

# *Quality Assurance* of Apprenticeship / Dual Education in the Austrian Higher Education System

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# What is quality assurance in HE?

- Conformance to **standards**: Benchmarking, external standards
- Fitness for **purpose**: But what is/are the purpose(s)?
- **Effectiveness** in achieving institutional goals
- Meeting customers' stated **needs**: Students?
- **Stakeholders'** perceptions: Which?
- **Academics'** perceptions: Burden, managerial, trust?
  - Quality is relative (eye of beholder)
  - Depending on context (lecture, syllabus, curriculum)

Source: Elassy, 2015



# Conceptual model of quality



Schindler, Puls-Elvidge, Welzant & Crawford (2015)

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# “Studyability”: Are degrees studyable?

**This is an important question to reach higher goals, in particular shorter periods of study and higher graduation rates.**

- **Proper modularization:** module structure (size, duration, number of examinations per module, enabling mobility, didactic concept of teaching/learning forms)
- **Functioning study organisation:** planning and safeguarding of the range of courses on offer (planning security for students, prevention of overlaps, especially in the case of subject combinations),
- **Realistic workload:** Time/ effort/ workload – degree?
- **Appropriate examination organisation:** transparency of dates and reporting deadlines, freedom from overlap and timely opportunities for repetition, equal distribution of the burden of examinations
- **Appropriate counselling and support services:** Study-related services are available at a central and decentralised level, specific advisory services for specific student groups are available.
- **Tailor-made access:** Admission requirements are formalised and justified in terms of content, admission procedures (examination of admission requirements) are transparent.
- **Practicable recognition rules:** Internal university standards and procedures for the recognition of externally performed achievements and competences acquired outside the university are clearly regulated, students have access to advice on questions of recognition

AQ Austria, 2019



# Frameworks of QA in Austrian HE

## External:

- Austrian University of Applied Sciences Studies Act (**FHStG**) (but also University Act, Private University Act)
- **Strategy documents** UAS and general University
- Hochschul-Qualitätssicherungsgesetz (**HSQSG**) [University Quality Assurance Law]
- **ISO 9001**: 2015 Quality Management Systems
- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the **European Higher Education Area** (ESG 2015)

## Internal:

- **E.g. Processes** for IMC Quality Management System



# UAS Studies Act (FHStG)

- §8(2): **Accreditation as University of Applied Sciences**
- §8 (2.1): “[...] development of a **quality management system**”
- §8 (3): **Accreditation as a University of Applied Sciences degree programme**
- §8 (3.3): “courses are offered by a **scientifically, professionally and pedagogically-didactically qualified teaching and research staff**”
- § 3.9: The courses must be evaluated by the students; the evaluation results serve **quality assurance** and are to be used for the pedagogical-didactic further training of the teachers.
- § 9.2.: The **quality** of teaching must be ensured by a scientifically and didactically qualified teaching staff.
- cf. [https://bmbwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/E\\_FHStG.pdf](https://bmbwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/E_FHStG.pdf)



# UAS Studies Act (FHStG)

- §10(3) **“The tasks of the University of Applied Sciences Board shall be:”**
- 7. coordinating the content of all teaching and examinations;
- 8. Ensuring the **quality of teaching and research** as well as evaluating the entire teaching operation including examination regulations and curricula;
- 9. awarding academic degrees and revoking them [...];
  
- **The tasks of the faculty shall be:**
- Commissioning and participation in the implementation of external **quality assurance** procedures



# Internships/ apprenticeships focus?

**§ 3.3.:** Within the framework of Bachelor's degree programmes at universities of applied sciences, students **must be required to complete a professional internship that represents a training-relevant part** of their studies. The period of study is not extended by the duration of the internship. UAS Studies Act (FHStG)

**§ 43.4:** The **assessment of the internships** within the framework of the pedagogical-practical studies is carried out by the course leader on the basis of the written service description of the practical teacher. If the written service description is likely to lead to a negative assessment, the student has the right to submit a written statement. (University Law)





# HS-QSG [University Quality Assurance Law]

- §3: Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria
- §18: Principles and Procedures of Quality Assurance
- §19: Conduction of Quality Assurance Procedures
- §22: Audit and Certification
- §23:  
Accreditation of Universities of Applied Sciences and University of Applied Sciences degree programmes
- <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20007384>



# HS-QSG: Accreditation of UAS

## §23: In any event, the audit areas of institutional accreditation shall include:

1. Objectives and profiling;
2. Development planning;
3. Studies and teaching;
4. Applied research and development;
5. Organisation of the university and its achievements
6. Financing and resources;
7. National and international cooperation;
8. Quality management system;
9. Personnel with particular attention to the balanced representation of the sexes in all positions and functions.

## The examination areas of the programme accreditation for the requested university of applied sciences degree programme include in any case:

1. Degree programme and course management;
2. Staff;
3. Quality assurance;
4. Financing and infrastructure;
5. Applied research and development;
6. National and international cooperations



The **Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria)** was founded in 2012 on the basis of the Higher Education Quality Assurance Act (HS-QSG) as a quality assurance agency for Austrian universities.

AQ Austria is responsible for the entire higher education sector in Austria. In its activities, **AQ Austria is guided by the following principles:**

- Universities bear the main responsibility for quality in all their areas of performance and for quality assurance and development.
- AQ Austria sees its procedures as a supplement to the university's internal quality assurance and orients them towards the self-imposed goals of the university. It is independent in its activities and free of instructions. Decisions in quality assurance procedures are made exclusively on the basis of quality aspects.
- The implementation of quality assurance procedures is based on international standards of good practice, in particular the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).
- The development of procedural rules and standards or criteria shall be based on cooperation with universities and other stakeholders.

The Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria (AQ Austria) is commissioned by the Higher Education Quality Assurance Act (HS-QSG) to prepare a **report on the development of quality assurance at higher education institutions at least every three years**, whereby quality assurance is defined as "various concepts and measures for the development and verification of the quality of the performance of higher education institutions".

# QA at the University & AQ

The **universities of applied sciences must submit a report** to the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria by the end of March each year on the development in the past academic year. The annual report serves as a qualitative presentation of the achievements and activities of the universities of applied sciences. **In any event, this report must include the following contents:**

1. Presentation of any further development of the objectives of the University of Applied Sciences;
2. Qualitative presentation and analysis of developments in the areas of studies and teaching, applied research and development, personnel, internationality, cooperation, including the presentation of significant changes compared to the last accreditation application or the last annual report;
3. Presentation and analysis of gender equality measures.

Source: Fachhochschulgesetz Austria

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# AACSB Accreditation

- Very prestigious association with 800 accredited business schools worldwide
- Alignment with AACSB criteria required
- IMC member, in process of application preparation
- Average duration to earn accreditation: 4-5 years
- Important: IMC Transnational programmes have to be included as well!
- Role of practical training semester?



# AACSB & WBL?

## Standard 5: Assurance of Learning

Direct measures refer to evidence from learner work such as examinations, quizzes, assignments, and internship feedback that is based on direct observation of individual performance behaviors or outcomes.

Indirect measures of learning refer to evidence attained from third-party input that is not based on direct observation of individual performance behaviors or outcomes. For example, an employer survey asking for an assessment of how a school's learners have performed on internships relative to learners from peer institutions is an indirect measure. However, a learner who completes an internship for degree credit and is assessed by the company on individual performance, with such feedback provided to the school, is a direct measure.

## Standard 4: Curriculum

Experiential learning includes a wide variety of activities such as internships, service learning, study abroad, consulting projects, and other high-impact pedagogical practices.

<https://www.aacsb.edu/-/media/aacsb/docs/accreditation/business/standards-and-tables/2020%20aacsb%20business%20accreditation%20standards%20july%202021.ashx?la=en&hash=FFDE475EE45DE3610525117BAD72B9CAF10DDB25>



# Internal Quality Assurance IMC

- Teaching and Learning Quality Manual
- Quality Assurance Manual (goals, evaluations, key figures, yearly reports, audit, feedback from PTS; Plan-Do-Check-Act)
- Study- and Examination Regulations
- Manual for graduating cohort
- **PTS Manual**
- Manual for the Formal Composition of Scholarly Papers



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# IMC Accreditations for QA (Examples)

## IQNet



Wir erfüllen die Anforderungen hinsichtlich der international gültigen Managementstandards ISO 9001 und ISO 14001. Daher wurde unsere Hochschule von IQNet, dem umfassendsten Netzwerk von Akkreditierungsagenturen, mit zwei Zertifikaten ausgezeichnet.

[IQNET 9001 ZERTIFIKAT >](#)

[IQNET 14001 ZERTIFIKAT >](#)

## Quality Austria



Unsere Fachhochschule ist die erste Hochschule in Österreich, die für drei international gültige Managementstandards – nämlich ISO 9001 (Qualitätsmanagementsystem), ISO 14001 (Umweltmanagementsystem) und ISO 29990 (Qualitätsmanagementsystem in der Aus- und Weiterbildung) – von der Quality Austria zertifiziert wurde.

[ISO 9001 URKUNDE >](#)

[ISO 14001 URKUNDE >](#)

[ISO 29990 URKUNDE >](#)

## Diploma Supplement



Bereits dreimal – 2006, 2010 und 2013 – wurde die IMC FH Krems mit dem Diploma Supplement Label von der Europäischen Kommission, des Europarates und der UNESCO ausgezeichnet. Dieses gilt als besondere Anerkennung für die Transparenz und Qualität, mit denen die Bologna-Ziele von unserer Fachhochschule umgesetzt werden.

## Tourism and Hospitality Education (THE ICE)



Ausgelauene Zertifikate

Unser Bachelor-Studiengang und unser Master-Studiengang Tourism and Leisure Management wurden mit dem Internationalen Qualitätszertifikat „Accredited Member of THE-ICE“ ausgezeichnet.

Das Besondere: Unsere Studiengänge waren die österreichweit ersten zertifizierten Studiengänge in Tourismusmanagement.

[THE-ICE-ZERTIFIKAT >](#)

## Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)



Die Mitgliedschaft bei der AACSB ist der erste Schritt der IMC Fachhochschule Krems, die angestrebte Akkreditierung im Bereich Business zu erreichen.

Um dieses Ziel zu erreichen, durchläuft die Hochschule ein mehrjähriges Begutachtungsverfahren mit besonderem Fokus auf Studium & Lehre sowie Forschung & Entwicklung, Weiterbildung und den beruflichen Perspektiven der Absolventinnen und Absolventen. Darüber hinaus wird die Verankerung und Wirkung der Hochschule in der Wirtschaft beurteilt.

[ZUR AACSB >](#)

## European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD)



Hohe internationale Anerkennung genießt die IMC FH Krems durch die Mitgliedschaft im weltweiten Netzwerk der EFMD. Die EFMD, mit Sitz in Brüssel, ist die wichtigste Qualitätssicherungs- und Akkreditierungs-Plattform für Information, Forschung, Networking, Innovation und Best Practices im Bereich Managemententwicklung in Europa.

[ZUR EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT >](#)

## Österreichische Agentur für wissenschaftliche Integrität (ÖAWI)



Die ÖAWI verfolgt die Aufgabe, Vorwürfe wissenschaftlichen Fehlverhaltens in Österreich auf professionelle Weise zu untersuchen, die Schwere des Verstoßes zu bewerten und allenfalls Vorschläge für nachfolgende Maßnahmen zu unterbreiten.

[ZUR ÖSTERREICHISCHEN AGENTUR FÜR WISSENSCHAFTLICHE INTEGRITÄT >](#)

## European Association for International Education (EAIE)



Die Mitgliedschaft bei der EAIE ermöglicht der IMC FH Krems das Netzwerken sowie die Anbahnung und den Austausch von Wissen im Bereich der Internationalisierung der Hochschulbildung.

[ZUR EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION >](#)

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# Programme Quality: Safeguards

- Sufficient **number** and **quality** of **applicants**
- **Faculty have** relevant background (incl. didactics)
- Good **English skills** of students and staff
- Thorough **curriculum design** (needs, legal requirements, adaptations) and development
- **Incentives** for teaching staff to invest effort
- Sufficient **financial** and **human resources**
- **Commitment** to sustainable cooperation by all involved



# QA in Apprenticeships in Austria

## The main mechanisms of quality assurance are:

- Modern training is ensured by revising and updating exam and training regulations at regular intervals.
- mechanisms are in force to determine the companies' authorisation to train apprentices, and systems are in place to qualify the trainers
- quality assurance is understood as the joint task of all stakeholders, i.e. the competent authorities, employer and employee representations, and the individual training companies and VET schools (*Berufsschulen / Berufsfachschulen*).

Source: IBW, 2016



# QA in Apprenticeships in Austria

## The main quality assurance instruments are the following:

- Regular revision and updating of training and exam regulations by implementing a structured procedure with the involvement of all stakeholders.
- Assessment of the companies' suitability to train apprentices by the apprenticeship office, jointly with the chamber of labour.
- IVET trainer examination and preparatory courses: The trainers have to be qualified in their specialist field/occupation and to teach their profession. They need to furnish proof of having completed an IVET trainer examination or an equivalent qualification. The training of trainers is supported by providing IVET trainer courses and CVET programmes.
- Source: IBW, 2016



# QA in Apprenticeships in Austria

## **Other measures:**

- Regular assurance of the in-company training quality by using supportive training materials (guidelines etc.).
- Quality assurance of the teaching staff at part-time vocational schools by offering related in-service and further training
- Quality assurance of the teaching process and school organisation by implementing quality development programmes
- Clearing office for the apprenticeship-leave examination: This project comprises the revision of examples of examinations for the apprenticeship-leave exam based on the exam and training regulation as well as the awarding of a quality label for suitable examples of examinations.
- Training of examiners for the apprenticeship-leave exam
- Further development of the exam modalities
- Awards for exemplary training companies ("State-honoured training company", state prize "Best training company", etc.) at the federal and regional level.

Source: IBW, 2016



# QA Network in Austria

The **network for quality management and quality development of the Austrian universities** serves the inter-university informal exchange about the practice of quality management at the participating universities. In this network, the mutual exchange of experience and information is promoted, especially with regard to the implementation of quality-related projects or the implementation of QM systems.

Source: [www.qm-netzwerk.at](http://www.qm-netzwerk.at)



# QA for part-time, dual study & PTS in Austria

**Part-time study:** same principles of QA apply as for full-time degree

## **PTS at the IMC:**

- Strict documentation on the internal eDesktop: Students must upload information on their employer, but also their assessments, tasks and reports.
- All information is thoroughly checked by the career center and the course leaders and approved on the edesktop.
- This means that nobody kann get their internship accredited or start it without formal approval.
- Students get only one final mark once they have ticked all boxes on the edesktop.

**Dual study:** no clear guidelines in Austria, subject to internal university quality management



# Dual study in Germany: QA

## Who can become a dual study company?

In order to be allowed to train, a company must be suitable for vocational training in accordance with § 27 (1) BBiG in terms of type and institution and the number of trainees must be in reasonable proportion to the number of trainers. In the case of a trainee, a professionally and personally suitable trainer is sufficient. The **criteria** in detail:

- **Suitability by type:** the company must have employees who are personally and professionally suitable as trainers.
- **Personal suitability:** First of all, anyone who has not committed a crime or who is prohibited from employing children and young people is personally suitable.
- **Professional aptitude:** A trainer is professionally suitable if he is suitable for work pedagogy on the one hand and professionally suitable on the other.
  - A trainer is suitable for work pedagogy if he has completed the training
  - A trainer is professionally suitable if he: himself has vocational training in the relevant training occupation or a university degree in the corresponding field of study and has sufficient professional experience.
- **Suitability by institution:** The suitability by institution describes that the training institution itself must be suitable for training to a certain extent. If the company is professionally equipped, i.e. all the tools and means that a trainee needs to cope with the training are available, the company is suitable "by facility".

<https://arbeitsgeber.campusjaeger.de/hr-blog/duales-studium-anbieten#ausbildung>

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