as well as whether the current facilities are suitable for implementing the three taught programmes, and later Masters course. (...) The site visit made clear that a new building is needed, the students we were able to question also stated that this would help improve its identity as a university. In particular the library which in its current state is housed in the cellar, would most benefit

⁵ The programmes are implemented in Milano in cooperation with the so-called "Studi Cognitivi".

from the upgrade. SFU Ljubljana is clearly aware of this need for change. The panel also felt that SFU Ljubljana students should be provided with direct VPN connections to the Vienna library. The current system seemed to require a gatekeeper in terms of a staff member who could get readings for students on request. The panel would strongly suggest it would be much more appropriate for students to have direct and open access to SFU Vienna's virtual library through direct VPN connections and ideally in the new premise a dedicated computer lab and student study area.(...) as at the moment SFU Ljubljana is a weekend programme and their use of the classrooms and lecture theatre is only for weekends and evenings (t)he panel requested further documentation to show a detailed plan for the first semester to demonstrate how they will manage logistically to hold all these classes (with limited time for rooms and teaching staff). This was provided and clearly demonstrated that even in existing premises SFU Ljubljana is able to satisfactorily implement the full planned programme. However, it remains uncertain whether the current premises will be sufficient once the second cohort of students in the following year will start their studies. The clarification that the Masters programme will not begin until after the first cohort of Bachelor students have graduated means that by this time the space and time restrictions of the current premises would no longer apply, assuming the move has taken place before then. (...) A final issue which remains less clear is whether, once the new premises have been acquired, SFU Ljubljana will remain an evening/weekend based university, or whether it will offer full time course also during the week. During the site visit it seemed this had not yet been decided. However this seems crucial to let prospective students know in advance what sort of university programme is being offered. In addition there are some concerns about whether it this did change with the new premises how the first cohort of students who begin on the weekend/evening model will be managed effectively.

Overall the panel agreed that the current location is able to offer the required infrastructure in the short term, but in the long run the change in location is necessary. The panel has assessed the criteria as *now partially-met*.

Recommendations: (...) Firstly, that all students are given their own direct VPN connection in order to access journals and books on the virtual library in SFU Vienna.

Secondly that SFU Ljubljana become clearer in their strategy and advertising to future students as to whether they will offer daytime as well as evening/weekend courses especially after the move to new premises.

Thirdly the panel supports the process already begun to search for and move to new premises, ideally enabling a more developed library and computer lab and study area for students as well as wheelchair access (as stated in both the alternative plans for new premises submitted to the panel upon request).

Finally in general the panel supports the aim that SFU Ljubljana has already stated that the new premises offer more facilities for teaching, research and staff offices."

[3] Are organisation, management, and support structures established in the same quality as they are maintained at the main institution? Are adequate support structures available for students seeking advice on scientific, discipline-specific, study-related organisational, or socio-psychological matters?

Expert panel review report: "According to the application, SFU Ljubljana established its system of quality management according the Slovenian Law of Higher Education, and the Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, and

the framework for Quality Management in use in all SFU locations. It was stated in the application and in the site visit that lessons have been learned from the experiences of SFU Milan. All administrative procedures between Faculties of SFU Vienna and study programmes at various locations abroad are done mainly using English allowing for oversight by SFU Vienna. Therefore a high level in the English language is a precondition for all Vienna based and Slovenian staff members. The application acknowledged sometimes the conflict between different national traditions and the European character of the SFU Vienna which continues to build on its experiences of operating in different locations and manage these effectively. (...) The responsibility for this lies clearly with SFU Vienna, which is of utmost importance since graduates will be awarded with an Austrian academic degree. According to both the application and to interviews with students during the site visit, it was clear that adequate support structures were available for students seeking advice on scientific, discipline-specific, study-related organizational, or socio-psychological matters. (...) While the appropriate organisational and management processes are therefore in place, both in the documentation and in practice, further formalization of these procedures would be useful. There was explicit awareness of this and statement to this effect by the liaison person from SFU Vienna to SFU Ljubljana.

The panel has assessed the criteria as *met*.

Recommendation: Recommendations here are minor and generally support the existing direction of SFU Vienna and suggest further formalization of practices especially with further expansion of their programmes when this will be more necessary than it has been as a smaller institution.

[4] Is the national legislation at the site in Ljubljana observed? Are educational traditions and cultural differences, respected – only if and insofar this would not affect the private universities' quality standards? Especially with regard to teaching and learning, including examinations, the students' role in the teaching and learning process as well as in any quality assurance processes? Are the study programmes offered in Vienna (main institution) and the location Ljubljana of uniform quality?

Expert panel review report: "The application document states that SFU Ljubljana's application for the Psychology study programmes have been approved for NAKVIS since April 2016 (in line with Slovenian transnational regulation). (...) The confirmation is based on the regulation of Transnational Highschool Education, which defines the criteria for allowing foreign Universities (Faculties) to implement their accredited study programmes at *Slovenian High School Faculties*⁶ (Universities). (...) The decision is also publicly available in a public record published at NAKVIS website. (...) The criteria for meeting these requirements are clearly stated and the process is clear and transparent.

The panel has assessed the criteria as *met*."

[5.1] Is a sufficient number of qualified scientific staff (permanent and non-permanent) available for all degree programmes?

Expert panel review report: "The study programmes have been documented in the application for the Bachelor and Master courses. For all courses of the programmes the respective teachers have been assigned. For the currently planned implementation of the

⁶ As of the regulation referred to.

programmes a teaching schedule for a starting semester was provided, which showed a sufficient number of qualified scientific staff. Based on the documentation provided the list of qualified scientific staff (permanent and non-permanent) available for the Psychology study programmes could be seen very clearly. This was supplemented with the CVs of all persons involved. Also, the implementation of the programmes for the Winter semester has been provided so the panel could see that the resources are available for the current study programmes and the forthcoming programmes. Clearly defined roles for scientific staff could not be found in the application document or be provided at the site visit, although such roles are defined and categorized in SFUs statute. During the site visit the panel was informed that generally, a division of 40:40:20 (teaching, research, administration) was in place for all staff members. However, it appeared as though this was rather a guideline which had not clearly been formalized or defined. The panel had some concerns about the qualification and research focus of some teaching staff members and the courses they are appointed to teach according to the accreditation application. Notably several appointed staff members for the Psychology programme also teach at the psychotherapy programmes currently offered at SFU Ljubljana. Some staff members therefore gained their PhD in Psychotherapy, rather than Psychology. However, it was pointed out at the site visit that staff teaching core subjects in the Bachelor programme must hold a Master (or equivalent) degree in Psychology, and teaching staff of the Master programme a PhD in Psychology. (...) The panel therefore considers formalized and clear criteria regarding the qualification and the selection of the teaching staff as necessary. Based on the documentation and the information of the site visit the panel concluded that the current staff can be seen as sufficient.

The panel has assessed the criteria as **met**.

Recommendations: The panel recommends to define staff roles/categories in a more formalized and clear way (teacher, researcher, etc.) combined with the formal qualifications for these roles.

The panel recommends that SFU Vienna define guiding criteria for staff categories that are in line with SFU Vienna statutes and Slovenian legal requirements.

Furthermore, the panel recommends that, since SFU Vienna is responsible for the study programmes at SFU Ljubljana, the former ensure that the process for the selection of staff members and the alignment of teachers with courses. SFU Vienna is to be held accountable for staff teaching (and researching) at the foreign location."

[5.2] Does the permanent scientific staff allocated to a consecutive Bachelor/Master model consist of at least one full-time employee with qualifications to be appointed professor and at least one additional full time equivalent allocated to a maximum of three persons with at least a doctoral degree?

Expert panel review report: "According to the accreditation application, a sufficient number of scientific teaching staff will be involved in the Psychology study programmes. For the Bachelor three people (equivalent to two full-time employees) and for the Master also three people (equivalent to two full-time employees) have been appointed. All appointed full time staff members have a PhD degree, however, notably one full time staff member appointed for the Bachelor programme holds a PhD in Psychotherapy, but the equivalent of a Masters degree in Psychology. The study coordinators of the Bachelor and Master programmes are assistant professors, one of which received the assistant professor title from SFU Ljubljana in Psychotherapy. The appointment to the title is in line with Slovenian legislation. During the site visit the procedures regarding the appointment of full time teaching staff to the

appointment to academic titles was explained thoroughly. (...) The panel considers the number of scientific staff members currently allocated for the study programmes as adequate, as the legal requirements are fulfilled. (...)

The panel has assessed the criteria as *met*.

Recommendation: The panel recommends that plans for future staffing focus on recruiting those with a core background in Psychology and likes to repeat its recommendation that the responsibility for personnel and staff at SFU Ljubljana belongs in the end to SFU Vienna."

[5.3] Does the scientific staff in permanent employment teach at least 50% of the classes?

Expert panel review report: "SFU Ljubljana provided an outline of classes and appointed staff members in the Psychology Bachelor and Master study programme. (...) According to the tables provided in the accreditation application, the scientific staff in permanent employment teach at least 50% of classes. The panel is convinced that SFU Ljubljana provided a sufficient outline on the appointment of permanent teaching staff, however it needs to underline that the core responsibility lies with SFU Vienna.

The panel has assessed the criteria as *met*."

[5.4] Is the ratio of permanent scientific staff to students adequate?

Expert panel review report: "According to the additional documents there will be eight teachers out of the permanent scientific staff. The calculation of the applicants show a planned number of 250 students after four years (with a maximum of 50 per year) which means a ratio of 1:31,25. The assumptions are that the number of students will be only 140 after four years which would mean a ratio of 1:17,5. Students at the site visit stated that the teaching staff in the psychotherapy programme is currently very approachable and supportive of students, which further indicates an appropriate staff to student ratio.

The panel has assessed the criteria as *met*."

[6] Are the study programmes offered in Ljubljana included in Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna's quality management system? Do the degree programmes include a regular quality assurance and enhancement process, taking into account also study conditions and programme organization and involving all relevant groups, especially students?

Expert panel review report: "According to the application and additional documentation and information received during the site visit, the study programmes will be included in the existing quality management system at SFU Ljubljana, which is integrated into SFU Vienna's quality management system. It is stated in the application document that the quality management system in place at SFU Ljubljana for the currently existing study programmes has been established in accordance with the Slovenian Law of Higher Education and aligns with the guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area. Furthermore, the staff at SFU Vienna is responsible for ensuring that all quality management procedures also align with Austrian regulations. (...)The panel acknowledges the various measurements taken by SFU to establish quality assurance at the SFU Ljubljana site involving all relevant groups, but according to information received during the site visit, some measurements are

conducted in a rather informal manner. The panel thus recommends further formalization of different quality assurance measurements relating the exchange between SFU Ljubljana and SFU Vienna. According to the documentation and information received at the site visit, regular quality assurance processes are in place at SFU Ljubljana, involving all relevant groups, especially students. At the site visit, current SFU Ljubljana students were able to confirm that course evaluations are currently conducted for every course taught at SFU Ljubljana, as a requirement before students can sign up for respective exams. (...) However, this could not be confirmed by students met at the site visit, who claimed not to have received evaluation results. (...) Each appointed study programme coordinator for Psychology at each of the various SFU locations has to prepare a written summary of student evaluations in English which has to be submitted to the head of the faculty for Psychology at SFU Vienna. (...) The integration of the quality management system at SFU Ljubljana into that of SFU Vienna was confirmed in the documentation and at the site visit.

The panel has assessed the criteria as **met**.

Recommendation: However, the panel recommends to further formalize quality management processes and to provide students with reports of quality assurance measurements, as outlined in the documentation."

[7] Is funding ensured and are the funding sources being transparently documented? Does offering of the study programmes at the additional location Ljubljana lead to a lack of resources and, subsequently, a deterioration in quality at existing main site?

Expert panel review report: "A financial outline of the expenses for the Psychology study programmes at SFU Ljubljana was submitted with the accreditation application. Notably the financing highly depends on the number of enrolled students, as the only income currently expected comes from student's tuition fees, which is expected to be below the expected expenses in the first year of the new programmes. At the site visit, it was confirmed that SFU Vienna carries full financial responsibility for SFU Ljubljana. Furthermore, it was confirmed in the documentation, as well as at the site visit, that enough financial means are available to ensure that all enrolled students will be able to complete study programmes at SFU Ljubljana if they were to expire. According to the documentation and information received at the site visit, the new location at SFU Ljubljana does not lead to a lack of resources at the existing main site. (...) According to the documentation and information received at the site visit, required funding sources for the Psychology study programmes are available.

The panel has assessed the criteria as **met**."

[8] Are facilities and equipment required for all study programmes available?

Expert panel report: "SFU Ljubljana currently has one main building with offices for the Psychotherapy programmes teaching staff, which includes a storage space for books in the basement and a room where classes with up to 20 students can be taught. (...) The building also holds rooms that are used for psychotherapy practice and counselling and the SFU Ljubljana Psychotherapy Outpatient Clinic. At the current premises there are facilities designated to conduct empirical psychological testing. Most classes and lectures are held in the classrooms of a high school located one kilometre from the current main SFU Ljubljana building. Notably neither of the two currently used facilities allows access with wheelchairs. In the documentation it was pointed out that rooms adapted to persons with special needs could be rented at facilities of the University of Ljubljana if required. The books available to

students at SFU Ljubljana are currently kept in a storage room in the basement of the main building. Students have no direct access to this room but have to order books through administrative staff. Students' access to online resources is also limited, as some articles are only available upon request from the administrative staff. (...) The facilities of the nearby high school can only be used on weekends and after 04.00 pm on weekdays. According to the plan submitted by SFU Vienna, all classes are consequently either taught between 04.00- 08.30 pm on weekdays and all day on nearly half of all Saturdays during one semester. At the site visit, a further document was submitted by SFU Vienna stating that new premises for SFU Ljubljana are currently actively being searched for with the help of an outside consultant, for which a proposal is expected by September 2018. In case the Psychology programmes will be accredited, premises of around 1.725 square meters for the use of 15 employees and 300 students will be bought or built. The document also states that the new premises have to be accessible for people with physical disabilities. The facilities and equipment currently available at SFU Ljubljana include several limitations for students and staff. The panel considers the lack of largely independent access to online resources, the library and a designated space to work and study as major deficit. Especially for the Master programme, facilities to conduct empirical psychological testing are advisable. Furthermore, the limited access to the facilities of the nearby high school leads to an execution of the Psychology programmes as evening and weekend programmes. This is not specified in the documentation and, to the knowledge of the panel, is also not advertised to students.

The panel has assessed the criteria as *now partially-met*.

Recommendations: The panel highly recommends expanding students' access to online resources and to allow for use at home through implementing library-to-client connections with full access.

The panel also recommends establishing a library which students can use largely independently and which includes designated spaces where students can work and study.

Taking the submitted documents for a plan of change of facilities into consideration, the panel highly recommends finding premises at which the Psychology programmes can be taught as full-time rather than as weekend and evening programmes.

The panel further recommends allocating facilities to conduct empirical psychological testing."

[9] Is the scientific staff involved in research activities, that comply with international standards? Is the interaction between research and teaching ensured? Will the students be involved into research projects to the extent required type of the degree programme? Are the planned organizational and structural framework conditions sufficient and suitable to implement the research concept at the location Ljubljana?

Expert panel review report: "According to the accreditation application, one programme coordinator is appointed for each of the Psychology study programmes, who will be employed full time. Additionally, two people will be employed half time for the Bachelor and two people half time for the Master programme. The CVs of these persons (and also the other, non-permanent) have been provided and their academic work and research activities can be seen among several, but not all staff members.(...) Current research activities were listed in the documents provided. SFU Ljubljana listed a total of seven current and two planned research projects relevant for the psychology programmes. The current and planned research projects included national and international co-operations, which were mostly, according to

information received at the site visit, initiated through personal ties of research staff involved. (...) During the site visit it was presented that for now current research activities are dependent primarily on funding provided by SFU Vienna, rather than additional funding. According to information received at the site visit, SFU Vienna sees its responsibility to ensure that further research funds will be available for SFU Ljubljana. The presented research outcomes of the research projects which are in a phase where results can be presented nevertheless cannot be qualified as very visible internationally (e.g. presentation at conferences or internationally visible articles). The work of the study coordinators can be seen as visible in the presentation on conferences as well in publication of scientific articles, mostly in the national context. However, the panel sees the currently appointed coordinators for the Bachelor and Master programmes as adequate and capable of implementing research projects with a more international orientation. In sum, the research results are often in Slovenian, so there are few international publications. The students of Psychotherapy Sciences that were interviewed in the site visit stated that students were in general informed about the current research projects of staff members, but that it was uncommon for students to be actively involved in research projects. (...) At the site visit, staff members stressed their aims to enhance the link between research and teaching and to integrate students into research projects. (...) Organizational and structural framework conditions are sufficient based on the documents and the information obtained during the site visit. Ongoing and future research activities are supported by SFU Vienna, even though SFU Vienna could provide even more support in order to ensure that teaching is more research based. This is especially important given the fact that apart from minor national adaptations the curricula is to be implemented according to the content accredited.

The panel has assessed the criteria as **met**.

Recommendations: The panel strongly recommends increasing research publications especially in the international context including renowned international journals. SFU Vienna is held to be accountable and needs to provide support.

Also the panel recommends SFU to further integrate SFU Ljubljana into the network of SFU Vienna to enhance international co-operation and international research. With regard to this, the panel recommends working on a clear SFU Vienna Psychology research strategy including a definition of overall responsibilities."

[10] Are national and international co-operation projects with higher education institutions and/or partners outside the higher education sector in line with the study programmes' profiles envisaged? Do the co-operation projects encourage and support the advancement of the study programmes and the mobility of students and staff?

Expert panel review report: "The information submitted in the documentation on national and international co-operation was limited. No aims, strategies or formalized agreements with national or international institutions were included in the documentation. Most projects and co-operations were related to Psychotherapy. However, it was pointed out at the site visit that legally no clear legal distinction between Psychotherapy and Psychology is made in Slovenia. The national co-operations listed were mostly related to research and internships. (...) Upon request, an extensive list of "internship partners" was provided, listing institutions at which students can possibly conduct an internship as a compulsory part of their studies. The information on international co-operation simply consisted of a list of institutions, but no information on the type of co-operation intended with the institutions. At the site visit, it was stated that several co-operations are largely based on individual relations or links of staff

members with institutions. Other SFU locations in Vienna, Linz, Berlin, Milano and Paris are also listed as co-operation partners. (...) As the Psychology programme of SFU Vienna is not part of the ERASMUS network, neither is the programme at the location in Ljubljana. International student mobility is thus limited to SFU Vienna. A research project of SFU Vienna on the children of the Balkan wars was mentioned at the site visit as possible project for co-operation with SFU Ljubljana, although it remained unclear which role SFU Ljubljana would play in this project. Although SFU Vienna operates at several locations, the panel had the impression that the added value of these location appears to be limited at SFU Ljubljana, especially for students. Additionally, other national and international co-operations listed appear to lack formality.

The panel has assessed the criteria as **met**.

Recommendations: The panel recommends SFU Vienna to further integrate SFU Ljubljana into the network of SFU Vienna to enhance international co-operation and thereby make use of already existing resources.

The panel also recommends formalizing agreements with national and international co-operation partners.

Furthermore, the panel recommends to work towards the acceptance of the SFU Vienna Psychology programme into the ERASMUS network to increase options for student mobility."

Summary and final assessment⁷

The panel has no fundamental objections for AQ Austria to provide accreditation based on the documentation, site visit, and requests for further information. SFU Ljubljana and SFU Vienna have clearly demonstrated their commitment to quality provision of Bachelor and Master programmes in Psychology at the new location, and processes are in place to manage this change of location effectively.

Recommendations of the expert panel:

"Firstly, to be more precise on the added value of the new location (for both SFU Vienna but also to the students and teachers for being part of a Europe-wide university).

Secondly, the panel recommends further developing the formalizing process of what have been more informal structures and practices, which will become more important as the Sigmund Freud Private University expands. In particular it is crucial that the overall responsibility lies with SFU Vienna for academic quality, implementation and staffing of the SFU Ljubljana psychology programme. The psychology programme is in effect a single programme of SFU Vienna offered at different locations. The specific links and ties between SFU Vienna and SFU Ljubljana should be clear, formalised and visible, for both staff and students.

Thirdly, the panel strongly recommends that SFU Ljubljana ensures clarify for students (and teachers) as to what time of programme is being offered, specifically in regard to full-

⁷ The following recommendations by the expert panel are to be understood as summarizing final recommendations. (see published report of the panel).

time/part-time, and weekend/evening or day courses. This partly depends on their new premises but also on their overall strategy and what sort of students they hope to enroll.

Fourthly, the panel recommends that SFU Ljubljana works towards expanding and developing national and international cooperation with scientific, academic, higher educational and professional institutions, both with the SFU network and beyond.

Finally the panel strongly recommends that SFU Ljubljana moves to the new planned premises as soon as is practical.

Overall, the panel is pleased to be able to approve the implementation of the psychology programme at Bachelor and Masters level of SFU Vienna in the new location of SFU Ljubljana, and believes that all issues concerning this have been adequately addressed."

In its formal statement the applicant institution thanked the expert panel for the review. SFU Vienna stated, that the expert panel acted, "[...] *very thoughtful and – in relation to the difficulties regarding the implementing of sustainable research structures in the context of an, in terms of the location in Slovenia, yet very young university complex – very knowledgeably assessment signifies a big chance for the whole Faculty of Psychology to secure previous achievements and to further develop.*"

The applicant institution addressed the individual recommendations and out-lined in what way recommendations will be or already have been addressed.

Reasoning for the decision of the Board:

In the summary of the outcomes of the assessment (review report) and the formal statement of the applicant institution, the Board concluded that the review report was comprehensive and the assessment was comprehensible and consistent with the findings.

However, contrary to the review panels' assessment, with reference to the applicant institution's opinion, the assessment has been amended in three aspects. The Board decided to amend the following assessment areas (foci):

- [2] Is Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna able to assert the quality of its study programmes in Ljubljana and exercise its responsibilities?

and

- [8] Are facilities and equipment required for all study programmes available?

from "partially met" into "met".

The Board came to this amendment since the applicant institution has underlined in its formal statement that measures have already been taken which enable students (also currently students from the BA/MA study programmes Psychotherapy Science of SFU Vienna at the SFU Ljubljana) to have a location-independent online access to the library of the SFU Vienna. In addition, the applicant institution has underlined, that also initial steps have been taken regarding SFU Ljubljana's need for new premises. Additionally, the Board had referred to a finding provided in the review report, according to which SFU Ljubljana, has already relevant steps taken (e.g. definition of needs and requirements for new premises and communication

with real estate professionals etc.) in order to overcome the current situation in a timely manner.

In addition, the Board decided to amend the assessment provided by the review panel in the following aspect:

- [1] Have the accountability and responsibilities of the main institution (Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna) and the other location (Faculty for Psychotherapy Science of the Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana) been clearly defined and are they adequate? (§ 14 (5) d)

from "met" into " partially met".

In the summary of the review report and the formal statement provided, but as well with regard to the various recommendations issued under e.g. 1; 5.1; 5.2, the Board asks for a better formalization and explicit determination of processes respectively responsibilities regarding the question of final and overall responsibility of SFU Vienna for the teaching and research staff (selection / appointment / teaching assignments / research). The Board decided to amend the recommendation [1]

"The panel recommends for further developing the formalization of practices and processes discussed above in addition to statement in Transnational Higher Education cooperation agreement (TNHE cooperation agreement), especially that the responsibility for personnel and staff at SFU Ljubljana belongs in the end to SFU Vienna."

into a *condition*:

„Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna is demonstrably responsible for the selection of teaching and research staff. Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna submits a concept within nine months after the decision enters legally into force, from which it can be deduced, in what kind of responsibilities regarding teaching and research staff (selection / appointment / teaching assignments / research) between the Faculty of Psychotherapy of Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana and the Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna are regulated."

As stated above, the fulfilment of this condition must be documented in writing within nine months dated from legal force of the decision (30th August 2019) and is subject to assessment by AQ Austria. In case of non-fulfilment, the accreditation will be withdrawn according to para. 24 section 9 HS-QSG.

5 Annex

- Report of the expert panel (8th August 2018)
- Formal Statement by SFU Vienna (20th August 2018)