

ApprEnt - National Report – Austria

15th of November, 2017

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1. Initial Information

1.1. Apprenticeship schemes at DUK and Senate of Economy

Danube University Krems (DUK): There is no apprenticeship scheme at Danube University, but the university provides study programmes for continuing education, which include practice-based, competence-based and activity-based learning. Students reflect their professional practice and challenges to acquire new professional skills and competences. All study-programmes are designed for full-time working students and are based on blended learning, so learning and working at the same time are not a contradiction. It is often the case that employers cover the costs for Danube University's study programs.

Danube University provides study programmes with professional licences, e.g. "Supervision und Coaching", or "Psychosomatische Medizin" which require not only practice-related activities like study projects, but also internships. The academic directors of these study programmes probably would know more about apprenticeships at Danube University, but also the academic directors within the Department of Interactive Media and Educational Technologies, who are supporting students to bring in practical experience or to develop study programmes specifically for certain employers.¹

SENAT/lehrlingspower.at: Senat der Wirtschaft and lehrlingspower.at currently does not train apprentices. As an independent network of companies, it is involved in apprenticeship topics by consulting and lobbying for companies with apprentices. Especially in the area of SMEs the Senat supports knowledge transfer through the initiative "Mittelstands-Allianz", together with lehrlingspower.at, Austrians first independent network for companies offering apprenticeships. Robert Frasch, founder of lehrlingspower.at, is also the editor-in-chief of the web-based Platform www.ausbilden.co.at.

1.2. Apprenticeships in Austrian Higher Education

In Austrian Higher Education, there are currently three ways in which practical experiences at the work-place are integrated into higher education study programs:

- **Dual-study programmes:** Dual-study programmes were developed in cooperation with enterprises (usually medium to large-sized), in order to provide alternating phases of practice (at the workplace) and theory (at the higher education institution). At the moment, only universities of applied sciences offer these programmes. A trend of

¹ Danube University Krems (n.D.): About. Retrieved from <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/universitaet/index.php?URL=/en/universitaet/ueberuns>, 13th of November 2017

emerging dual-study programmes in Austrian HE started about 2 years ago. Since then, more and more dual-study programmes have been developed².

- **Work-study-programs:** Work-study-programs usually are providing lectures on weekends and a blended learning system, so it is possible also for students in full-time jobs to study next to working. Usually, work-study-programs are provided by universities of applied sciences and curricula are connected to the prior learning and practical experiences of students.³
- **Continuing education study programs:** These kind of study programs allow validation of prior learning for admission in Austria. Danube University is one of the leading provider of continuing education study programs in Austria and in Europe and basically every academic director is involved in integrating practical experiences of students into the study programme. This mostly happens through project work and reflections, but also via internships, through blended learning and lectures on the weekends. Danube University was established 20 years ago and has been providing continuing education study programs since then.⁴

A Review of Dual-Study Programs in Austria

Throughout our research, we found seven providers of dual-study programs in Austria:

1. IMC Fachhochschule Krems
2. Paracelsus Medizinische Privatuniversität
3. FH Joanneum
4. FH Vorarlberg
5. FH St. Pölten
6. FH Oberösterreich
7. FH Technikum Wien

All in all, we found six dual-study programs on Bachelor-level and 3 dual-study programs on Master-level:

² Dual studieren in Österreich (2017): Warum dual studieren? Retrieved from <http://www.dualstudieren.at/dual-studieren/warum-dual-studieren/>, 13th of November 2017

³ 3S Unternehmensberatung (n.D.): Berufsbegleitende Aus- und Weiterbildungen. Chancen und Herausforderungen. Retrieved from: <http://www.berufsbegleitend.at/>, 13th of November 2017

⁴ Danube University Krems (n.D.): About. Retrieved from <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/universitaet/index.php?URL=/en/universitaet/ueberuns>, 13th of November 2017

Dual Study Program	Mode	Companies	Assessment	Certification	EQF-Level	Link
IMC Krems Entrepreneurship and eBusiness	Dual study: 6 weeks of full time study/semester, rest of the time working + internships in other P&C departments, similar traineeship Fees: Paid by P&C	Peek & Cloppenburg (application via P&C)	Case Studies, Project Work, reflecting how theory could be applied in daily work	BA, 180 ECTS	6	https://www.fh-krems.ac.at/de/studieren/bachelor/unternehmen/fuehrung-und-e-business-management-berufsbegleitend-pc/studienplan/
Paracelsus Medical Private University Healthcare-Study	Fulltime study, competence-based, internships Fees: 1760€/year	Several Hospitals (application via one of the hospitals)	No info found online	BScN, 210ECT + VET Diploma for healthcare	6	http://www.pmu.ac.at/2in1.html
FH Joanneum Bachelor: Production and Organisation Master: Engineering and Production Management Product- and Process development	Alternating: 3 months practice, 3 months theory Employment from 3rd to 6th Semester, similar traineeship Master1: Longer Phases of Practice (up to 5 months) Master 2: Blocked theory 6-9weeks, eLearning	Admonter AL-KO Alpla Andritz AG Anton Paar Atomic AVL BMW Böhler Bosch Brau Union Knapp Magna Mondi Palfinger Post Logistikcenter Saubermacher Siemens SSI-Schäfer-Peem VOEST Alpine...	Project Work, Work in Labs, written exams, documentation of work experiences, reflection of practice report	BSc (180ECTS) MSc. (120ECTS)	6, 7	https://www.fh-joanneum.at/produktionstechnik/bachelor/ https://www.fh-joanneum.at/engineering-and-production-management/master/ https://www.fh-joanneum.at/lebensmittel-produkt-und-prozessentwicklung/master/
FH Vorarlberg BSc. Electrical engineering	Dual studies and part-time/work-study programmes	http://www.fhv.at/studium/technik/elektrotechnik-dual-	Written exams, lab reports, project work, project report, portfolio-exams,	BSc (180ECTS)	6,7	http://www.fhv.at/studium/allgemeine-informationen/gesamtuebersicht-studienangebot/berufsbegleitende-und-

	<p>Dual phase from 3rd Semester on</p> <p>4 practice phases (all in all 12 months), practice combined with bachelor thesis</p> <p>Blended learning</p> <p>No fees, companies give students time for studying 4x3 months blocked</p>	bsc/partnerunternehmen/	<p>working/learning diary, case studies, presentations</p>			duale-studiengaenge/
<p>FH St. Pölten</p> <p>BSc. Smart Engineering of Production Technologies and Processes</p>	<p>Practice/theory phases</p> <p>Fees: 380€/Semester</p>	https://www.fhstpa.at/de/studium-weiterbildung/medien-digitale-technologien/smart-engineering/partnerunternehmen	<p>Project work and documentation, reports,</p>	<p>BSc (180ECTS)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>https://www.fhstpa.at/de/studium-weiterbildung/berufsbegleitend-studien</p> <p>https://www.fhstpa.at/de/studium-weiterbildung/medien-digitale-technologien/smart-engineering</p>
<p>FH Oberösterreich</p> <p>Master Automotive Mechatronics and Management</p>	<p>Part-time work during studies</p> <p>18 months working fulltime 2nd to 4th semester, project work</p> <p>No courses from Mondays to Tuesdays from 2nd semester onwards</p>	https://www.fh-ooe.at/en/welsh-campus/studiengaenge/master/automotive-mechatronics-and-management/industry-cooperation/	<p>Project work and documentation, written exams</p>	<p>MSc 120ECTS</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>https://www.fh-ooe.at/en/welsh-campus/studiengaenge/master/automotive-mechatronics-and-management/study/qualification/</p>
<p>FH Technikum</p> <p>Bachelor in Informatics</p>	<p>Practice phases in company</p> <p>Application at selected companies who are working with FH,</p>	https://www.technikum-wien.at/duales-studium-bachelor-studiengang-informatik	<p>Written exams, reflection, oral exams, project work</p>	<p>BSc (180ECTS)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>https://www.technikum-wien.at/duales-studium-bachelor-studiengang-informatik/</p>

2. Structure and governance

2.1. Typology of stakeholders

Public Bodies responsible for Apprenticeship-Schemes in Austria

The legal aspects of lower-level apprenticeships (NQF level 4-6) in Austria are covered by 3 ministries:

- [Ministry of Science, Research and Economy \(BMWFW\)](#): Responsible for all topics related to companies, which provide apprenticeships
- [Ministry of Education \(BMB\)](#): Responsible for all topics related to vocational schools.
- [Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection](#): Responsible for all topics related to employees. It also funded the web platform “[Ausbildung bis 18](#)”, which promotes apprenticeships among teenagers up to 18 years old.

Furthermore, also the Chamber of Commerce is an official stakeholder. General information is available at [Chambers of Commerce](#): The Chamber of Commerce’s structure consists of on a national-wide organisation, as well as of separate departments for each federal state, which are almost independently organised. They are divided into district chambers and branch chambers which even provide their own information structure. These chambers provide mostly information about legal issues.

An initiative of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce is “[SkillsAustria](#)”, which is organising the vocational skills competitions AustrianSkills, EuroSkills and WorldSkills. SkillsAustria is a part of the national Chamber of Commerce, whereas the Styrian Chamber of Commerce is responsible for [EuroSkills 2020](#) in Graz. These distributed responsibilities and competences are an example of how complex the apprenticeship system in Austria is. There are various stakeholders, which have different responsibilities and competences.

Other Regional and Country-Wide Stakeholders providing advice and information regarding Apprenticeships

Besides the above mentioned structure, there are lots of other organisations with relation to lower-level apprenticeships (NQF level 4-6) in Austria:

- [Institut für Bildungsforschung der Wirtschaft](#): Documents, studies and learning material
- [Chamber of Commerce - Berufsinformationszentrum der Wiener Wirtschaft](#): Information for apprentices
- [Network of companies training apprentices in Tyrol](#)

- [Network of companies in Upper Austria](#) (Industry)
- [Chamber of Labour](#)
- Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut (WIFI): [Job portal for training on national level](#) (regional there are lots of companies and/or individual trainers):
- [Berufsförderungsinstitut \(BFI\)](#): VET provider

Institution/organisations which are actively involved in apprenticeships

Dual study programmes are usually provided by Universities of Applied Sciences in cooperation with companies (usually medium to large-sized companies, see table above at “1.2.1 A Review of Dual-Study Programs in Austria”).

Regarding **lower-level apprenticeships**, two major organisations are involved: companies and vocational schools. In addition to these two, there are many stakeholders involved, too. The major ones on the official level are: Government with different ministries, labour unions, chamber of commerce and the industrial association.

There are also several NGOs engaging in lower-level apprenticeships: training companies, job market platforms, employer branding experts, fair organisers (there are lots of job fairs, some of them specialised only on apprenticeships).

3. Apprenticeship Programme Development and Stakeholder Involvement

3.1. Promotion of Apprenticeship Programmes in Austria

In **higher education**, usually higher education institutions and companies are involved in promoting their educational programmes. The University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg funded the web-platform “[Dual studieren in Österreich](#)”.

At the moment, there are many programmes to promote **lower-level apprenticeships** in Austria and to motivate companies to train apprentices. This is especially motivated by the decreasing number of apprentices. One reason for this decrease is that companies cannot find suitable apprentices, who can meet their requirements. Furthermore, there is a trend that many students stay in school and go to university afterwards instead of starting an apprenticeship.

Most of these promotion programmes are initiated by the business sector, companies or institutions like the chambers of commerce or “Industriellenvereinigung” (industrial association). Furthermore, there are promotion programmes for middle to large-sized companies. There are various funding schemes in Austria, but listing all of them would go beyond the scope of this summary.

In Austria, there are 3 major web portals, focused on job ads for apprenticeships only:

- www.lehrlingsportal.at
- www.lehrberuf.info
- www.lehrstellenportal.at

3.2. The Standard Design of Apprenticeship programmes in Austria

In Austria, there are three ways how schemes similar to apprenticeships are implemented in **higher education**:

- **Dual studies** (still rare and rather new): employers and universities are working together, alternating practice and study phases
- **Work-study-programmes**: offered at many FHs (universities of applied sciences), study times are on Fridays, Saturdays, internships, practice-orientated education, blended learning; study could also be done without the employer's consent.
- **Continuing education study-programmes**: Continuing education study-programmes are including most features from work-study-programmes mentioned above, but are often much more specialized and focused on further education.

For higher education, there is the [AQ Austria](#), which is regularly checking the quality of HE institutions and their study-programmes.

In Austria, there is a tradition of dual education system for **lower-level apprenticeships**. Apprenticeships combine phases of working in the companies and learning in vocational schools ("Berufsschule"). The apprenticeship usually lasts three to four years, varying from profession to profession. In Vienna, apprentices attend vocational schools approximately 1 day per week. If apprentices come from rural areas, vocational school times are usually blocked to a period of 10 weeks per year. Apprenticeships end with a final exam, the "Lehrabschlussprüfung". It is an educational audit done by the chamber of commerce. It assesses both, theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Quality control is a topic which has been recently discussed in Austria. The Chamber of Commerce claims that everything works fine and furthermore, Austria has been among the best performing countries at the WorldSkills or EuroSkills vocational training competitions in the last years. Nevertheless, many companies wish change and an improvement of the apprenticeship system in Austria. Assessment methods need to be modernized, but due to various stakeholders in the Austrian apprenticeship system, changes are taking a lot time and effort.

3.3. Setting up Apprenticeship Programmes

Limited material is available from other dual study programmes in Austrian **higher education**, but Danube University is experienced in adult education and continuing education. Curricula at Danube University are practice- and competence-based. Based on these experiences, it would not be a problem to set up an apprenticeship programme, but it needs to be considered that DUK's target group consists of adult students. DUK also only provides master-programmes and certified, short-cycle study programmes, no bachelor-programmes.

Regarding **lower-level apprenticeships**, a lot of helpful material is provided by the local chamber of commerce. The latter even provide coaching sessions for companies who want to employ and train apprentices. The [IBW \(Institut für Bildungsforschung\)](#), an institute close to the chamber of commerce and the Austrian Government, also provides a lot of material for employers. Unfortunately, these guidance material is not used very widely by companies and many companies (especially SMEs) complain about not getting enough guidance regarding apprenticeships.

Next to the official partners for providing information about apprenticeships listed above, there are many associations and networks like [lehrlingspower.at](#), [Ausbilderforum Tyrol](#) or [Ausbilderverbund Upper Austria](#) who give advice to companies and provide information.

3.4. Assessment and Certification of Apprenticeship Programs

At **higher education** institutions providing dual study programmes assessment methods are often based on project documentation, reflection, lab works, written and oral exams or portfolio assessment (see table at page 3 under "Review of Dual-Study Programs in Austria").

At Danube University Krems, students can receive a certificate, an academic title and also professional licences. Assessment are usually based on internships reports, project documentation, scientific literature research, oral or written exam, etc.⁵

All **lower-level apprenticeships** end with a certification called "Lehrabschlusszeugnis", issued by chamber of commerce. This exam consist of an assessment of practical skills (practical demonstration of skills) and theoretical knowledge. This certification allows students to work in their profession. After "Lehrabschlusszeugnis", student are allowed to

⁵ DUK (2015): Curriculum Psychosomatische Medizin. Retrieved from: https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/imperia/md/content/department/psymed/broschuere/psy2_broschuere_20150130.pdf, 4th of November 2017.

start a “Meister”-training, which means “Master in profession”, not to confuse with a Master’s degree in higher education. Passing the “Meister”-Exam allows students to open their own companies in regulated professions.

3.5. Number of Students in Apprenticeship Programmes

Higher Education

Usually, 15-30 persons are admitted per academic year in a dual study programme (see dual study programme list above). There are much more students in work-study-programmes and in continuing-education study programmes. At Danube University, around 8862 people are currently studying in continuing education study programmes.⁶

Vocational Education

Regarding lower-level apprenticeships, there are approx. 28.000 companies, which are currently training apprentices in Austria.

In 2016, 106.950 people were employed in lower-level apprenticeships. This number has been decreasing in the last years (in 1980 there were more 194.000 apprentices in Austria). The decrease is due to demographic changes in Austria and the lack of attractiveness for young people.⁷

3.6. Which legislation do you have in place in your country/region/institution about Apprenticeships?

Lower-level apprenticeships in general are regulated by law through [Berufsausbildungsgesetz \(BAG\)](#). Details for the various professions are regulated by the Ministry of Science, Research and Economy through [Ausbildungsordnung](#).

Higher-level apprenticeships are provided by higher education institutions, which are bound to [Hochschulgesetz](#). Furthermore, depending on the study-programmes, there are also other laws applicable, for example there are [legal provisions for the Bachelor of Nursing](#) in Austria. Furthermore, there are [legal provision for universities of applied sciences](#), too.

⁶ Danube University (2017): About. Retrieved from: <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/universitaet/index.php?URL=/en/universitaet/ueberuns>, 5th of November, 2017

⁷ WKO (2017): Lehrlingsstatistik. Retrieved from: <https://www.wko.at/service/zahlen-daten-fakten/daten-lehrlingsstatistik.html>, 6th of November, 2016

3.7. Funding of Apprenticeship Programmes

Dual study-programmes in **higher education** are usually funded by the state, especially if in public institutions. At many higher education institutions there are no fees to pay, a few institutions collect a fee of 363,36€ each semester.⁸ At Danube University Krems, students have to pay fees for studying, with fees are varying from study program to study program.⁹

For **lower-level apprenticeships**, the Austrian government and its Ministry of Education is responsible for funding vocational schools in Austria¹⁰. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Research, Science and Economy, the national Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Labour are responsible for the curricula in vocational schools.

The vocational school budget is a part of the general budget of schools in Austria. The total cost per student for vocational schools/trade school in the year of 2013 was 14 201€¹¹

When it comes to practical training in companies, the employer is financially responsible for the apprenticeship. There is funding provided by the Ministry of Science, Research and Economy, but it has been limited to 169 Mio. € per year.

3.8. Level of Education of Austrian Apprenticeship Schemes

In **higher education**, the dual study programmes usually lead to a Bachelors or Master's degree (Level 6 to 7 in the Austrian Qualification Framework¹²).

⁸ FH Guide (2017): Study Fees. Retrieved from http://www.fachhochschulen.ac.at/en/fh_magazine/2008/study_fees, 4th of November 2017

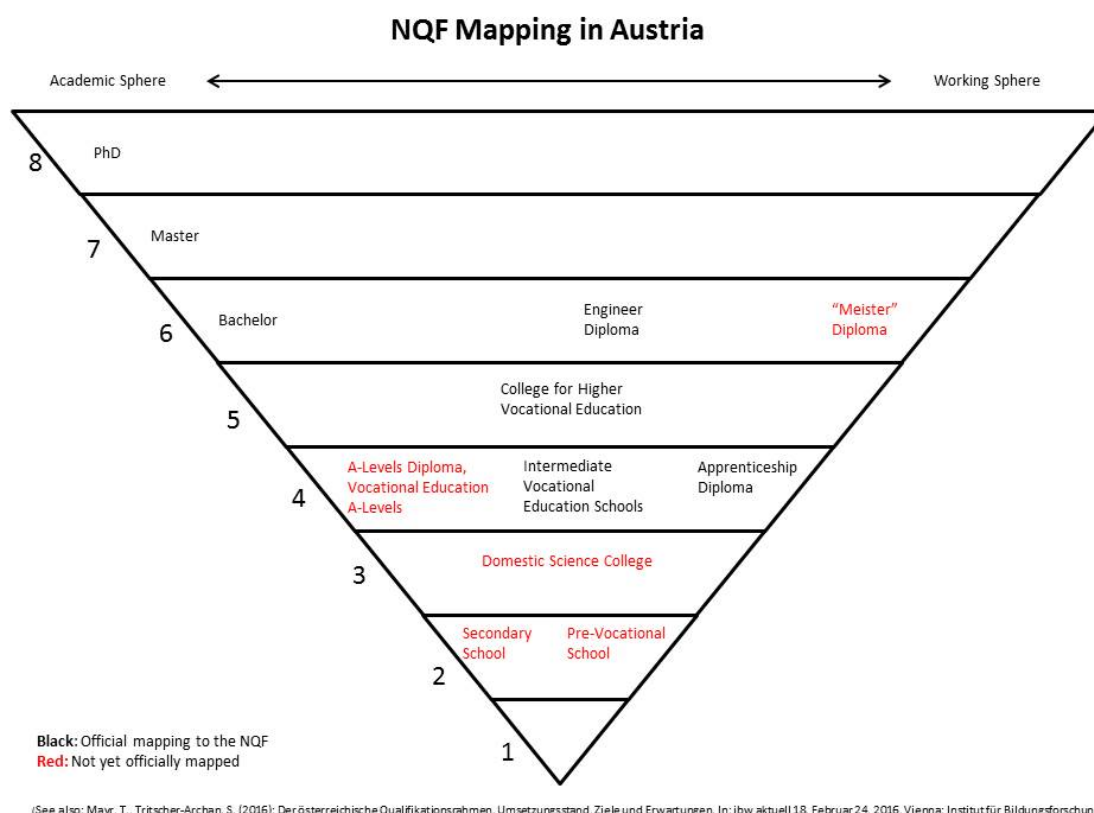
⁹ DUK (2016), retrieved from <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/studium/faq/index.php#info>, 3rd of November 2017

¹⁰ BMB (2017), retrieved from: <https://www.bmb.gv.at/schulen/bw/bbs/berufsschulen.html>, 5th of November 2017

¹¹ Statistik Austria (2015): Bildung in Zahlen 2013/14 - Schlüsselindikatoren und Analysen. Vienna. Retrieved from: http://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung%2C+Kultur&pubId=508, 4th of November 2017

¹² WKO (2017): NQR - Nationaler Qualifikationsrahmen. Umsetzung, Ziele und Erwartungen. Vienna. Retrieved from: <https://news.wko.at/news/oesterreich/NQR---Nationaler-Qualifikationsrahmen.html>, 13th of November, 2017

The structure of the Austrian National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is very similar to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The process of mapping qualifications is still ongoing. The visualisation below which qualifications have been officially mapped already and which ones haven't been mapped¹³:



3.9. Subjects/Professional Areas/Economic Fields Most Common in Apprenticeship Programmes

Dual study programmes in Austrian Higher Education are most common in the following disciplines: Technical studies/engineering/informatics, business administration and health care.

In lower-level apprenticeships, there are 10 areas which are most popular by the number of apprentices. From a more differentiated perspective, many of these professions do not require much prior learning from school or are connected to large companies or business sectors in Austria. A lack of interest and attractiveness of professions in the field of SMEs is resulting into a decreasing number of apprentices in this area.

¹³ Mayr, T., Tritscher-Archan, S. (2016): Der österreichische Qualifikationsrahmen. Umsetzungsstand, Ziele und Erwartungen. In: ibw aktuell 18, Februar 24, 2016. Vienna: Institut für Bildungsforschung

For male apprentices, the following professions are the most popular ones: metal engineering, electrical engineering, motor vehicle technology, retail trade, plumbing and fitting, bricklayer, carpenter, cook, mechatronics, information technology.¹⁴

For female apprentices, the following professions are the most popular ones: retail trade, office clerk, hair stylist, cook, waitress, pharmaceutical assistance, administration assistance, hotel assistance, metal engineering, and pastry chef.¹⁵

From a regional point of view, the highest popularity of apprenticeships is in the western region of Austria (Vorarlberg, Tirol), whereas in the eastern regions and big cities like Vienna, the popularity of apprenticeships is lower.¹⁶

¹⁴ WKO (2017): Die 10 häufigsten Lehrberufe bei Buben 2016. Vienna. Retrieved from: http://wko.at/statistik/wgraf/2017_03_Lehrlinge_Burschen_2016.pdf, 13th of November, 2017

¹⁵ WKO (2017): Die 10 häufigsten Lehrberufe bei Mädchen 2016. Vienna. Retrieved from: http://wko.at/statistik/wgraf/2017_02_Lehrlinge_M%C3%A4dchen_2016.pdf, 13th of November, 2017

¹⁶IBW (2017): Lehrlingsausbildung im Überblick 2017. Strukturdaten, Trends und Perspektiven. Vienna. Retrieved from: <https://www.ibw.at/resource/download/1577/ibw-forschungsbericht-190.pdf>, p. 32

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Danube University Krems (2015): Curriculum Psychosomatische Medizin. Retrieved from: https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/imperia/md/content/department/psymed/broschuere/psy2_broschuere_20150130.pdf, 4th of November 2017.

Danube University Krems (2016): FAQs. Retrieved from <https://www.donau-uni.ac.at/en/studium/faq/index.php#info>, 3rd of November 2017

Dual studieren in Österreich (2017): Warum dual studieren? Retrieved from <http://www.dualstudieren.at/dual-studieren/warum-dual-studieren/>, 13th of November 2017

FH Guide (2017): Study Fees. Retrieved from http://www.fachhochschulen.ac.at/en/fh_magazine/2008/study_fees, 4th of November 2017, 5th of November 2017

Mayr, T., Tritscher-Archan, S. (2016): Der österreichische Qualifikationsrahmen. Umsetzungsstand, Ziele und Erwartungen. In: ibw aktuell 18, Februar 24, 2016. Vienna: Institut für Bildungsforschung

Statistik Austria (2015): Bildung in Zahlen 2013/14 - Schlüsselindikatoren und Analysen. Vienna. Retrieved from: http://www.statistik.at/web_de/services/publikationen/5/index.html?includePage=detailedView§ionName=Bildung%2C+Kultur&pubId=508, 4th of November 2017

WKO (2017): Lehrlingsstatistik. Retrieved from: <https://www.wko.at/service/zahlen-daten-fakten/daten-lehrlingsstatistik.html>, 6th of November, 2016

WKO (2017): NQR - Nationaler Qualifikationsrahmen. Umsetzung, Ziele und Erwartungen. Vienna. Retrieved from: <https://news.wko.at/news/oesterreich/NQR---Nationaler-Qualifikationsrahmen.html>, 13th of November, 2017