



Agentur für
Qualitätssicherung
und Akkreditierung
Austria

Review Report of the Expert Panel to Accreditation of a new location for two study programmes:

Change of location where the degree programmes Bachelor/Master Psychology are provided and change of language (German > Slovenian); According to §§ 12 (1) 8 and 12 (1) 10

pursuant to section 7 of the Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (PU-AkkVO 2015)

Vienna, 08th August 2018

Table of Contents

1 Principles for the procedure	3
2 Short information on the accreditation application for the modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of two study programmes	4
3 Explanatory notes of the experts	6
4 Statements and assessments based on the assessment criteria pursuant to PU-AkkVO 2015	7
5 Summary and final assessment	20
6 Reviewed documents.....	21

1 Principles for the procedure

Higher education in Austria

The Austrian higher education system currently comprises:

- 21 public universities;
- 13 private universities, the providers of which are private entities, which have been publicly recognised through accreditation
- 21 universities of applied sciences; the providers are either institutions organised under private law which are subsidised by the state or accredited public entities;
- the university colleges of teacher education are provided by the state or private institutions that have been publicly recognised through accreditation;
- the philosophical-theological higher education institutions are provided by the Catholic Church;
- the Danube University Krems is a state university for postgraduate further education, its structure corresponds to a great extent to public universities;
- the tasks of the Institute of Science and Technology – Austria are the appreciation and advancement of new fields of research as well as the post-graduate education in the form of PhD and post-doc programmes.

In the winter semester of 2017¹ around 303.790 students were studying at public universities (including the Danube University Krems). Furthermore, approximately. 51.522 students were inscribed for a degree programme at a university of applied sciences and approx. 13.530 students at a private university.

External quality assurance

Pursuant to the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (german: HS-QSG), public universities must have their internal quality management system certified in the framework of an audit procedure every seven years. There are no legal or financial consequences linked to the certification decision.

Private universities must undergo an AQ Austria-coordinated institutional accreditation procedure every six years. After twelve years of uninterrupted accreditation, the accreditation can be awarded for twelve years at a time. If in the meantime degree programmes or certificate university programmes leading to an academic degree are set up, they also require accreditation.

Universities of applied sciences must have their initial institutional accreditation renewed after six years. After that, they switch to the audit system. The accreditation status is, however, linked to a positive certification decision following the audit procedure. Initial accreditation is required for each degree programme before it may be offered.

¹ As of April 2018 (source Statistic Austria / unidata). Unlike the data available for public universities, the data for universities of applied sciences do not include non-degree seeking students. At public universities 278.039 ordinary students have been enrolled for the WS 2017/18.

Accreditation of private universities and their degree programmes

In Austria, private universities wanting to operate as higher education institutions require institutional accreditation, which has to be renewed on a regular basis. In addition to the institutional accreditation, each degree programme to be offered by the private university requires prior accreditation. Furthermore, changes relevant to accreditation require approval by an administrative decision. Therefore an application for modification of the administrative decision on accreditation needs to be filed. The Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria) is responsible for accreditation.

AQ Austria conducts all accreditation procedures pursuant to the Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities² (PU-AkkVO 2015). Furthermore, the procedures conducted by the Agency are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.³

AQ Austria appoints experts for the evaluation of accreditation applications. On the basis of the application documents and following a site visit at the applicant institution, the experts draw up a joint review report. The Board of AQ Austria then makes its accreditation decision on the basis of the review report and taking into consideration the applicant institution's comment. If the statutory prerequisites for accreditation are met and the qualitative requirements are satisfied, the submitted degree programme may, by administrative decision, be accredited. In case of a modification of an administrative decision or an extension of an accreditation, accreditation may be granted under conditions.

The Board's administrative decision has to be approved by the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Research prior to its entry into force. After the procedure has been completed, a report on the outcome of the procedure as well as the expert report shall be published on the websites of AQ Austria and the applicant institution.

The legal bases for the accreditation of degree programmes at private universities are the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (HS-QSG)⁴ as well as the Private Universities Act (PUG)⁵.

2 Short information on the accreditation application for the modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of two study programmes

Information on the applicant institution	
Applicant institution	Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna
Legal status	Company with limited liability (German: GmbH)

² Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (PU-AkkVO 2015)

³ Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)

⁴ Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (HS-QSG)

⁵ Private Universities Act (PUG)

Initial accreditation	2005
Date of last extension of accreditation	2015
Site(s)	Vienna, Linz, Berlin, Milan, Paris, Ljubljana
Number of (active) students	3.581 ⁶
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)⁷</i>
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)

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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 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 I/A06-143/2015).

Information on the study programmes subject to changes	
Accreditation application for the modification of the administrative decision on the accreditation	<p>Changes relevant to accreditation pursuant § 12 (1) (8) PU-AkkVO 2015: Application for Ljubljana as an additional location for two study programmes (consecutive Bachelor/Master in Psychology)</p> <p>Changes relevant to accreditation pursuant § 12 (1) (10) PU-AkkVO 2015: Application for a new language – Slovenian – for the additional location for for two study programmes (consecutive Bachelor/Master in Psychology)</p>

The accreditation application was submitted by Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna on 11th December 2017. As per resolution of 05th June 2018 the Board of AQ Austria 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)
Harold Carla	Student of Psychology and American Studies at the University of Vienna.	Student expert

On 20th July 2018 the expert panel and the representative of AQ Austria conducted a site visit of the premises at the location in Ljubljana.

3 Explanatory notes of the experts

The following should be taken into consideration concerning whether the new location for the study programmes in Psychology, initially accredited at Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna (short: SFU Vienna) in 2007 and already extended to Linz, Berlin and Milano, should also be implemented at the Faculty for Psychotherapy Sciences of the Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana (short: SFU Ljubljana).

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.

In general the documentation provided in the application and supplementary materials were clear and well structured, although there were a few exceptions, such as the fact that some of the staff *Curriculum Vitae*s were difficult to read. These were provided promptly upon request along with other important information before the site visit. In addition, the application at times used certain terminology in an imprecise way, for example where the word 'accreditation' was used to cover other meanings such as 'recognized by'. Finally, some sections of the report seemed to be less well developed and checked than others, in particular those involving national and transnational cooperation. However, the necessary clarifications were given during the site visit and in further supplementary documents provided.

The site visit itself was conducted in an open interview atmosphere that the panel found very helpful. As discussed in more detail below, in general while the application as a whole was a strong one, the panel felt a need for the formalization of some of the informal personal agreements currently in practice, and therefore the review panel issues some recommendations as seen below which make it clear that SFU Vienna has the core responsibility in final decision making.

The site visit demonstrated that lessons were being learned from other locations where the SFU Vienna Psychology programme is currently being implemented, including Milan and Berlin, and thus it was clear that both SFU Vienna and SFU Ljubljana are aware that the change of location involves an ongoing process of cooperation and development which starts once the accreditation process is finished, rather than ends.

4 Statements and assessments based on the assessment criteria pursuant to PU-AkkVO 2015

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? (§ 14 (5) d)

Statement and Analysis

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 Milan⁸ 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.

Assessment

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.

4.2 Is Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna able to assert the quality of its study programmes in Ljubljana and exercise its responsibilities? (§ 14 (5) d)

Statement and Analysis

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. The panel here needs to deal with both of these simultaneously, as it the implementation of the new Bachelor programme (and later consecutive Masters programme) will likely begin in the current premises before moving to the new ones. As stated in the application and then seen by the panel in the site visit, SFU Ljubljana currently rents a building Rovšnikova 2, 1210 Ljubljana - Šentvid. 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 (Prušnikova ulica 98, 1210 Ljubljana-Šentvid), a walkable distance from SFU's headquarters building (1 km). It is clear that both the owners of the current main premises and SFU Ljubljana would like to move soon to new premises. 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. These plans were not clearly stated in the initial application but the panel requested

⁸ The programmes are implemented in Milano in cooperation with the so-called "Studi Cognitivi".

this and SFU Ljubljana provided explicit and satisfactory proposals and demonstrated their clear intention for this move and their awareness of its necessity of doing so within a short time frame. 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 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.

The panel had some concerns whether the current premises could deliver the full programme planned with the three programmes (four in future once the Masters in psychology begins). This is especially true 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. The 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. SFU Ljubljana therefore dealt with this issue to the satisfaction of the panel. 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.

Assessment

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

Recommendation

While the panel decided these criteria have been met, there are the following 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.

4.3 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? (§ 14 (5) d and § 17 (1) m)

Statement and Analysis

According to the application, SFU Ljubljana established its system of quality management according to 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 application and the site visit stated that each case is processed by Vienna staff to assure it fits with Austrian requirements as well as local Slovenian ones. 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. During the site visit, students stated clearly that they felt supported by teachers and staff felt secure within the structure and seemed to know where to go for particular requirements. 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.

Assessment

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.

4.4 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? (§ 14 (5) e)

Statement and Analysis

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). Furthermore the recognition of Austrian diplomas that students of SFU Ljubljana graduate with is certified by the Slovenian ENIC-NARIC Centre, which has been stated in the application will be recognized without objection (as the Psychotherapy Sciences programmes have already been recognized). It is stated that AQ Austria's accreditation process is recognized by the Slovenian ENIC-NARIC Centre (as regulated by Slovenian transnational regulation). The annexes to the application document state that since January 2017 NAKVIS has confirmed that SFU Ljubljana can offer, in addition to the Bachelor/Master study programmes Psychotherapy Sciences, the Bachelor and Master study programme in Psychology which are accredited and implemented at SFU Vienna. 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*⁹ (Universities). The confirmation was given to SFU Ljubljana in February 2017 (NAKVIS decision no. 6033-4 / 2015/9) on the enrolment of a higher education transnational education contract concluded between SFU Ljubljana and the SFU Vienna for the implementation of Bachelor and Master programme in Psychology at Faculty of Psychotherapy Science of the Sigmund Freud University in Ljubljana). The decision is also publicly available in a public record published at NAKVIS website.

Based on the documentation provided in the application and annexes, and further questioning during the site visit, it is clear that SFU Ljubljana have been carefully pursuing all necessary national Slovenian legal requirements, in addition to those of SFU Vienna and Austrian requirements. The criteria for meeting these requirements are clearly stated and the process is clear and transparent.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

⁹ As of the regulation referred to.

4.5 Staff

4.5.1 Is a sufficient number of qualified scientific staff (permanent and non-permanent) available for all degree programmes? (§ 17 (2) a)

Statement and Analysis

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 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 acknowledges that SFU Vienna has implemented a social- and cultural science focused approach to Psychology, which intersects with Psychotherapy, but nonetheless sees the importance of appointing staff members with a clear focus on Psychology for core psychological subjects. The staff 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.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

Recommendation

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.

4.5.2 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? (§ 17 (2) b)

Statement and Analysis

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 title of assistant professor, associate professor and full professor is awarded to a holder of a doctorate who has demonstrated appropriate educational skills. The appointment to the title of assistant professor is possible if the candidate fulfills special qualitative and quantitative conditions in addition to common and general conditions in line with Slovenian legislation. According to Slovenian legislation assistant professors are appointed for five years. The procedure was effectively explained to the panel.

The panel considers the number of scientific staff members currently allocated for the study programmes as adequate, as the legal requirements are fulfilled.

However, as previously mentioned, based on available information from the documents and site visit, the planned staff, only partly have background in psychology.

Assessment

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.

4.5.3 Does the scientific staff in permanent employment teach at least 50% of the classes? (§ 17 (2) c))

Statement and Analysis

SFU Ljubljana provided an outline of classes and appointed staff members in the Psychology Bachelor and Master study programme. This outline has been further supported with an additional document providing a detailed schedule on classes taught during the first semester in which the Bachelor in Psychology study programme will be implemented. 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.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

4.5.4 Is the ratio of permanent scientific staff to students adequate? (§ 17 (2) d)

Statement and Analysis

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.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

4.5.5 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? (§ 14 (5) d and § 17 (3) a-c)

Statement and Analysis

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 application document stated that all relevant documents from SFU Vienna for quality assurance, such as exam regulations, teaching evaluations or regulations on the appointment of staff and professors were translated into English. Thus, the administrative staff at both locations is required to have profound English skills to enable communication between SFU Vienna and SFU Ljubljana.

According to the accreditation application and information received at the site visit, regular quality assurance processes are planned for the psychology programmes at SFU Ljubljana. The documentation provides an outline of regular quality assurance procedures, such as "Employee appraisal meetings", "Team meetings", "Regular meetings between the head of the local department, the head of department's administration and students' representatives" or "Regular meetings of the heads of local departments with the heads of the Faculty of Vienna". 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. In the self-documentation, SFU states that "Students, teachers and other staff are informed with self-evaluation results on annual basis." However, this could not be confirmed by students met at the site visit, who claimed not to have received evaluation results.

Additionally, students who were members of the local student representatives confirmed that their involvement in several structural levels at SFU Ljubljana and stated that their contributions regarding feedback on teaching staff were taken seriously.

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.

Regular quality management and enhancement tools involving all relevant groups, especially students, are planned for the psychology programmes at SFU Ljubljana. 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.

Assessment

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.

4.6 *Funding*

4.6.1 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? (§ 14 (5) d and § 17 (4) a)

Statement and Analysis

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. No teaching staff from SFU Vienna will teach in the Psychology programmes at the SFU Ljubljana location and it was stated at the site visit that responsibilities for the SFU Ljubljana location are clearly allocated within the head of the Psychology faculty at SFU Vienna.

According to the documentation and information received at the site visit, required funding sources for the Psychology study programmes are available.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

4.7 *Infrastructure*

4.7.1 Are facilities and equipment required for all study programmes available? (§ 17 (4) b)

Statement and Analysis

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. Notably, this is also the only room where students can work independently, when no classes are held, on SFU Ljubljana facilities. 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. Students can only log onto most online sources through the SFU Ljubljana network with their own devices on the premises of SFU Ljubljana, where no designated work places for students exist. Only one computer is available for the use of students.

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.

Assessment

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

Recommendation

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.

4.8 *Research and development*

4.8.1 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? (§ 17 (5) a-d)

Statement and Analysis

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. As several staff members also teach at the SFU Ljubljana psychotherapy programme, several staff members work on the intersection between psychotherapy and psychology, which is also reflected in their research and publications.

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. The focus of this work is broad and can be found in different areas, e.g. from personality disorders to more economically oriented coaching research. 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. It appears as though there are currently no paid student positions in place or planned at SFU Ljubljana. At the site visit, staff members stressed their aims to enhance the link between research and teaching and to integrate students into research projects. When staff were informed about the issue that students in the psychotherapy programme currently appeared to be hardly involved, it was pointed out that a larger proportion of students in the psychotherapy Master programme were involved in research projects and that the interest for research activities might be different between psychotherapy and psychology students.

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.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

Recommendation

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.

4.9 National and international co-operation:

4.9.1 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? (§ 17 (6) a-b)

Statement and Analysis

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. Two research projects with the Faculty of Education of the University of Ljubljana are currently in preparation. 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. However, the extent to which students benefit from this co-operation appears limited. According to information received during the site visit, it is possible for SFU Ljubljana students to complete an exchange term at SFU Vienna, but not at other SFU locations, as study programmes there are not offered in English. 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.

Assessment

The panel has assessed the criteria as met.

Recommendation

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.

5 Summary and final assessment

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.

The panel does however have the following recommendations:

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-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.

6 Reviewed documents

- Application document as of 19 April 2018 (initial submission version as of 11 December 2017; two rounds of clarification and corrections were needed).
- Additional requested documents prior to site-visit as of 13 July 2018, 17 July 2018 and 19 July 2018 (requested information were relevant for the following topics:
 - More legible (e.g. not scanned documents) CVs for four of the staff members. Comprehensible description/overview according to which an assessment of criterion § 17 (2) can be supported especially with regard to § 17 (2) lit b. (e.g. information on Slovenian regulation and criteria regarding the appointment to academic titles)
 - All additional documents received during site-visit as of 20 July 2018 (including an updated CV of one staff member, and an outline of requirements for new premises)
 - Additional documents requested during the site-visit and received after the site-visit as of 26 July 2018, including:
 - Plan (logistics, staffing, schedule etc.) for the first semester – (joint description Bachelor/Master in Psychotherapy Sciences and Bachelor in Psychology – the Master in Psychology is intended to start consecutively.)
 - List of internships in non-HEI institutions for psychology (out of the existing list for Bachelor/Master in Psychotherapy Sciences, suitable for Bachelor/Master in Psychology) and further information on what prospective interns will do at/during the internships.