



Vocational Training at Eawag

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Topics: Organisation & Staff

Sam Derrer has been Head of Vocational Training at Eawag for ten years, so he knows just how varied the apprenticeships are, and how trainees here are both supported and stretched.



Sam Derrer is Head of Vocational Training at Eawag.
(Photo: Dean Shirley)

What are the distinctive features of vocational training at Eawag?

Sam Derrer: With its vocational training, Eawag offers a professional learning environment,

with motivated trainers who also supervise the trainees as line managers – during the time they spend in the various departments. One particularly distinctive feature is the large number of apprentices we train here. For these young people, that makes the transition to the “adult world” a bit easier, as it gives them an opportunity to compare notes and network amongst themselves.

What apprenticeships does Eawag offer?

At Eawag, we provide training particularly in the laboratory sector – for both chemistry and biology laboratory technicians. But we also offer apprenticeships in the administrative and IT areas – for business administrators (EFZ/Federal Certificate of Proficiency), system engineers (EFZ) and ICT specialists (EFZ).

What exactly does an apprenticeship involve?

Apprentices here spend three to twelve months working in the same position and then move to a different group or department. This breadth of training provides insights into a number of different areas. Theoretical input reinforces what the apprentices learn on the job and supplements their practical training.

Are there any highlights the apprentices particularly look forward to?

That’s certainly true of our Apprentice Camps, which promote their social skills and personal development, and which the apprentices help to organise. In the first year, we have a forest project week, and our annual ski camp is also popular. Our collaboration with partners in industry gives trainees an opportunity to experience different corporate cultures and ways of working outside Eawag.

What requirements do candidates have to meet for an Eawag apprenticeship?

When we select our apprentices, we pay particular attention to their basic motivation and enthusiasm for the job. In today’s working environment, team skills and the ability to communicate effectively are also key requirements.

What else is important in vocational training, apart from the actual qualifications?

We want to make sure our trainees are not just technically qualified, but also prepared for their overall career journey. That includes personal development and also an awareness of social questions which will be important later in life.

Currently available apprenticeships at Eawag

On our job portal you will find the apprenticeship positions currently available at Eawag. We look forward to receiving your application!

[Go to the job portal](#)

Cover picture: Eawag, Peter Penicka

A vocational apprenticeships at Eawag

[Watch the Video on Youtube](#) (in German).

Related Links

Further information on apprenticeships

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