



Agentur für  
Qualitätssicherung  
und Akkreditierung  
Austria

Review Report of the Expert Panel to the accreditation procedure for modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of MODUL University Vienna Private University

Accreditation of Nanjing as a new location for study programme:

“Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management”

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

Vienna, 12.05.2017

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# 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 philosophic-theologic higher education institutions are provided by the Catholic Church;
- the Danube University Krems is a state university for postgradual further education, its structure corresponds to a great extent to public universities;
- the tasks of the Institute of Science and Technology – Austria is 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 2016<sup>1</sup> around 308.673 students were studying at public universities (incl. the Danube University Krems). Furthermore, approx. 50.017 students were inscribed for a degree programme at a university of applied sciences and approx. 12.201 students at a private university.

## External quality assurance

Pursuant to the Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (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.

<sup>1</sup> As of April 2017

## 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 Universities<sup>2</sup> (PU-AkkVO). Furthermore, the procedures conducted by the Agency are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.<sup>3</sup>

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 Science, Research and Economy 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)<sup>4</sup> as well as the Private Universities Act (PUG)<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (PU-AkkVO)

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

<sup>4</sup> Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (HS-QSG)

<sup>5</sup> Private Universities Act (PUG)

## 2 Short information on the accreditation application for the modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of study programme

Information on the applicant institution	
Applicant institution	MODUL University Vienna Private University
Legal status	Limited liability corporation (in German: GmbH)
Initial accreditation	30.07.2007
Date of last extension of accreditation	01.01.2015
Site	Vienna
Number of students	584
Accredited degree programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management</li> <li>• Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism, Hotel Management and Operations</li> <li>• Bachelor of Science in International Management</li> <li>• Master of Science in International Tourism Management</li> <li>• Master of Science in Sustainable Development, Management and Policy</li> <li>• Master of Science in Management</li> <li>• Master of Business Administration (certificate university programme)</li> <li>• Master of Business Administration in Sustainable Development and Management (certificate university programme)</li> <li>• Doctor of Philosophy in Business and Socioeconomic Sciences</li> </ul>
Information on the study programme subject to changes	
Name of study programme	Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management
Type of study programme	Bachelor degree programme
ECTS	180
Regular study period	6 Semesters
Maximum intake per year	120
Academic degree	Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management
Study formate	Full time
Language	English
Tuition fee	RMB 75,000
Accredited for the following location(s)	Vienna
Accreditation application for the modification of the administrative	Changes relevant to accreditation pursuant § 12 (1)

decision on the accreditation	PU-AkkVO: Location  Application for Nanjing as an additional location for study programme
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The accreditation application was submitted by MODUL University Vienna Private University on 28.09.2016. As per resolution of 13.12.2016 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
Prof. Dr. Rupert Holzappel	City University of Applied Sciences Bremen	Head of the expert panel, expert from academia
Dr. Axel Jockwer	Entrepreneur	Expert with scientific and practical qualification
Annika Hassur	Fudan University, China	Student expert

On 16.03.2017 the experts and the representative of AQ Austria conducted a site visit of the premises of location in Nanjing, China.

### 3 Explanatory notes of the experts

The assessment procedure is based on the following two premises.

No site visit of the same expert panel at the main institution Modul University Vienna Private University has preceded the site visit in Nanjing, and while the expert panel members thus feel unable to explicitly assess, compare or comment on managerial, organisational, or supportive structures and procedures at Modul University Vienna Private University, they do have, however, certain expectations and practical experiences of academic environments at similar European tertiary education institutions in general, and specifically at public and private universities in the Bologna region. The following documentation of the evaluation and the final assessment of the anticipated collaboration is hence based on documentary evidence as well as on individual and personal expectations, experiences and impressions, as expert panel members of the accreditation process also had time to discuss responsibilities and accountabilities personally during their site visit.

While the expert panel members do not know all the details that would do justice to and provide a fair and just description of Chinese society adequately, they are aware of the existence of political and ideological frameworks that result in economic, legal and cultural differences, requiring not only acknowledgment but genuine contemplation when evaluating, assessing and comparing collaborative study programmes, support facilities and procedures as well as academic environments and their administrative support instruments. These procedural presumptions also encompass any comparison of personal living circumstances and study conditions in general for students in China with those existent in Western Europe.

On the one hand, some of the inequalities and inequities between per se 'identical' study programmes, thus are, due to the aforementioned fundamental and innate systemic differences, for the time being, probably unavoidable and can possibly not be completely eliminated as such. However, on the other hand, it is also the opinion of the expert panel members that issues such as academic freedom, critical thinking, freedom of speech, etc., ought to be (gradually) strengthened. These educational instruments not only permit but also

and foremost foster academic discourse as well as critical analyses of different economic and political systems and their respective perspectives that are inherently embedded or even firmly enshrined in different ideologies. In essence, academia depends on these qualities and their availability, in order to be able to progress and generate new knowledge as a result of research and in order to produce a new generation of capable academics in the form of graduates from any study programme.

In any accreditation process the concept of quality plays a major role. While the term quality may have many different meanings for different people, the members of the expert panel suggest the use of a commonly shared understanding but slightly 'softer' definition and use of the term than usually employed. In the context of this accreditation application, the assessment of the quality of this particular academic study programme and its collaborative delivery is thus based on the expectation that the term and concept of 'quality' stands for a product that is free from defects, deficiencies and any significant, avoidable variations from the original product.

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

### 4.1 Have the accountability and responsibilities of the main institution (MODUL) and the other location (Nanjing) been clearly defined and are they adequate? (§ 14 (5) d)

With respect to regular operational and administrative processes, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Modul University Vienna Private University, Austria, together with its licensed, or rather in the process of being licensed, partner university Nanjing Tech University Pujiang Institute (NJPJI), China, in conjunction with its Modul School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Nanjing, have been clearly and adequately defined and assigned appropriately to the respective partner institution in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document.

According to the aforementioned document, the evaluation of the study programme as well as quality assurance aspects of its implementation and ongoing delivery remain with Modul University Vienna Private University. Quality management at Modul University Vienna Private University resides at three levels. While the Dean for International Programmes assumes responsibility for the overall coordination of quality assurance and quality improvement measures, management determines and prioritizes the strategic relevance of measures to be taken, designating responsibilities to respective quality assurance representatives. Additionally, advisory bodies to be involved in quality assurance strategies, will be determined by management. A quality assurance representative to be appointed by faculty and staff is also mentioned in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document. It is unclear whether this representative will be appointed in Nanjing or in Vienna and where the representative will be located. This aspect requires clarification.

Whilst topics in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document cover a number of issues sufficiently and adequately, ranging from individual teaching responsibilities of academic staff to general quality management measures with regards to the delivery of the study programme, important details of the responsibilities and accountabilities of contractual arrangements between the partners remain rather unclear. For example, there is no mentioning of responsibilities for students' wellbeing and academic progress if, for example, there were any shortfalls in terms of staffing and or financing of the study programme in Nanjing, to name but a few potential risks.

Whilst it is acknowledged that not all possible shortcomings or crises may be anticipated and dealt with in detail, it is the expert panel members' view that contractual agreements and arrangements with regards to the possibility of major negative events and the potential of adverse developments in the future should be in writing and ought to be made transparent for all parties involved and affected, possibly in the form of a crisis management strategy plan. Such a contractual and procedural management plan, based on a risk analysis of possible structural as well as temporary changes, is seen as essential, especially in a partnership that not only faces the 'tyranny of distance' in the form of spatial challenges but also experiences very diverse and sometimes contrary political, cultural, and economic environments, which may be subject to unpredictable changes and unforeseen developments in the future.

It is therefore the view of the expert panel that criterion 4.1 has been met. However, it is therefore also strongly recommended:



- (1) To develop and implement a risk analysis for the study programme, followed by a crisis management strategy. This should be done by taking into account and integrating evolving expectations and actual experiences of the cooperation on a continuous basis.
- (2) To clarify the location of the quality assurance representative for the BBA programme between the main institution and the other location.

## 4.2 Is MODUL able to assert the quality of its study programme in Nanjing and exercise its responsibilities? (§ 14 (5) d)

In the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document the label 'Modul' refers to both Modul University Vienna Private University as well as to Modul School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Nanjing. However, it is assumed that responsibilities of Modul University Vienna Private University with regards to the quality of the study programme in Nanjing are meant, and these linear, one-directional flows of responsibilities are thus being assessed at this stage.

The Quality Management framework at the Modul School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Nanjing is detailed in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document. In this context, the document also mentions the Guidelines of Academic Collaboration between the International Hospitality and Dietary Culture College, Nanjing Tech University Pujiang Institute, Nanjing, China and Modul University Vienna Private University, which prescribe and detail essential regulations and rules (study regulations, exam regulations, admission principles, faculty categories, quality instruments, etc.).

It is the opinion of the expert panel that the **actual adherence** to procedures and guidelines as outlined in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document and specified during their site visit would be **sufficient and adequate for the time being**. The important phrases of the last sentence have been highlighted to emphasize the necessity to compare rules and regulations with actual 'real world' experiences on a continuous basis. A positive match between prescribed guidelines and their application in practice can hence only be established after the commencement of this collaborative partnership. Procedures should thus be assessed and adapted in a cyclic and iterative evaluation process. During the site visit it was also discussed and acknowledged that (limited) modifications, due to different national, political, ideological, legal and cultural conditions and circumstances, are to be expected and may have to be accepted and adopted at present, but could and should be revisited and reassessed in the future.

However, module descriptions and content, programme delivery, exam regulations and staff qualifications, to name but a few quality assurance criteria, are only one side of the coin. In addition to formal academic and administrative frameworks, requirements and procedures, the learning progress and outcomes for individuals (students and staff) as well as all students' general wellbeing are also dependent upon conditions like living environments (e.g. dormitories), students' ability to experience and practice academic freedom, their ability to access a multitude of study material as well as the availability of personal space to learn, study and develop their analytical and critical thinking capabilities, competences and skills, and the general support infrastructure. While the subsequent section 4.3 of this review report addresses primarily 'formal' requirements in terms of organisational, managerial and supportive structures and procedures, the aforementioned points are seen as major criteria of 'quality delivery' and will be addressed notably in section 4.4.

With regards to internal or inherent qualities and formal requirements of the study programme, it is the expert panel members' opinion that Modul University Vienna Private University is able to assert the quality of its study programme in Nanjing and that the assessment criterion 4.2 has hence been met adequately and sufficiently.

**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 sociopsychological matters? (§ 14 (5) d and § 17 (1) m)**

The Application for Accreditation of Study Program document addresses the issue of support facilities and services, predominantly with the description of the already existing Student Services Center (SSC) and its future extended role. According to the accreditation document the SSC will assume a customer focused multi-faceted function with regards to the timeframe as well as its services and its collaboration with other campus units. Accompanying students from the time of recruitment and prospective enrolment till graduation day and career opportunities, administrative, academic as well as social and health issues of students are coordinated by academic and non-academic staff at the SSC to foster the well-being and success of students.

The aforementioned services are, in the expert panels' opinion, described and detailed in a sufficient and adequate manner. However, some questions remain regarding the realization of some of the envisaged services and support mechanisms. In particular, it remains unclear what the ambitious sounding goal of 'holistic growth' as well as the label 'essential life skills' actually mean, what they stand for, and how their development will be encouraged, fostered, cultivated and nurtured. A number of issues that could fall into the categories of holistic growth and essential life skills have already been mentioned, such as academic freedom, critical thinking and scientific discourse of different ideologies, etc.. At this point the expert panel would like to draw the attention to the question of support mechanisms for marginalized and disadvantaged students, and the question of whether or not, and if so, when and how, these disadvantaged students will receive special attention, guidance and support. This could encompass, but is by no means limited to, issues such a barrier free studying infrastructure, financial support mechanisms, etc..

While the assessment criterion 4.3 has been met adequately and sufficiently, it is the recommendation of the expert panel: To establish equal organisation and support structures as in the main institution, provide additional support services and facilities for financially disadvantaged, otherwise marginalized minorities and/or physically challenged/disabled students since national legislation and funding permit so.

4.4 Is the national legislation at the site in Nanjing 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? (§ 14 (5) e)

The expert panel acknowledges that national Chinese legislation differs from European and Austrian law and that legal differences, discrepancies and obligations have to be taken into account when comparing and evaluating accreditation, implementation and delivery processes of study programmes as well as the specific content of such programmes. In the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document legal and cultural differences constitute the basis of discrepancies between the Austrian and the Chinese version of the study programme, its accreditation and its delivery.

The study programme itself, which will be offered as a dual-degree programme, is embedded in the 4-year Bachelor programme that has already been accredited by the Chinese Ministry of Education. It is hence not subject to any additional Chinese or Austrian accreditation procedure or process for that matter. In accordance with Chinese law, a compulsory, preparatory first year of study precedes the actual three year B.A. programme. This first year of study includes subjects and study material that are not part of the original Austrian curriculum.

The Chinese version of the curriculum itself has also required some fine-tuning in order to reflect legal and cultural differences adequately. For example, it makes perfect sense to substitute European law with Chinese business law and international legal regulations relevant for the hospitality sector in China. Also, the Accounting and Management Control I module had to be adapted with respect to Chinese rules and regulations. Other legal differences concern failure and drop out rules, which are specified in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document.

Having outlined and taking into account the expert panels' assessment background in a preamble in section 3 of this document, it nevertheless needs to be stated that during the site visit in Nanjing, a number of deficiencies have come to the attention of the expert panel. These concerns cannot simply be ignored or explained away with cultural or legal differences and shall be specified at this point.

For example, students on the Nanjing Campus commonly live in very crowded dormitories. Concurrently they apparently experience incredibly tight learning schedules with extremely limited or rather virtually close to zero free time as well as only inadequate access to sufficient study facilities and material. This rather harsh sounding statement is based on personal impressions as well as the Chinese students' own evaluation of their study situation and their living conditions. From a purely academic viewpoint, the expert panel was also extremely disappointed to see a very limited number of books only on the university library's bookshelves. Additionally, access to online resources such as the Internet or World Wide Web, is still obviously still very limited or non-existent in China in general. Within the Bologna region, European students are able to access not only the Internet but also online catalogues of library resources via WLAN on any European university campus.

While one could argue that national legislation, educational traditions and cultural differences account for these deficiencies and will not permit immediate change, these, in our view,

restrictive circumstances regarding living conditions and study environments, will neither foster students' academic and personal development or progress adequately nor will these shortcomings promote students' abilities of self-studying, or at least not in the same way, a student in Vienna would experience his or her tertiary education. Such constricting conditions neither take into account students' individual academic needs nor their wishes for privacy or recreational interests.

The expert panels' site visit impressions thus stand in stark contrast with instruments and procedures of student support as detailed in The Student Services Center's (SSC) multi-faceted role has been outlined and evaluated in the previous section (assessment criterion 4.3).

In summary, it should be stated though that, given the circumstances, it would be unfair to assess and interpret the criterion in question as 'not met'. While the expert panel can assume that national Chinese legislation at the site Nanjing is being observed, most of the aforementioned differences resulting in the described deficiencies and variations in comparison to Modul University Vienna Private University, appear to be beyond the control and influence of the main institution.

It is therefore the view of the expert panel members that this criterion has been met.

From the necessity of provision of additional academic resources emerges a condition which will be addressed in the section 4.8 of the review report.

The expert panel recommends at this point:

- (1) To enhance learning quality, provide students with access to a standard office package.
- (2) To improve the interactive learning approach, the staff and students shall be encouraged to use presentations in the classes.
- (3) To make an attempt towards enhancement of the study and living environments.

## 4.5 *Staff* (§ 17 (2) a-d)

4.5.1 Is a sufficient number of qualified scientific staff (permanent and non-permanent) available for the degree programme?

By taking a look at the already existing as well as at the future staff, the expert panel found that there is a complete number of qualified scientific staff, necessary for the operation of the study programme. At the moment there are 4 full-time internal scientific employees for the study programme: one full professor and at the same time Program Area Director, one assistant professor, one senior lecturer and a lecturer.

Additionally the scientific staff includes 4 external part-time lecturers from the Pujiang Institute. By the beginning of the study programme in the academic year 2017/2018 six further part-time lecturers as permanent scientific staff members and two researchers with no teaching responsibility but a focus on research and administrative tasks will be employed.

The given mixture of permanent and non-permanent academic and non-academic staff with different levels and different focuses leads the expert panel to the conclusion that the criterion would be met.

Still the vulnerability of this setup asks for a double-click on the topic: A big part of the workload lies upon the shoulders of the Program Area Director of the BBA-Programme while there is no fallback available. The Program Area Director is responsible for teaching the central courses as well as for a lot of administrative issues and research activities.

While the expert panel had a lot of opportunities to get to know the scientific qualifications of the staff, it was not able to get a proper opinion on the didactical skills neither it could find permanent quality assurance strategy when it comes to pedagogics. By taking a look at the CVs of the resident staff the expert panel is convinced of their didactical abilities but asks for a stronger focus on developing pedagogical issues in a long-term perspective.

For those reasons the expert panel considers this criterion for just partially met. The assessment of the standard 4.5.1 leads to following conditions:

- (1) To assure continuous teaching and research activities in the study programme, sustainable replacement for the Program Area Directors' functions should be developed.
- (2) To enhance the qualifications of the scientific staff, further education on pedagogical and didactical methods of the academic staff should be institutionalised.

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?

The existing permanent scientific team of MODUL School Nanjing consists of 1 full-time professor, 1 full-time assistant professor with a doctoral degree, 1 full-time senior lecturer with a doctoral degree and 1 full-time senior lecturer. The permanent scientific staff for the planned study programme is sufficient and the expert panel sees this criterion to meet the requirements.

4.5.3 Does the scientific staff in permanent employment teach at least 50% of the classes? Is the ratio of permanent scientific staff to students adequate?

The expert panel had the chance to inform themselves about the modular system (11 modules) and the plans for the 6 semesters in detail. The internal-external faculty ratio is 95% in the first year, 63% in the second, 60% in third year and stabilizes at around 56% in the following years. While starting at a very high level in the first year, the requirement to cover at least 50% of the teaching obligation by internal faculty is met and will continue within the next years.

Due to a start with only about 60 students in the first year, a very good student support ratio of 15 students per faculty member is expected in the beginning. The assumed increase in the number of students (maximum intake 120 students per year) will change this relationship to reflect a student support ratio of 30 students per faculty member after 5 years. The respective criterion is met.

The expert panel comes up with a following recommendation: To sustain an adequate quality of support, the permanent scientific staff to students' ratio should be kept beneath the mark of 30 students per faculty member.

**4.6 Quality assurance:** Is the study programme offered in Nanjing included in MODUL's quality management system? Does the degree programme 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)

According to the application documents and information provided at the site visit, the quality assurance of the study programme offered in Nanjing includes regular evaluation of the courses (Course organization, course content, didactics) and teaching staff (teaching style, competency etc.) by the students. The programme coordinators plan to follow the same evaluation procedures as in Vienna.

The evaluation forms will be analyzed in Pujiang Institute. This will be in the responsibility of the "quality assurance representative", appointed from faculty and staff. He/she will coordinate and document quality assurance and quality improvement measurements. After the results have been provided to the dean at IHD of Pujiang Institute, they will be discussed with the lecturers as well as at the virtual semester conference held commonly with the team of Modul University Vienna Private University every semester. The first semester conference is planned for June/July 2017.

Further a close and regular web exchange between the two locations is intended in the future. A fixed schedule or details about the content of those web conferences haven't been disclosed yet. Those feedbacks will give an insight into the programme's quality and faculty development in Nanjing. The Board of Modul University Vienna Private University will receive the aggregated results of the evaluations in the annual quality report. Those annual quality reports shall ensure that the study programme offered in Nanjing is included in Modul's quality management system. It has been further mentioned that lecturers in Modul University Vienna Private University and Modul School Nanjing will be linked together in order to enhance the exchange between teachers in the same field.

Concerning the evaluation of the lectures by the students in Nanjing, the accreditation application documents didn't provide further information about the participation rate from the students or evaluation results from the first semester (fall term 2016) of the Chinese Bachelor programme. However, the interviewed students confirmed during the site visit that they regard the evaluations as useful and they feel confident to answer them truthfully and objectively.

The expert panel considers the criterion 4.6 as met and provides following recommendations concerning the enhancement of the quality assurance of the study programme:

- (1) To enhance the study programmes' evaluation and general quality assurance, the rectorate should involve more staff in quality assurance system.
- (2) To enhance the quality assurance, the Modul University Vienna Private University has to set up a fixed schedule for its joint semester conferences with details about its content.
- (3) To enhance the capacity building, the direct and professional exchange between the staff of Modul University Vienna Private University and Nanjing should commence before the autumn semester 2017.

**4.7 Funding:** Is funding ensured and are the funding sources being transparently documented? Does offering the study programme at the additional location Nanjing lead to a lack of resources and, subsequently, a deterioration in quality at existing main site? (§ 14 (5) d and § 17 (4) a)

The anticipated collaborative partnership is obviously based on business prerogatives. It is assumed that internal rules on financial clearing and payments as well as funding, mentioned in the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document, will hence be sufficient and adequate. Also, the time frame of initially nine years appears to be adequate.

The only concern that could be voiced regarding the issue of funding is the rather short period of registration for private non-enterprises entities, which expires or rather has expired on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2017. The expert panel can only presume that the issuing administration unit, Jiangsu Provincial Education Department, has or will renew and extend the current (expired) registration.

It is therefore the view of the expert panel that this criterion has been met adequately and sufficiently.

**4.8 Infrastructure:** Are the required facilities and the equipment for the study programme available? (§ 17 (4) b)

The International Hospitality Management and Dietary Culture College is a well-equipped institute with facilities as a training hotel, coffee shop, kitchen and wine tasting laboratory for training purposes. For the expected annual intake of approx. 120 students per year, the facilities are sufficient and complete.

Overall the expert panel can state, that there are many working places equipped with computer working-stations available for students at the Jiang Ning Campus (8 computer rooms with 60 working places and each 100 PCs, plus one "Apple room" with 56 Mac computers). The campus hardware is from 2014 and very like up to the needed standards. Every semester the IT-department adapts the PCs to the requirements of the study programmes. Some of the provided software can be used and shared by the students; some other software has to be acquired. There are sufficient teaching rooms according to the self-documentation, however during the site visit it was mentioned by the students that classrooms are too big for the small number of students and therefore, it is more difficult to understand the teachers as well classmates.

The homepage of the planned study programme as well as the homepage of the library and the class registration platform are available only in Chinese language. It is intended to make those available in English, but it should be ideally done until the beginning of the study programme in autumn 2017.

Currently the campus library resources in English in the field of tourism and hospitality management are very limited, although acquisition has already started. It is aimed to increase the library volume up to 2000 titles. Several computers in the library are equipped with VPN to connect to the "home-library" in Modul University Vienna Private University, but this enables students merely to browse through the catalogue. Because of legal reasons students can't download any eBooks online. The subscription for academic journals as EBSCO,

Business Premier, ProQuest have been arranged and will be provided for the students soon. Those sources are considered important to do research on the faculty level and for the preparation of teaching/courses.

During the site visit the expert panel got to know that the students have classes until 8 pm and that the library closes at 9.30 pm, what leads to very limited time for self-study. Students can't study in the classrooms either, because those are closed after class time as well. The only possible solution for the students to do homework or engage in self-studies is studying in their room in the dormitory that they share with 12 students in total. According to the students it is nearly impossible to study in that noisy environment, limiting their study time to the minimum.

All in all, the criterion is considered being partly met under following conditions:

- (1) To ensure the implementation of the programme, the English-speaking class information, registration, as well as the study programme internal communication platform have to be set up latest by the beginning of the second semester of the programme.
- (2) To ensure sufficient equipment for the purpose of both self-study and research, the amount of programme related academic literature has to be expanded significantly, in particular literature in English, latest by the beginning of the second semester of the programme.
- (3) To facilitate the programme curriculum and the research in Economics (e.g. Macroeconomics, Microeconomics) and Business Administration (e.g. RH Management, Supply Chain Management), the library should provide access to several relevant academic journals in this field of study latest by the beginning of the second semester of the programme.

Additionally, the expert panel provides following recommendations:

- (1) To improve the general learning environment and increasing the self-study time of the students, the library opening hours and the class-accessibility should be prolonged or aligned with the course schedule. Also, the living situation in the dormitory could be improved, especially considering the construction of the new campus.
- (2) To assure the interactive teaching style, the classes should be held in classrooms suitable for the class size.

## 4.9 Research and development (§ 17 (5) a-d)

4.9.1 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?

The Application for Accreditation of Study Program document names a broad spectrum of foci for the planned research activities at the Modul School Nanjing:

- Management and Entrepreneurship in the Hospitality Sector in China
- Human Resource Management
- Branding of International and National Companies
- E-Commerce



- Smart Governance in Smart Cities

According to this the expert panel experienced that the scientific staff is interested and involved in research activities with a focus on cultural differences in Human Resources and organization as well as in service satisfaction, loyalty, and heritage and branding. At this point the expert panel states a good mixture of nowadays fields of international scientific interest, but does see neither a proper focus nor a proper strategy on future research activities.

The Application for Accreditation of Study Program document tries to set a focus but stays unclear: "It is expected that particularly topics related to the hospitality industry will be addressed with higher priority. Hence, managerial and entrepreneurial aspects and particularly human resource management and electronic distribution channel issues in the hospitality sector will be picked up preferentially." It seems that the teaching's focus on bridging the gap between top-management and every day execution via a well educated mid-management in charge of the operational level by far beats the will for research that complies with international standards. The expert panel thinks those approaches should be united to ensure interaction between research and teaching. The ambitioned self-set goal of gaining "world leadership" may not be achieved without high quality research projects.

Of course "bachelor students will not do research independently" but the Application for Accreditation of Study Program document stays very vague and does not offer a lot of clear opportunities for students to be involved in research activities.

Despite that, this is just the start of a new programme in Nanjing; nevertheless, the expert panel considers this criterion only to be partially met under following conditions:

- (1) To ensure the international standard of the research, a detailed research plan and a research agenda should be provided.
- (2) To ensure the students' involvement in research projects, the research concept and research map should line out tangible options and scenarios of students' involvement in the planned research activities.

#### 4.9.2 Are the planned organizational and structural framework conditions sufficient and suitable to implement the research concept at the location Nanjing?

Based on the discussions during the site visit the expert panel determines a clear focus on teaching activities in order to establish a new class of management professionals (to match the lack of managers working for big hotel groups in China) rather than on the implementation of a research concept that complies with international standards.

Nevertheless, the expert panel considers the organizational and structural conditions to be sufficient and suitable to implement a research concept after it has been properly developed and established. By taking a look at the variety of academic staff and the individual background of the internal and external teachers as well as at the possibilities on the campus (training hotel, training kitchen, multidisciplinary approach) the expert panel is sure that Modul School Nanjing will be successful. Therefore, the expert panel considers this criterion to be met.

The expert panel recommends: To ensure the implementation of research on international standard, the programme should widen the scientific network worldwide.

**4.10 National and international co-operation:** Are national and international co-operation projects with higher education institutions and/or partners outside the higher education sector in line with the study programme' profile envisaged? Do the co-operation projects encourage and support the advancement of the study programme and the mobility of students and staff? (§ 17 (6) a-b)

According to the Application for Accreditation of Study Program the fundamental idea of this study programme is the inflow of know-how to improve the education of local students. The good international reputation of Modul University Vienna Private University is supposed to help to choose fitting "counterparts" for Nanjing Tech University. However, currently there isn't any tangible national or international academic cooperation planned yet. Instead the main focus is on the cooperation with industry partners for internship placement.

In the upcoming years, an exchange semester abroad to partner universities of Modul University Vienna Private University or partner universities of Modul School Nanjing is planned. Currently there are no specific plans about the time, structure, location, content, organization or funding of the student or staff exchange.

According to the applicant, applying for Erasmus+ is quite difficult and the participation prospective in this programme stayed unclarified during the site visit. The expert panel learned that for most prospective students the option to study or to have the opportunity of an internship abroad is as much important as the degree.

In addition to the cooperation between the academic staff of the Modul University Vienna Private University and MODUL School Nanjing via web, a faculty staff exchange is planned in the future. This faculty exchange could be carried out between Modul School Nanjing and Modul University Vienna Private University or the newly built Modul Campus Dubai.

However, the expert panel considers the criterion as met with following recommendations:

- (1) To ensure the mobility of students, the programme should design, strategize and implement overseas study opportunities for Chinese students.
- (2) To secure the implementation of the academic exchange for students, the strategy, details and procedures of the exchange at Modul School Nanjing should be written down and implemented as soon as possible. The current students have to have the chance to go on an exchange in their second or third year.
- (3) To support the mobility of students, the students from Modul School Nanjing should have the option either to complete the mandatory internship abroad or to study one to two semesters abroad or both.
- (4) To encourage and enable mobility of the students and staff of the Modul School Nanjing, the Modul University Vienna Private University has to examine if Erasmus+ can be applied for and search for additional funding options.
- (5) To enable the mobility of the staff of the Modul School Nanjing, the organization of the faculty exchange has to be conceptualized and in line with student exchange.

#### 4.11 Is the study programme offered in Vienna (main institution) and the location Nanjing of uniform quality? (§ 14 (5) d)

Employing the expert panels' definition of 'quality' as stated in section 3, it is the view of this expert panel that having a product of uniform quality at both sites, may be a future (long-term) goal both parties can strive for, but a Chinese study program equivalent to the Austrian study programme including all conditions, circumstances and aspects cannot be expected at the outset of this partnership programme. Even as a short-term objective, this sounds unrealistic.

If one differentiates between programme content (predominantly the curriculum), programme delivery (predominantly the teaching and learning environment) and programme support facilities, only the curriculum can be attested to be of uniform quality at present. The quality and qualities of other aspects of the programme differ due to mostly unavoidable variations for the time being. Some of these differences have been outlined and specified respectively in section 3. If achieving uniformity regarding all aspects of the study programme is the envisaged long-term goal, the study programme will thus have to be subject to a continuous and successful quality assurance process, which can ensure ongoing improvements with regards to the programme in its totality.

Some concerns as well as conditions regarding programme delivery and support facilities have already been mentioned in section 4.4. There are, however, two further aspects that should be included in the 'uniformity' criterion, at least in the expert panels' view.

First, there is the question of students' qualifications and prerequisites before they enter the programme. In particular, students' competence of English as a second language and the main language of instruction requires special attention. The expert panel was not convinced or satisfied that this particular criterion is of uniform quality. While there is a process in place that governs the assessment and improvement of Chinese students' English language skills, the outcome appears to allow students with insufficient knowledge of the English language to continue studying in this programme. Such a lenient interpretation of language requirements does not appear to be in the best interest of either party. Neither students and lecturers nor the programme as such or the institutions involved for that matter will benefit from 'dragging' students along who lack the competence to study in English.

Second, there is the question of study abroad experiences and the availability of such student exchange programmes for Chinese students as stated in section 4.10. While students of the Modul University Vienna Private University obviously do have the opportunity to study in China, it remains unclear whether or not, and if so, when and how Chinese students can embark on an overseas study experience.

For the above mentioned and detailed reasons, it is therefore the view of the expert panel members that criterion 4.11 has been partially met, with the following condition:

- (1) To ensure the uniform quality of the study programme, the English language requirements for application and enrolment have to be revised and reassessed and set to the level of B1.1 in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR).

## Summary and final assessment

In summary, all members of the expert panel are unanimously of the opinion that the anticipated partnership and programme between the Modul University Vienna Private University, Austria, and its future partner university Nanjing Tech University Pujiang Institute (NJPJI), China, in conjunction with its MODUL School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Nanjing, constitutes a well-planned and organized collaborative effort, which by all means should be beneficial for all business partners as well as for students.

The expert panel recommends the Board of AQ Austria to accredit the Nanjing Tech University Pujiang Institute (NJPJI), China as a new location under the following conditions:

- (1) To assure continuous teaching and research activities in the study programme, sustainable replacement for the Program Area Directors' functions should be developed.
- (2) To enhance the qualifications of the scientific staff, further education on pedagogical and didactical methods of the academic staff should be institutionalised.
- (3) To ensure the implementation of the programme, the English-speaking class information, registration, as well the study programme's internal communication platform have to be set up latest by the beginning of the second semester of the programme.
- (4) To ensure sufficient equipment for the purpose of both self-study and research, the amount of programme related academic literature has to be expanded significantly, in particular literature in English, latest by the beginning of the second semester of the programme.
- (5) To facilitate the programme curriculum and the research in Economics (e.g. Macroeconomics, Microeconomics) and Business Administration (e.g. RH Management, Supply Chain Management), the library should provide access to several relevant academic journals in this field of study latest by the beginning of the second semester of the programme.
- (6) To ensure the international standard of the research, a detailed research plan and a research agenda should be provided.
- (7) To ensure the students' involvement in research projects, the research concept and research map should line out tangible options and scenarios of students' involvement in the planned research activities.
- (8) To ensure the uniform quality of the study programme, the English language requirements for application and enrolment have to be revised and reassessed and set to the level of B1.1 in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR).

Furthermore, the expert panel makes the following recommendations:

- (1) To develop and implement a risk analysis for the study programme, followed by a crisis management strategy. This should be done by taking into account and integrating evolving expectations and actual experiences of the cooperation on a continuous basis.
- (2) To clarify the location of the quality assurance representative for the BBA programme between the main institution and the other location.
- (3) To establish equal organisation and support structures as in the main institution, provide additional support services and facilities for financially disadvantaged,



otherwise marginalized minorities and/or physically challenged/disabled students since national legislation and funding permit so.

- (4) To enhance learning quality, provide students with access to a standard office package.
- (5) To improve the interactive learning approach, the staff and students shall be encouraged to use presentations in the classes.
- (6) To make an attempt towards enhancement of the study and living environments.
- (7) To sustain an adequate quality of support, the permanent scientific staff to students' ratio should be kept beneath the mark of 30 students per faculty member.
- (8) To enhance the study programmes' evaluation and general quality assurance, the rectorate should involve more staff in quality assurance system.
- (9) To enhance the quality assurance, the Modul University Vienna Private University has to set up a fixed schedule for its joint semester conferences with details about its content.
- (10) To enhance the capacity building, the direct and professional exchange between the staff of Modul University Vienna Private University and Nanjing should commence before the autumn semester 2017.
- (11) To improve the general learning environment and increasing the self-study time of the students, the library opening hours and the class-accessibility should be prolonged or aligned with the course schedule. Also, the living situation in the dormitory could be improved, especially considering the construction of the new campus.
- (12) To assure the interactive teaching style, the classes should be held in classrooms suitable for the class size.
- (13) To ensure the implementation of research on international standard, the programme should widen the scientific network worldwide.
- (14) To ensure the mobility of students, the programme should design, strategize and implement overseas study opportunities for Chinese students.
- (15) To secure the implementation of the academic exchange for students, the strategy, details and procedures of the exchange at Modul School Nanjing should be written down and implemented as soon as possible. The current students have to have the chance to go on an exchange in their second or third year.
- (16) To support the mobility of students, the students from Modul School Nanjing should have the option either to complete the mandatory internship abroad or to study one to two semesters abroad or both.
- (17) To encourage and enable mobility of the students and staff of the Modul School Nanjing, the Modul University Vienna Private University has to examine if Erasmus+ can be applied for and search for additional funding options.
- (18) To enable the mobility of the staff of the Modul School Nanjing, the organization of the faculty exchange has to be conceptualized and in line with student exchange.

## Reviewed documents

Application documents and amendments by Modul University Vienna Private University.

## 5 Confirmation of the experts

Name	Prof. Dr. Rupert Holzapfel
Expert pursuant to section 5 para. 2 PU-AkkVO:	Expert with scientific qualification and chairing member of the expert panel
Signature	
Name	Dr. Axel Jockwer
Expert pursuant to section 5 para. 2 PU-AkkVO:	Expert with scientific and practical qualification
Signature	
Name	Annika Hassur
Expert pursuant to section 5 para. 2 PU-AkkVO:	Student expert
Signature	