

An das Board der  
Agentur für Qualitätssicherung  
und Akkreditierung Austria  
Renngasse 5, 4. OG  
1010 Wien

Wien, 20.08.2018

Betreff: **GZ: I/A06-37/2018**  
**Stellungnahme zu Gutachten**  
Abänderung der Akkreditierung des Bachelorstudiums  
„Psychologie“ und des Masterstudiums „Psychologie“ am  
Standort Ljubljana der Sigmund Freud PrivatUniversität  
Wien GmbH

Sehr geehrtes Board der AQ Austria,

im Anhang zu diesem Schreiben übermitteln wir die Stellungnahme zum  
Gutachten vom 09.08.2018.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Sigmund Freud  
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## **Statement**

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 provided and change of language  
(German – Slovenian)

Firstly, thanks are given to the reviewer-team for the basically positive evaluation of the proposal and their critical-constructive recommendations for the realisation of the objective project. Below, the reviewer-team's suggestions and recommendations on the specific assessment criteria will be answered point by point.

### **ad 4.1**

As extensively discussed during the on-site visit of the reviewer-team and appreciatively represented by the report of the reviewer team, the Faculty of Psychology of the SFU Vienna collected exhaustive experiences in the management of the conduction of the SFU-Psychology-Programme at a dislocated study branch, in another language and within a context that is considerably different from the Austrian research and university policy by the branch establishment in Milan during the past three years. By the cooperation with the Milan colleagues, a good piece of various arising administration procedures and decision-making processes on questions of quality management regarding teaching and research have been formalised by now. Just as with Milan, by the implementation of a Psychology-Department at SFU Ljubljana, the final responsibility regarding any issues affecting the academic staff (and with it self-evidently also replacements and appointments) as well as the awarding of external lectureships will rest on the Faculty Management in Vienna. At this place and once more, it shall be explicitly pointed out that the Faculty of Vienna specially installed the position of a Vice-Dean who is exclusively charged with tasks regarding the implementation of quality standards of

the Faculty of Psychology at the dislocated branches. The reviewer's recommendation regarding the relevant formalisation of diverse procedures will, in any case, be taken into account for the collaboration during the implementation of the Psychology-Programme at the branch in Ljubljana.

#### **ad 4.2**

ad 1) Independently from the outcome of the current accreditation process, the change regarding the access to the SFU licenced online library resources has already been arranged. Differently from the representation in the review report (p. 9), a direct (i.e. without a required gatekeeper) access was also previously possible. Nevertheless, this access is IP-bound, that means that it is available only at computers with an internet connection to the local SFU network (within the SFU building). The responsible technical commission has already been charged to work-out a solution for students of Ljubljana to provide them with an at-home-access to the library-system.

ad 2) The SFU-Ljubljana so far provided the study programmes of Psychotherapy Sciences extra occupationally, that means by a weekend-study whilst keeping up work-employments of students. Concerning the Study of Psychology, a full-time-study, and that finally means a daytime-study that is offered as distributed over the course of the whole week, is intended. However, the implementation of such a programme requires an early move to a new building.

ad 3) Moving to a new building shall and will allow to arrange adequately sized rooms for installing a library, workspaces for students that are provided with computers and finally also for setting up test-rooms resp. an experimental laboratory.

#### **ad 4.3**

In relation to the necessity of an advancing formalisation of management- resp. organisational-procedures, please see the statement under point "ad 4.1".

**ad 4.5.1**

In relation to the members of the qualified scientific staff, it has to be reminded that there is no distinct Department of Psychology at SFU Ljubljana yet. By the development of the department, also the existing staff categories of the SFU Vienna need to be applied and implemented.

However, here it must be pointed out that the staff categories of the Faculty of Psychology are currently undergoing a phase of reshaping. By the decision of the Academic Senate of 22.6.2018, the new staff category "Associate Professor" has been incorporated in the constitution of the Private University. The commitment of this position to specific qualification criteria that are to be resolved by the Faculties, allows the Faculty of Psychology to reorganise academic positions according to the Anglo-Saxon model (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Full Professor). Simultaneously – and given an agreeing consensus in the Faculty Conference – the categories "Junior" and "Senior Lecturer" resp. "Senior Scientist" will be implemented with according contractual teaching duties and research tasks in place of the old designation "Research Associate" ("Universitätsassistent"). Self-evidently, these differentiations and with it the accompanied job/task descriptions will also be mandatory for the staff of the Department of Psychology at the SFU Ljubljana.

At this place and once more, it shall be explicitly pointed out that – regarding the recruiting of the academic staff resp. the awarding of external lectureships – the Faculty of Psychology in Vienna is the final decision-making authority.

**ad 4.5.2**

It shall be reminded that the SFU Vienna, starting from the winter's term 2007/08, introduced a programme of Psychology on the grounds that both areas – Psychotherapy Sciences and Psychology – are emphasised as independent from each other, i.e. as autonomous academic/scientific disciplines. The same acknowledgement now also leads the development of the Psychology in Ljubljana. On the other hand, it must be proceeded from the established, and currently, solely the study of Psychotherapy Science is established. Given a positive outcome of the accreditation process, the Faculty of Vienna will in any case encourage the

development of a Psychology, that will – just as in Vienna and by all possible forms of cooperation – clearly distinguish its self-concept, its culture and its aims and goal in teaching and research from the activities and undertakings in Psychotherapy Sciences. Indeed, herein the selection of the staff is a crucial instrument as the reviewers stressed. As the final responsibility regarding all staff issues rests in Vienna, an adequate selection can be guaranteed according to the interests of the discipline of Psychology in the future.

#### **ad 4.5.5**

Once more, it shall be repeated that the final responsibility regarding issues of quality management rests on the Faculty Management in Vienna. Additionally, it should be pointed out that within the area of competence of the Faculty of Psychology, the writing of reports on the outcome of student's evaluations of all study branches that established Psychology Programmes is mandatory. Self-evidently, this practice will also be adopted for the future Department of Psychology in Ljubljana.

#### **ad 4.7**

The recommendations stated under point 4.7 have already been addressed above (under point 4.2, 1 to 3): Students will soon be provided with the at-home-access to online library resources; by moving to a new building, working-spaces for students in an adequately sized library as well as openly available working rooms provided with computers will be arranged; above that, moving to a new building will also allow to install test-rooms for empirical works/studies within Psychology. In accordance with the reviewer's recommendations, the Study of Psychology will be implemented as a fulltime-study (daytime-study) after the occupation of a new building the latest.

#### **ad 4.8**

Under the present starting situation at SFU Ljubljana, the reviewer-team brings to account that previously within the local context of the study programmes of

Psychotherapy Sciences, particularly research projects at the interface between Psychotherapy and Psychology have been developed. The fact that the genuinely psychological research projects and proposals are at first dependent on the individual research interests of those colleagues who are supposed to cooperate in the future development of the teaching and research programme within Psychology, represents the usual starting point from which sustainable research structures can be developed. As the reviewers' stress, firstly, it will be a task of the Faculty of Psychology in Vienna to ensure start-up funding for projects resp. third party funded project-proposals, within which the academic working resources of the researches are to be locally bundled.

The Faculty in Vienna developed a clearly accentuated research profile within the areas of Cultural Psychology and Science Studies resp. Clinical Psychology and Media during the – meanwhile – eleven years and by the close cooperation with later founded university branches, especially, however, with the Department of Psychology in Berlin. By the proceeding integration of the Milan colleagues within the research context of the Faculty, also the focus on more clinical researches in the area of the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy was and will be strengthened. At this place, it shall be pointed out that members of the academic/scientific staff at the SFU Milan very closely involve themselves within the international (English-speaking) research context. Within the area of Economic Psychology, we currently work on the construction of an internationally organised research emphasis on Social- and Organisational-Psychology of Family Businesses in the context of research projects with the Stanford University and the Claremont Graduate University.

In succession and for the development of scientific research in the context of a Psychology Programme in Ljubljana it will be possible – just as the reviewers recommend – that the research endeavours of the in-situ colleagues will be step-by-step integrated in the existing international net of scientific research cooperation and research efforts.

Regarding the incorporation of students in teaching, involving the branch of Ljubljana in the – in the meantime as self-evidently established at the Faculty in

Vienna – culture of research-based teaching will indeed be an integral part. Here, examples of collaboratively with Berlin developed projects in courses of Social Psychology and Qualitative Methods can serve as a role model: Students from Berlin and Vienna developed smaller exercise-projects in across-locations-courses and presented them during a joint meeting conference at the end of the consecutive courses and study year.

Basically, the distinct steps for developing sustainable research structures and an internationally interconnected scientific environment are to be planned and implemented by a close cooperation between the Faculty Management in Vienna and local colleagues in Ljubljana. As with all issues of the quality management of teaching, again, the final responsibility for the creation of adequate conditions and structures must rest in Vienna.

#### **ad 4.9**

In accordance with the reviewers' recommendations, adequate conditions regarding the integration of the local research endeavours in the international discipline context are to be developed parallel to the implementation of high-quality teaching operations. The participation in the existing cooperation and networks within the European context of the SFU can only be a first step. In terms of the integration of the SFU in the ERASMUS-network, there must be significant structural improvements at the headquarter in Vienna. The Rectorate and the Senate are informed about the call for action.

#### **ad 5: Summary**

1) Basically, it has to be stated:

The value of the establishment of a new university branch for the Faculty of Psychology firstly consists in an increase in the critical size of the scientific research context. By the implementation of the study programme of Psychology at the various university branches of the SFU, an increase in the number of permanently employed scientifically qualified and scientifically working staff members is linked. Related to the just gained expansion of the accreditation regarding the conduction

of the Study Programme of Psychology in English at the headquarter in Vienna, also the transferring-possibilities between the different locations for students and teachers rise. In the future, the research and teaching network/cluster at SFU can additionally be used for comparative studies all over Europe. For the already existing research-network *Children of the Balkan war*, the SFU Ljubljana quasi offers an in-situ-post. The current running projects within this context are:

**Preparation of a EU-Proposal: „History, Psychology and ‚Politics‘ of the Balkan wars“**

**Scientific Support and Consulting of the Regional Youth Coordination Office RYCO (Tirana)**

2) The reviewer-team's recommendations regarding the formalisation of the cooperation's structures in the quality management of teaching and research will be taken seriously and will be adequately addressed by the Faculty Management, as was stated above. That the final responsibility regarding all issues concerning the implementation of the Studies of Psychology rests on the Faculty in Vienna is a fundamental requirement for the future cooperation with the SFU Ljubljana.



3) The study programmes in Ljubljana will come on offer as full-time studies over the course of the whole week.

4) Building-Up and developing national and international cooperation's networks will be fostered and encouraged by the Faculty of Psychology in Vienna.

5) Renting a new building is directly linked to the positive outcome of the accreditation of the Psychology Programme in Ljubljana. This would signify an important step in the advancement of the local university structures in Ljubljana for the colleagues in Slovenia.

Finally, we want to thank the reviewer-team for the positive review. The 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 recommendations of the reviewers are in any case helpful – also in relation to the already existing cooperation between the Faculty in Vienna and the branches in Berlin and Milan.