

Summary report on the modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of the location of four study programmes of MODUL University Vienna Private University

- "Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management"
- "Bachelor of Science in International Management"
- "Master of Science in Sustainable Development, Management and Policy"
- "Master of Business Administration"

Upon the application for modification of the administrative decision on accreditation of MODUL University Vienna Private University from 27th April 2016, AQ Austria conducted the **accreditation procedure of Dubai as a new location for four study programmes**: "Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management", "Bachelor of Science in International Management", "Master of Science in Sustainable Development, Management and Policy", "Master of Business Administration" according to para. 24 Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (HS-QSG) in conjunction with para. 2 Private Universities Act (PUG) in conjunction with Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (PU-AkkVO). In accordance with § 21 HS-QSG AQ Austria publishes the following summary report:

1 Accreditation decision

At its 38th meeting on 13th December 2016 the Board of AQ Austria decided to **grant accreditation** to the modification of the administrative decision on the accreditation of the study programmes "Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management", "Bachelor of Science in International Management", "Master of Science in Sustainable Development, Management and Policy", "Master of Business Administration" according to para. 24 Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education (HS-QSG) section 4 and 5 in conjunction with para. 2 Private Universities Act (PUG) in conjunction with para. 9 section 1

Decree on Accreditation of Private Universities (PU-AkkVO) **subject to the following condition**, because the criteria according to para. 17 PU-AkkVO are fulfilled except for criterion para. 17 section 3 lit a in conjunction with para. 14 section 5 lit d: *The degree programmes offered at the location Campus Dubai have demonstrably been integrated into MODUL University Vienna Private University's quality management system.*

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

The decision was approved by the Federal Minister for Science, Research and Economy on 18th January 2017. The decision entered into force on 23rd January 2017.

2 Short information on the application for accreditation

Information on the applicant institution				
Applicant institution		MODUL University Vienna Private University		
Site/s		Vienna		
Information on the study programmes subject to changes				
Name of study programmes	Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management	Bachelor of Science in International Management	Master of Science in Sustainable Development, Management and Policy	Master of Business Administration
Type of study programmes	Bachelor degree programme	Bachelor degree programme	Master degree programme	Certificate university programme
ECTS	180	180	120	90
Regular study period	6 Semester	6 Semester	4 Semester	4 Terms (18 months)
Maximum intake per year	max. 84	max. 105	max. 30	max. 30
Academic degree	Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management (BBA)	Bachelor of Science in International Management (BSc)	Master of Science in Sustainable Development, Management and Policy (MSc)	Master of Business Administration (MBA)
Study formate	Full time	Full time	Full time, part time is possible	Part time
Language of instruction	English	English	English	English
Tuition fee per	€ 40.000	€ 40.000	€ 24.000	€ 26.000

year				
Accredited for the following site since	Vienna, 24 th September 2012	Vienna, 24 th September 2012	Vienna, 25 th June 2010	Vienna, 24 th September 2012
Planned start at the location in Dubai	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18	2016/17
Accreditation application for the modification of the administrative decision	Changes relevant to accreditation pursuant § 12 (1) PU-AkkVO: Location Application for Dubai as an additional location for all four study programmes.			

3 Short information on the accreditation procedure

MODUL University Vienna Private University submitted an application for modification of the administrative decision on accreditation (19th September 2014) of the study programmes on 27th April 2016 for a new location Dubai.

At its 35th meeting on 29th June 2016 the Board of AQ Austria decided on the procedure and expert panel members and appointed the following experts for the review and assessment:

Name	Institution	Role within the expert panel
Georg Müller-Christ	Universität Bremen, Germany	Expert with scientific qualification and chairing member
Fatima Al-Shamsi	Paris Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, UAE	Expert with scientific qualification
Rasha Abd El Mawgoud	Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, Austria	Student expert
Gari Donn	University of Edinburgh, UK	Expert with scientific qualification

The Board of AQ Austria decided to carry out one joint accreditation procedure for the application of the modification of all four study programmes with one site visit taking place in Dubai, the planned location. Furthermore, the Board decided to adapt the focus of the review activity according to the demands of the procedure. The experts were asked to evaluate and assess the implementation of the four study programmes at the new location Dubai according to the criteria pursuing para. 17 PU-AkkVO, including para. 14 (5) d and e. The curricula of the study programmes were not focus of this evaluation since they were already reviewed during the initial accreditation procedure and are not subject to change for the delivery at the location Dubai.

A site visit at the location in Dubai took place on 13th October 2016, which was attended by the expert panel and the project coordinator from AQ Austria.

Gari Donn was acting as an external expert and contributing to the accreditation procedure by writing a separate review report, based on the paper application and focused on specific questions related to quality assurance and the integration of the degree programmes to be offered at the location in Dubai into MODUL University Vienna Private University's institutional quality management system. The other three experts formed the expert panel, who visited the planned location and conducted interviews with the applicant institution (site visit) prior to writing their review report. Both review reports were basis for the accreditation decision taken by the Board of AQ Austria.

The Board of AQ Austria took the accreditation decisions in its 38th meeting on 13th December 2016.

4 Subject matter of the application

MODUL University Vienna Private University applied for the modification of the administrative decision on accreditation regarding a new location, Dubai, for four of its existing and accredited study programmes: "Bachelor of Business Administration in Tourism and Hospitality Management", "Bachelor of Science in International Management", "Master of Science in Sustainable Development", "Management and Policy, Master of Business Administration".

According to the application of MODUL University Vienna Private University, the main aim of the Campus in Dubai is to provide quality education on the undergraduate and professional level equivalent to the study degree programmes at the home campus in Vienna. MODUL University Vienna Private University offers study programmes at the location Dubai. The Campus in Dubai is run by a cooperation partner, *DIID Management DMCC* (a joint venture company between DACH Advisory DMCC and Dubai Investments Industries LCC). The "Guidelines of Academic Self-Administration at Dubai Campus", which are part of the accreditation application, specify how MODUL University Vienna Private University enforces power in all matters regarding academic quality and quality assurance.

5 Grounds for the accreditation decision

The Board of AQ Austria based its decision on the application documentation by MODUL University Vienna Private University, the review reports of the experts and the formal statement by MODUL University Vienna Private University to the review reports.

Summarizing results from the assessments of the expert panel

(1) Have the accountability and responsibilities of the main institution (MODUL University Vienna Private University) and the other location (Campus Dubai) been clearly defined and are they adequate? Is MODUL University Vienna Private University able to assert the quality of its study programmes in Dubai and exercise its responsibilities? (§ 14 (5) d)

The *expert panel* comes to the conclusion that Campus Dubai wants to copy the university structure at the location. This is evaluated as critical for two reasons:

First of all, "Campus Dubai" is not a university itself and nor a site of MODUL University Vienna Private University, but an independent legal entity. Hence, Campus Dubai cannot replace the bodies and university structure of MODUL University Vienna Private University. Secondly, this does not comply with the statute of MODUL University Vienna Private University. Important decisions cannot be taken by a body at the location, for which e.g. the university senate or university board of MODUL University Vienna Private University would be responsible for according to the statute. With the planned arrangement MODUL University Vienna Private University would cut its own duties and responsibilities. In addition, the *expert panel* criticizes that the academic head (appointed by MODUL University Vienna Private University but employed by the Campus Dubai) is the only link between Campus Dubai and MODUL University Vienna Private University and thus almost the only way of exercising MODUL University Vienna Private University's responsibility. It is suggested to reduce the autonomy of Campus Dubai in decision making processes regarding student admission and appointment of professors.

The *expert panel* assesses that the accountability and responsibilities of MODUL University Vienna Private University and Campus Dubai have been clearly defined and are mainly adequate. Since it is not in line with MODUL University Vienna Private University's statute to shorten the competence of MODUL University Vienna Private University's bodies, the experts argue that the criterion is only **partially met** and formulate the following **condition**: If Campus Dubai is formally defined as a location of programme delivery, then the statute of MODUL University Vienna Private University must apply fully in all its aspects to the Campus Dubai. It must be clearly demonstrated that the entire set of regulations is applied in accordance with the prior status given to the decision-making processes as defined in the statute of MODUL University Vienna Private University. This is particularly applicable for the appointment process of professors and for student admission. MODUL University Vienna Private University has to be responsible for taking final decisions.

Having as a basis for her review report only the paper application, *Donn* analyses the two Annexes "Guidelines of Academic Self-Administration at Dubai Campus" and the contract between the co-operation partners MODUL University Vienna Private University und DACH Advisory in depth. The expert comes to the conclusion that the documents clearly state and explain the accountability and responsibilities of MODUL University Vienna Private University and Campus Dubai and assesses this part of the criterion as met.

With regard to the second question, *Donn* identifies the function of the program area directors' as relevant and the quality management report (sent to MODUL University Vienna Private University by the Campus Board yearly) as a relevant tool. She draws the conclusion that the Campus Board assumes responsibility for QA and that MODUL University Vienna Private University takes seriously its commitment to ensure the quality of the programmes to be delivered at Campus Dubai. *Donn* assesses the criteria as met.

(2) 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)

The *expert panel* assesses these criteria as met. Adequate support structures are available at the location Dubai and sufficient staff is available and qualified in order to provide services in the same quality as they are maintained at MODUL University Vienna Private University.

Donn states that evidence was found in the documents that provision for adequate support structures has been made and that issues of organization, management and support structures are taken seriously. Thus *Donn* assesses the criteria as met.

(3) Is the national legislation at the site in Dubai observed? Are educational traditions and cultural differences, respected – only if and insofar this would not affect the private university's 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 Dubai of uniform quality? (§ 14 (5) d and e)

The *expert panel* states that small adaptations have been made to the curricula due to cultural differences. Furthermore, evidence was shown that the applicant institution complies with the requirements of the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), the local (accreditation) authority, where special emphasis is put on the uniform quality of delivery of the study programmes. Thus the expert panel assesses the criteria as met.

Being derived from the research topics Campus Dubai plans to engage in, *Donn* argues that attention has been drawn to intercultural aspects and local traditions. The expert acknowledges that Campus Dubai puts an emphasis on Middle East traditions and aspects across its research. Furthermore, in her review report *Donn* thoroughly examines all four curricula with regard to whether cultural differences and educational traditions are also respected in teaching and learning. She comes to the conclusion that more references should be made to national, cultural and social context of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) region, especially with regard to literature references and examples and discussion points, which often relate to European and, in particular, Austrian circumstances. In addition, more recent texts, including web-based references, should be included in the reading lists.

In addition, *Donn* recommends not limiting the course language to English and teaching parts also in Arabic in order to improve employability of the graduates. She argues, having confidence in both, Arabic and English, might be a competitive advantage for graduates of Campus Dubai.

According to the argumentation presented above, *Donn* assesses the criterion para. 14 (5) e **partially met** and recommends the following improvements: "*On the Literature for all Course and Modules – more recent texts and readings should be included, with at least one from within the past two years. Additionally, e-texts and their url designations should be included wherever possible. Also, wherever possible, modules should refer to examples from the local and regional context as well as the Austrian and European.*" (Review report *Donn*, page 16)

Regarding the second question, whether the study programmes are offered of uniform quality at the main institution and the location, *Donn* points out that her understanding is limited to the paper application, not having visited the location Dubai. Nevertheless, the evidence shown in the documents indicates that the curricula are carefully replicated in teaching at the location in Dubai and appear to be of uniform quality. Hence *Donn* assesses the criterion as met.

(4) Staff (§ 17 (2) a-d)

The *expert panel* states that 5 full-time internal scientific staff members are already recruited and one additional assistant professor position for the area of Sustainable development will be filled in 2017. In addition 12 adjunct faculty members will teach in the four study programmes at Campus Dubai. Furthermore, there are 18 full time supporting staff members covering admin support, operation and recruitment, marketing and public relations. The expert panel assesses that all staff members are qualified, the number of faculty is sufficient (knowing that additional staff is projected on the long run) and workload is distributed properly.

From the full time scientific staff there are 2 full professors, 1 associate professor and 2 assistant professors and one additional future assistant professor to be filled in 2017. Considering that the criterion para. 17 (2) b demands one full time professor plus one additional full time equivalent allocated to a max of three people for a consecutive bachelor/master model, the criterion is met although faculty members are not assigned to a specific study programme.

The *expert panel* also confirms that more than 50% of the classes of each of the study programmes are taught by permanent scientific staff and the ratio of permanent staff to prospected students is adequate. The criteria are met.

(5) Quality Assurance: Are the study programmes offered in Dubai included in MODUL University Vienna Private University'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)

In their review report the *expert panel* states that Campus Dubai aims to replicate the same quality management system, including the same quality assurance measures and instruments as well as guidelines and regulations, as currently used at MODUL University Vienna Private University. The Campus Board is responsible for the implementation of MODUL University Vienna Private University's quality assurance measures, instruments and annually reporting to MODUL University Vienna Private University. After each study year, Campus Dubai has to report on the development of academic quality to MODUL University Vienna Private University, including an analysis on the quality of research, education and training and infrastructure. An unsatisfactory performance might lead to the replacement of the Academic Head by MODUL University Vienna Private University.

The *expert panel* argues that the criteria are met, because of the required instruments for quality assurance, reporting to the main institution MODUL University Vienna Private University and control by KHDA on a regular basis.

Donn assesses the criteria as met since usual regular quality assurance and enhancement processes are planned according to the documentary evidence, which take into account study conditions and programme organization involving all relevant groups.

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

Funding is ensured by the investors (the holding of Campus Dubai), which is clearly stated in the co-operation agreement with MODUL University Vienna Private University. The *expert panel* found out that offering the study programmes at the additional location in Dubai does not lead to a lack of resources for MODUL University Vienna Private University in Vienna. Thus the respective criteria are met. Nevertheless the expert panel recommends a different way of budgeting to enhance transparency.

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

The *expert panel* states that the available facilities are sufficient and rooms and technical equipment are appropriate for teaching and learning. In addition the premises offer a pleasant study environment, trying to replicate the home campus' infrastructure and design from MODUL University Vienna Private University. Further effort has to be put into the equipment of the library, whereby investment therefore is already covered in the business plan. Thus the *expert panel* assesses the criterion as met.

(8) Research and Development (§ 17 (5) a-d)

The *expert panel* states that MODUL University Vienna Private University identifies specific research themes for the location Campus Dubai, which are of particular interest for the region and will thus easily attract funders. Since all full time faculty members are active and involved in research, the interaction between research and teaching is ensured. Collaboration in research between faculty of MODUL University Vienna Private University and Campus Dubai is intended. The *expert panel* evaluates the planned organizational and structural framework conditions as suitable to implement the research concept at the location Campus Dubai and assesses the respective criteria as met.

(9) National and international co-operation (§ 17 (6) a-b)

The *expert panel* found that MODUL University Vienna Private University is already working on widening and expanding its existing international co-operations in order to include the location Campus Dubai. In addition efforts are made to establish co-operations with local companies to ensure internship spots for students. Between MODUL University Vienna Private University and the location Campus Dubai a rotation programme for students has been established and efforts are made to encourage staff to exchange on a regular basis. Given the already accomplished and made efforts, the expert panel assesses these criteria as met.

Finally, in their **summaries** both review reports recommend the Board of AQ Austria to grant accreditation under conditions and including recommendations.

Summarizing results from the formal statement by the applicant institution

MODUL University Vienna Private University submitted a joint statement to the review reports and expressed its understanding for the stated condition and recommendations. MODUL University Vienna Private University considered the condition raised and decided to adapt the "Guidelines of Academic Self-Administration at Campus Dubai" to address the concerns raised by the expert panel. The changes made relate to

1. the appointment of full and associate professors
2. and student admission

In both procedures MODUL University Vienna Private University now foresees its own bodies to be included:

1. In the procedure of appointment of professors the University Senate will be asked for approval of the suggested appointment committee (voted by Campus Senate and communicated by the Campus Board). The recommendation on the successful candidate will be forwarded to MU Vienna's President for approval, who takes the final decision.
2. Similarly, the admissions committee at Campus Dubai must be approved by the President of MODUL University Vienna Private University and the President will co-sign the admission of students.

MODUL University Vienna Private University argues in its statement that with this regulations added, MODUL University Vienna Private University will be able to take full responsibility for the academic quality at Campus Dubai. MODUL University Vienna Private University points out further important elements how execution of its responsibility is ensured: The Academic Head is appointed by the University Board of MODUL University Vienna Private University and Campus Dubai has fully adopted the regulations stipulated in the statute of MODUL University Vienna Private University.

Together with its statement MODUL University Vienna Private University submitted an updated version of the "Guidelines of Academic Self-Administration at Campus Dubai". The passages relating to the final decision power on the two main aspects stated above were changed according to the concessions made in the statement.

Furthermore, MODUL University Vienna Private University appreciated the formulated recommendations of both review reports and listed already actions on how to fulfil the suggestions, including adapting the mission statement as well as revision and updating of the course material and literature especially in order to better reflect the local and regional circumstances. MODUL University Vienna Private University only disapproves of the recommendation of having dual language teaching which will not be implemented because it would counter the aim of being a truly international university. However, Arabic language courses will be offered as non-curricular courses.

Reasoning for the decision of the Board of AQ Austria

Both review reports are comprehensive and assessments are consistent with the findings. The findings of the two review reports mostly complement each other, but do not disagree. Different conditions or recommendations are formulated, but none of the criteria is assessed as “not met”.

The *expert panel* recommends the Board to grant accreditation under one condition. In their statement MODUL University Vienna Private University addresses the condition raised by the expert panel regarding the lack of responsibility MODUL University Vienna Private University is taking with the proposed organisational structure. Following the formulated condition by the expert panel, MODUL University Vienna Private University changes relevant parts of the cooperation with Campus Dubai and submits a revised version of the “Guidelines of Academic Self-Administration at Campus Dubai”. With their statement MODUL University Vienna Private University already fulfills this condition regarding the two main aspects: appointment procedure of professors and student admission. With the changes made in the Guidelines, MODUL University Vienna Private University is now able to take over final responsibility for both procedures. Hence the condition raised by the expert panel is already fulfilled.

Donn assessed one criterion as only partially met, para. 14 (5) e and recommends to improve by nuancing course materials and literature to local and regional circumstances and recommends dual language teaching. The critique regarding outdated literature reference is, strictly speaking, not of concern for the respective criterion. This issue relates to the curricula, criterion para. 17 (1) e, which was not part of the evaluation. Therefore a condition could only concern para. 14 (5) d and the critical review of missing examples from local and regional context in the course descriptions. The same criterion is assessed as met from the expert panel with plausible reasoning. This leads to the conclusion, that minimum requirements of this criterion are met, but *Donn* recommends further measures. Hence the Board of AQ Austria decided to include this as a recommendation but not give a condition.

In addition, the Board of AQ Austria found no evidence in the review reports that the degree programmes offered at Campus Dubai will be integrated into MODUL University Vienna Private University’s quality management system (criterion para. 17 (3) a in conjunction with para. 14 (5) d). The review reports state that MODUL University Vienna Private University’s quality management system will be replicated at Campus Dubai, including the respective instruments and that Campus Dubai will report back to MODUL University Vienna Private University about any developments. Anyways, to replicate the quality management system is not the same as to be included into MODUL University Vienna Private University’s quality management system. Therefore the Board of AQ Austria grants accreditation under the following condition: The degree programmes offered at the location Campus Dubai have demonstrably been integrated into MODUL University Vienna Private University’s quality management system.

6 Annex

- Review report of the expert panel, 9th October 2016
- Review report of Gari Donn, 10th October 2016
- Formal Statement by MODUL University Vienna Private University, 28th November 2016