

## Austria – Fachhochschule Burgenland

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<b>Institution</b>	Fachhochschule Burgenland – University of Applied Sciences Burgenland - Austria
<b>Study programs</b>	We offer a range of bachelor, master and PhD programmes. We also offer bridging programmes and further education courses. For information please refer to our homepage: <a href="http://www.fh-burgenland.at">www.fh-burgenland.at</a> .
<b>Skills in German language</b>	German language skills are necessary for admission for most study programs.
<b>Study fees</b>	There are no study fees at the Fachhochschule Burgenland for the bachelor and master courses. A fee may be applicable for other courses. Please refer to the particular course on our website.
<b>Interviewed Person</b>	Asylum seeker from Gambia

### Preparation

On 5.7.2018 an asylum seeker (A.G., male) from Gambia was interviewed at the Fachhochschule Burgenland by Anne Kalaschek.

A.G. is approximately 25 years old and originally from Gambia. He has been in Austria for two years.

He finished high school in Gambia and wanted to study medicine but his family could not afford to send him to university. He applied for a place at a university in the USA and was awarded a place but without funding and thus could not take up this opportunity.

He then started to work for Medical Research Centre (MRC) in Gambia, supporting doctors with vaccination schemes and other preventative medicine programmes. However, it was always his dream to continue his education and he continually searched the Internet for scholarships abroad and applied for many. He was finally granted a partial scholarship to study for a diploma in Tourism (in English) at the Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management in Salzburg, Austria. Although this was not his chosen field of study, he felt that it was an opportunity to further his education. He feels that education is the most important thing in life. He was granted a visa to study in Austria and completed the diploma programme in May 2017.

He now has the status of an asylum-seeker. He is very keen to continue his education and has applied to our institution to study on our International Business Relations bachelor programme, specialising in tourism. The contact details of our institution were given to him by a local NGO. He also wants to apply to the University of Vienna, where there are more opportunities.

### Awareness

He was not aware of the concept of validation.

### Starting up

When questioned about the greatest problems he faced in his new country/by other refugees in this country, he cited the following:

- Finance: The biggest problem for him was the financing of his diploma studies in Salzburg as his scholarship was only partial but the college did not allow him to work alongside his studies. He is now an asylum seeker and receives accommodation, food and € 42 per month. He is allowed to take on seasonal jobs but this is difficult as he has to keep changing his accommodation.
- Language: He learned quite a lot of German by being around people from Austria during his studies and internships. He is now taking German classes offered through his asylum seeker status.
- Inter-cultural differences: Adapting to the local culture is often very difficult for refugees, he says, although he did not experience so many difficulties because he was used to working in a multi-national environment. He thinks that intercultural workshops are very valuable.
- Knowledge of educational opportunities: He stated that he was aware of educational opportunities in Austria as he did some research before he left Gambia. However, he stated that the refugees he knows locally have no knowledge of the fact that they may be able to apply to universities and suggested that this be made more public (i.e. putting notices in refugees' accommodation).

### Documentation and support

He is in possession of all his certificates (high school leaving certificate, language certificate, various medical diplomas, etc.)

### Assessment

To summarise, A.G. seems to be very keen to continue his education and appreciates the VINCE project's aims. His biggest challenges are of a financial nature. He was not aware that he may be able to have his high school certificate and various other medical certificates acquired during his work in the health sector in Gambia validated by a university.