

Austria – Fachhochschule Burgenland

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| Institution | Fachhochschule Burgenland – University of Applied Sciences Burgenland - Austria |
| Study programs | 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: www.fh-burgenland.at . |
| Skills in German language | German language skills are necessary for admission for most study programs. |
| Study fees | 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. |
| Interviewed Person | Velimir from Bosnia |

Preparation

Velimir (male, 32 years old) comes from Bosnia and come to Austria to study. Since 2015 he is a student of “European Studies - Management of EU-Projects” a Master’s program of the Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH - University of Applied Sciences in Burgenland.

After his Bachelor-degree in Bosnia he wanted to study abroad and found out that there is an agreement between Austria and Bosnia and that is why he decided to find a university in Austria. He researched by himself which university or master’s program fits his education and which university would accept his degree. He decided to apply for two master programs in Austria, one of these was at the Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH Master-program “European Studies - Management of EU-Projects”. The first step was to translate his diploma by a certified translator and he needed to validate his knowledge. All together it took two years and the costs are approximately € 150,-. The Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH needed a copy of this translated diploma and a list of all his courses with ECTS-points. After the assessment of his documents he was invited to an interview. He also had the opportunity to attend extra courses, if he had not finished some courses, which were needed for this degree. He got a letter of acceptance and had to bring all origin documents.

Awareness

He was not consciously aware of his skills and competences and he had to work this out all by himself. These websites helped him:

Guide to entry and residence requirements for foreign students:

http://www.migration.gv.at/fileadmin/downloads/infoblaetter/leitfaden_studierende_eng_2015.pdf

Requirements for the Admission to Austrian Universities:

<https://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/148/Seite.1480200.html>

<https://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/content/148/Seite.1480000.html>

Österreich – Bosnien und Herzegowina: Abkommen über Gleichwertigkeiten im Universitätsbereich (this is also valid for all other ex-Yugoslavia states):

https://wissenschaft.bmwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/wissenschaft/naric/oe_bosherz_abkommen_univ.pdf

Procedure for formal recognition:

<http://www.berufsanerkennung.at/rs/priznavanje-profesije/pregled/>

<https://wissenschaft.bmfwf.gv.at/home/studies/enic-naric-austria/>

How to find a study program:

<http://www.studienwahl.at/en>

http://www.fachhochschulen.ac.at/en/all_universities

Text about "Ungültige Zeugnisse aus Südosteuropa"

<http://www.dw.com/de/ung%C3%BCltige-zeugnisse-aus-s%C3%BCdosteuropa/a-16170344>

Which University is recognized in Austria:

<http://www.enic-naric.net/higher-education-institution.aspx>

Starting up

He was not informed on opportunities for testing/validating his capacities.

It was not necessary, as Austria has an agreement with Bosnia

The Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH invited him for an interview and he had to send his documents before the interview. He was asked to prepare two presentations: one was a topic about the European Union and the other one was to talk about himself: what he had done before (education, work,...) why he wants to study there, what is his motivation, why he choose this university/master program, etc.

V. prefers this kind of testing than a written test. The interview was held in a small group of 4 persons and the programme director. It was not like a competition between the applicants, but he could make a comparison and see the level of the other students.

He had a feeling that everything is professional and fair and felt it was performed in a respectful way.

It was exactly focused on his personal interest and the examiner asked about his motivation and why he wanted to study at this Master-program. They checked if he had all necessary documents and courses.

Documentation and support

Was there guidance when you started documenting your personal learning experiences?
Not at all. Everything he needed he searched online.

How easy/difficult was it to get together evidence of your learning? What help did you get?
It was easy for him to find out what he needed, which documents are necessary, what does he need to study in Austria. The hardest part for him was to prepare all documents as he needed to go to different offices and it took a long time until he collected all important documents.

What was your focus in documenting: formal learning, work experience, or also voluntary work, hobbies, personal strengths? Maybe also other personal spheres of capacity-building?
He focused on his Diploma and courses he attended. For his interview he had to present himself. The most important thing was his Diploma and the motivation.

What kind of material did you use for the documentation?
Diploma of his home university.

Did you arrange your experiences in a kind of portfolio?
Yes, he arranged a kind of portfolio like a CV, where he could show that he worked and studied in the same time to finance his studies.

How did your portfolio look like?
He described:
Work experiences,
Education
Informal Education – training
Experiences
Hobbies
Motivation

Was it hard to do the documentation of your capacities and experiences?
It was not complicated but there were many ways to go

Did you also construct new documentation if you failed to have the originals with you? How did you do this?

He has got his original documents.

Did you ask friends and family to reflect on your documentation?

Some friends looked through his documentation.

Did you do a kind of self-assessment yourself before the assessment? How and with whose support?

He prepared his presentations and revised them.

How were you prepared for the testing/validating? You got written instruction, you tested the assessment-interview with someone (who?), etc.

He received the invitation for his interview by mail with all the instructions what he had to bring and prepare for the interview. The Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH asked him to present a specific topic of the EU and introduce himself and gave him a time limit for that. He also knew that he had to answer questions about the EU so he could prepare quite well.

Assessment

How did you prepare for the assessment?

V. studied and researched everything he could find about the EU. He also made notes about himself and reflected about him what he wanted to do, what is his ambition.

Did you feel that the assessment was really about getting grip on your personal capacities?

Yes

Were you informed on the way the assessment was going to take place?

Yes, he was precisely informed

Was the assessment based on an intake or pre-judgement on where to link your capacities to?

it was a combination of all of this

Or was it an open assessment, geared at finding out where your capacities could be utilized best?

No

How was the assessment performed (from begin to end)?

The interview was held in a small group of 4. The program director asked us to start with the presentation and afterwards we were given questions and the opportunity to ask questions as well.

Did the assessor make you feel comfortable? Was he/she supportive?

Yes, she has a friendly nature and calmed us down before we started the interview.

In which language was the assessment?

The interview was held in English

Would you prepare for this kind of assessment differently when you got a new chance to do it?

He would try not to be nervous like he was before.

Impact

What was in general the outcome of the assessment?

The Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH told him that he has to wait until July, after all applicants were interviewed to receive an acceptance or refusal. And in July he got an acceptance of the Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH

Were you happy/satisfied with the outcome? (why yes or no?)

Of course, as he had the opportunity to study

Was there a direct result, in terms of access to a qualification, a voluntary job or paid work?

Yes, he was allowed to study in Austria at the Fachhochschule Burgenland GmbH

Did you get an offer for further guidance for taking further steps in learning or working?

He received an E-Mail with necessary details about the study programme and when it starts etc. At the semester beginning the program director explained the program in details and if he had questions he could come into her office.

Did you get an assessment-report or any other kind of statement on your capacities?

No

Did you agree with the next steps you were offered for learning and working?

No further steps were necessary

Now that you had a lot of time to reflect on your validation-process, what was the impact on the longer term for you?

How are doing now? Which steps did you really take after the testing/validating?

He is studying and that is was he is focused on.

Do you still use your personal documentation and update it with new experiences?

Yes, when he was looking for a job

What happened in the field of working?

He has got a part-time job. He is not allowed to work more than 20 hours. In the interview he told me that non EU-citizens can work: Bachelor-students 10 hours/week and Master-students 20 hours/week.

Are you more aware of the power of being clear on your own personal strengths and weaknesses?

Yes

What happened in your personal life? Was this documenting and testing of your personal capacities a life-changer for you? If yes or no, in what way?

It was/is a huge experiences for him. After his studies he hopes to find easily a job in Austria. All the research about Austria and how can he study here is a big fortune for him and he also helped his girlfriend to come to study at the same place.