Double career opportunities with the new training model "Apprenticeship and Study"
Apprentices earn bachelor's degree in "Systems Engineering"

***Villach, January 22, 2021* - Since the winter semester 2020, a newly developed dual apprenticeship for the job profile "Process Engineering + Electrical Engineering: Plant and Operating Technology" is offered in Carinthia, which is specifically aimed at AHS and BHS high school graduates. The Carinthia University of Applied Sciences offers a parallel extra-occupational study program. Within the framework of this model, Infineon Technologies Austria AG, Flex, RHI Magnesita, the Villach Vocational School as well as the GPS – Training Workshop and the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences cooperate to enable apprenticeship and study for apprentices / students.**

The increasing demands of complex industrial plants, which require professional support, programming and maintenance, are accompanied by an increased need for highly qualified specialists. "Carinthia is the first province in Austria to implement this attractive new educational offer! In this training, practice and theory are combined and the contents are optimally coordinated. In this way, we are making Carinthia even more attractive as a location for young people, and we are implementing a further measure for future-oriented training, which at the same time counteracts emigration and the shortage of skilled workers," emphasizes Carinthia's education officer, Governor Peter Kaiser. For the participants, "Apprenticeship and Study" means a fixed job and a bachelor's degree, and for the state of Carinthia it means a unique selling point, Kaiser continues.

"A combination of an apprenticeship and the University of Applied Sciences' degree in 'Systems Engineering' meets this need. Especially high school graduates who want to complete an apprenticeship after graduation and are interested in an in-depth education at the FH Campus Villach in parallel benefit from this unique education model," explains Ulla Birnbacher, Vice Dean of the Engineering & IT department at the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences. The project was co-initiated by the Villach Vocational School, GPS – Training Workshop and the industrial companies Flex, Infineon Technologies Austria AG and RHI Magnesita. While the theoretical and conceptual competences are developed in the study program, the in-company training focuses on the acquisition of practical and manual skills.

Josef Stocker, Director of the Villach Vocational School: "The clear shortage of skilled workers on the one hand and the issue of emigration of young adults on the other have been on our minds for a long time. Many discussions with executives from Carinthian companies and the Education Directorate have given rise to this project: Young adults can be offered a further training opportunity in the tertiary education sector after completing their Matura, especially in an AHS. This enables this generation to develop their careers in the technical field, which makes Carinthia an attractive place to live and work. We need an attractive offer so that young people have the incentive to stay in Carinthia. An effective and consistent training model in connection with the dual training system is granted. This will ensure that companies can secure their locations and meet the acute demand for employees in the industry with well-trained and motivated young people."

Apprenticeships and studies combine theory and practice
New challenges on the labor market, such as in plant and operating technology, as well as better opportunities for advancement within a company, are making more and more apprentices consider opting for a dual apprenticeship. Chiara Egarter (apprentice, Infineon Technologies Austria AG): "I decided on an apprenticeship with a parallel course of study because this model ideally combines technology with theory and practice. It was always clear to me that I wanted to follow a professional path in which I could combine the theoretical knowledge I had acquired with classic, practical applications. I also see clear advantages for a successful career here."

Well-trained technical specialists are also in particular demand at Infineon in Villach, where the expansion of the chip factory is progressing. Thomas Reisinger, Chief Operations Officer at Infineon Technologies Austria, says, "The production of microchips today is already strongly digitally supported and will become even more networked and knowledge-intensive in the future. As innovation factory in the global Infineon network, we therefore need skilled employees who can grow with us. With Apprenticeship 4.0. and new concepts such as "Apprenticeship and Study," we offer young people in the region a future-oriented training with interesting career opportunities."

With the "Apprenticeship and Study" training model launched this winter semester, young people have the prospect of an attractive job in an industrial company, two apprenticeship degrees and a bachelor's degree. Martin Reiner, Managing Director Flex Althofen: "Training has a very high priority at Flex Althofen, as we want to offer young people career prospects in the region. Therefore, it was natural for us to also actively support the unique project "Apprenticeship and Studies" and to train apprentices according to this model. This offers the skilled workers of tomorrow an excellent combination of practice and theory. The young people are given the opportunity to get to know many areas in an international high-tech company and to start their careers after successful completion."

Graduates of "Apprenticeship & Study" will be in demand on the labor market. They are highly qualified specialists who will also be able to take on management tasks in the future. "Digitalization is creating completely new job profiles in the industry. The 'Apprenticeship and Study' concept is guided by the future needs of modern companies. This comprehensive training enables graduates to help shape new ways of working and to develop into highly qualified managers," says Simone Oremovic, Executive Vice President People, Projects & Communications RHI Magnesita. "We are proud to offer and help shape this innovative training model. Our site in Radenthein is one of the most modern industrial plants in Austria and therefore offers the perfect conditions to train the skilled workers of tomorrow."

Fast Facts:

Duration of training:

- Double apprenticeship shortened to 3 years
- Bachelor's degree at the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences can be completed parallel to the apprenticeship

Effort per week:

- 4 days of apprenticeship (in the company or vocational school)
- 2 days of study at the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences

Application procedure:

1. Application for an apprenticeship position in a company that offers the **apprenticeship "Process technology + Electrical engineering: Plant and operating technology".**
2. After acceptance for the apprenticeship, application to the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences for the part-time bachelor study "Systems Engineering" is possible
3. Admission procedure at the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences
4. Start of studies in the middle of September

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