Letter of Intent: Cooperation in the Field of Holocaust Teaching at Swiss Schools

by and between

the Pedagogical University of Applied Sciences of Northwestern Switzerland
- represented by the Professorship for Social Sciences Teaching,
- with the support of the State Secretariat for Education and Research of Switzerland as well as the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Directors of Education

and

Yad Vashem - The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority
-represented by the International School for Holocaust Studies, European Department

In February and April 2011 representatives of the Pedagogical University of Applied Sciences of Northwestern Switzerland FHNW (Prof. Dr. Viktor Abt, Prof. Dr. Peter Gautschi) and of Yad Vashem (Richelle Budd Caplan, Dr. Noa M Kayton) met in order to establish a cooperation in the field of Holocaust teaching at Swiss schools.

In this conjunction the following agreements were reached:

1. The Partners are planning in each of the years 2011 and 2012 to facilitate a research and study visit for approx. 12 (and if financial resources permit, up to 18) students and lecturers from Swiss teacher training universities with the aim of boosting participants’ understanding of issues associated with teaching about the Holocaust and handling memory cultures, and by this means to make a contribution to teaching and/or research & development at the respective parent university.

2. The research and study visit shall be conducted at the International School for Holocaust Studies.

3. Homogenous language groups shall be created, insofar as the course language is not English.

4. The programme of the research and study visit shall be discussed jointly by the Partners and shall be determined by Yad Vashem, which shall also be responsible for the content. As a rule, the visit shall take 6 working days to complete, of which 5 days shall take the form of seminars (plenary or group seminars) and 1 day shall be spent in accordance with the individual specialist focus, as a rule from Sunday to Friday.
5. The preferred times for the research and study visits are the months of January and September. The precise dates shall be determined in good time following consultation.

6. The Pedagogical University FHNW shall assume the travel, accommodation and catering expenses for all participants as well as any possible costs for activities, which are not directly associated with teaching about the Holocaust. Yad Vashem shall on behalf of all participants assume the costs of the Holocaust studies at the International School for Holocaust Studies, and shall make the hotel reservations and organise the transfers between Ben Gurion Airport and the hotel as well as between the hotel and the seminars for which Yad Vashem is responsible.

7. During the research and study trip, seminar attendance shall be obligatory for participants. On seminar working days the programme shall include free time for individual in-depth projects. Within the framework of the set rules, and taking account of the respective number of students involved, participants shall have free access to museums, exhibitions, collections, archives and learning centres.

8. The study trip preparation and follow-up work shall be discussed jointly by the Partners, and shall be defined by the Pedagogical University FHNW, which shall also be responsible for these activities. If possible, an employee of Yad Vashem shall take part in the preparation and follow-up work, whereby the travel expenses shall be borne by Yad Vashem and the accommodation and catering expenses shall be borne by the Pedagogical University FHNW.

9. The Partners shall keep each other informed about further activities in the field of Holocaust teaching in Switzerland, and in this conjunction shall support each other, within the framework of their capabilities, in respect of the realisation thereof.

10. Both Partners declare their interest in raising the profile within Switzerland of the online courses on the topic of the Holocaust provided by Yad Vashem, and are keen to encourage the take-up of these courses.

11. The Partners shall discuss the treatment of memory cultures in general, shall work on organising an international conference on this topic in Switzerland, and shall consider how to transfer the resulting insights into the Swiss school and university system.

12. Selected employees of the respective institutions shall have the opportunity, during the course of any possible research and study trips undertaken in the respective partner country, within the framework of the available capacities and taking account of the number of participants involved, to work at the partner institutions for periods of up to 10 days free of charge.

13. In order to ensure that their cooperation in the field of Holocaust teaching at Swiss schools is placed on a long-term footing, the Partners shall conduct at least one video conference per annum at the expense of Yad Vashem.

14. The Partners shall make a public announcement of their partnership.
Jerusalem, April 2011

Richelle Budd Caplan
Director, European Department
Int. School for Holocaust Studies

Cc:

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate
Natan Eitan, Director-General, Yad Vashem

Aarau, April 2011

Prof. Dr. Peter Gautschi
Head of Chair for Teaching and Learning History and Social Studies

Prof. Dr. Viktor Abt
Head of International Office
Pedagogical University FHNW
PH FHNW