

Architecture

Curriculum

Master's programme

Duration: 6 semesters

Programme number: 066 443

This is the English translation of the original German version. Only the latter is legally binding.

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§ 1. Preamble

The Institute of Architecture at the University of Applied Arts Vienna is a laboratory for the future. In their personal dealings with high-profile teaching staff, students have the opportunity to gather experience that turns information into knowledge. The ongoing discussion of the relation between theory and practice gives students an insight into the reality of design allowing them to understand what it means to make architecture.

The three design studios with their different key aspects are marked by knowledge transfer in small groups, which unites all students through common topics in order to test the paradigms of contemporary architecture by way of example. It is recommended that students switch to another design studio for at least one semester during their second year of studies.

Students work in teams with comprehensive supervision and assistance by highly qualified personalities from the field of architecture. From the outset the main focus is on design, the development of concepts, and a complex examination of architecture. The programme encourages the creative association of related topics.

Integrated in the studios' design work, the teaching of technical and theoretical subjects is organized around an in-depth understanding of scientific and engineering basics plus the relevant theoretical background, as well as the development of individual tools and practices to manage the own artistic stance.

The study subject group „Architectural Science“ encompasses integrating the technical disciplines in the whole of the design process. The subject group „Theory“ provides an understanding of the cultural and societal connections of the discipline. In the subject group „Instrumentarium“ students develop methods to manage and communicate their designs set in current economical, ecological, and political contexts. In this way, the students' artistic design potential is honed, the ability for efficient cooperation that is crucial in their subsequent professional practice is trained, and the critical responsibility of architects toward their tasks is taught. Strategic thinking and visual culture enable communication within the discipline as well as engagement with various interests in society.

§ 2. Qualification profile

The field of activity which the students will be prepared for and for which the master thesis project qualifies them is in a perpetual state of flux that is constantly accelerating primarily due to the digitalisation of society and current geopolitical developments. Graduates possess a high level of flexibility with which to adapt to new situations and they have a firm command of the latest technologies and tools. This prepares them for all architectural tasks, from spatial planning to interior design, and gives them the organizational skills required to tackle an increasingly complex production process. In view of globalisation and the predominance of economic calculation proactive planning becomes particularly important. Graduates have been trained to think strategically and to anticipate future scenarios so that they may react to complex situations with appropriate solutions.

Architecture is the three-dimensional expression of a society. Accordingly, as mentioned in the preamble, the programme is geared toward the acquisition of technical and theoretical knowledge in connection with the

development of design ideas. However, it also gives students an awareness of the fact that architecture is part of culture and that they bear a responsibility with regard to the given tasks. By critically reflecting on so-called practical necessities as well as standardised procedures, their specific expertise regarding space and organization enables them to devise solutions to current and, above all, future problems and to meet the demands of society.

This is possible thanks to an educational training that encourages collaboration and imparts to the students the necessary tools and platforms for communication. Work in the design studios trains openness between various disciplines, and the master programme intensifies this close interaction all the more as it is now possible to increase the intensity of studies regarding the structure and the solving of tasks at an advanced level.

§ 3. Admission

(1) Prerequisites for admission to the master programme are

- a) evidence of artistic aptitude by way of an entrance examination,
- b) completion of a bachelor degree programme in architecture of international standard at a recognised national or foreign post-secondary educational institution, which together with the master programme will meet the requirements of article 46 of the guidelines 2005/36/EG and
- c) English language knowledge at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) required for successful continuation of the studies. An Austrian secondary school certificate (school grade 12 or 13) or a comparable certificate from a member state of the European Union is accepted as evidence of such skills.

(2) In the application process applicants are to submit a portfolio of their previous work and a biography with previous studies and professional activity including all relevant diplomas, if necessary in certified translation.

(3) The entrance examination is carried out by an examination committee and is divided into two stages:

- a) portfolio
- b) personal interview

(4) The entrance examination has been successfully completed when the examination committee grants a positive assessment for both parts.

§ 4. Scope, academic degree, language

(1) The master degree programme in architecture is an engineering science programme pursuant to § 54 para. 1 Universities Act. It comprises 180 ECTS credits over a period of six semesters.

(2) Upon successful completion of the programme the student is awarded the academic degree of "Master of Architecture" (MArch).

(3) The programme is taught in English.

§ 5. Architectural Design, Expertise, Integration, Free Topics

(1) The courses in the master programme are divided into four areas: Architectural Design, Expertise, Integration, and Free Topics.

(2) 75 ECTS are to be completed in Architectural Design.

(3) 65 ECTS are to be completed in Expertise. This area is divided into the three subject groups of „Architectural Science“, „Theory“, and „Instrumentarium“. Each subject group contains core and supplementary subjects.

(4) 24 ECTS are to be completed in the subject group „Architectural Science“ from a range of courses totalling a minimum of 30 ECTS. The core subjects are

1. Building Construction
2. Structural Design
3. Energy Design
4. Digital Design and Digital Production

(5) 16 ECTS must be completed in the subject group “Theory” from a range of courses totalling a minimum of 20 ECTS. The core subjects are

1. History and Theory of Architecture
2. Applied Geometry and Mathematics
3. Theory of Science and Theory of Society
4. Urban Strategies
5. Research Methods in Architecture and Design

(6) 16 ECTS must be completed in the subject group “Instrumentarium” from a range of courses totalling a minimum of 24 ECTS. The core subjects are

1. Management and Law
2. Communication
3. Applied Strategies
4. Digital Processes

(7) In addition, 9 ECTS from the subject groups “Architectural Science”, “Theory”, and “Instrumentarium” must be completed as integrated courses in connection with Architectural Design (Architectural Design 5). Students are to work on the contents of the various subjects based on their own designs. Integration beyond this extent into the subject of Architectural Design is not only possible, but explicitly recommended to both teachers and students.

(8) 10 ECTS are to be completed in “Free Topics” from the range of courses offered at the University of Applied Arts Vienna or other universities. For the purpose of individual deepening or expansion of knowledge the courses may be selected from specialist areas within or beyond the narrower field of architecture. Moreover, a successfully completed internship in the form of qualified practical work experience at an architectural firm may be credited for a total of 4 ECTS. Suitability of the internship as per § 78 [4] Universities Act must be confirmed beforehand and in writing by a staff member entitled to make such decisions on behalf of Architectural Design; otherwise the administrative body for study law will be unable to award academic recognition of this internship.

§ 6. Master thesis

(1) The master thesis, totalling 30 ECTS credits, concludes the programme and serves as evidence of the student’s ability to handle a particular topic independently with regard to its content and method. It consists of a project to be developed on a topic from the subject of Architectural Design and to be presented in appropriate professional form. Integration of the subject groups “Architectural Science”, “Theory” and “Instrumentarium” is to be documented as appropriate.

(2) Before defining the subject of the master thesis, all mandatory examinations of the curriculum are to be successfully completed.

§ 7. Courses

(1) Pursuant to § 68 [2] Universities Act, the subject of Architectural Design is the central artistic subject. It is offered as individual artistic tutoring¹ in the form of five courses (Architectural Design 1 to 5), each consisting of 15 ECTS.

(2) Courses in the area of Expertise are primarily offered as seminars. In the subject group “Architectural Science” only courses comprising 3 ECTS can be completed. In the subject group “Instrumentarium” and the subject group “Theory”, courses of any number of credits may be completed. Integrated courses must consist of 3 ECTS each.

(3) The range of available Expertise courses is updated each semester. It must be ensured that each semester an adequate selection of courses from the core subjects is available to the students and that this range is supplemented by additional courses in such a way that students are provided with sufficient choice for their individual in-depth studies to the extent stipulated in § 5 para. 4 to 6. Courses from supplementary subjects are to be allocated to appropriate disciplines in consultation with the curricular committee.

(4) In order to register for Architectural Design 5 and the related integrated courses as specified in § 5 para. 7, successful completion of Architectural Design 1 to 4 plus the Expertise courses under § 5 para. 4 to 6 is required.

¹ Refer to the study law section of the university statutes for the definition of the course types.

(5) It is recommended to evenly distribute the individual selection of “Free Topics” pursuant to § 5 para. 8 over the first five semesters of study.

§ 8. Examination regulations

(1) Course examinations

Course examinations are held by the heads of the courses. The examination contents, methods, and assessment criteria must be announced in a suitable form before the beginning of each semester. In the case of integrated courses, students are to first and foremost provide evidence regarding their ability to integrate into their design work the competencies they acquired in the individual study subjects. The assessment is based on the level of depth and quality at which the respective subject was integrated.

(2) Master examination

The master examination concludes the architectural degree programme. It consists of

1. the master thesis
2. the examination committee's assessment regarding the integration of subjects from the Expertise area into the architectural design presented in the master thesis
3. the examinations in the study subject of Architectural Design, and
4. the examinations in the area of Expertise („Architectural Science“, „Theory“, plus „Instrumentarium“)

(3) In the assessment of the master thesis, students are to publicly present their thesis and discuss it with the members of the examination committee. The composition of the examination committee is the responsibility of the administrative body for study law, whereby examiners from the subject of Architectural Design and from the three groups of Expertise subjects are to be included, based on the contents of the examination. Special consideration must be given to the participation of qualified members from outside the university.

(4) The master thesis under § 8 para. 2 subpara. 1 is assessed by the supervising tutor on her/his own, whereas pursuant to § 8 para. 2 subpara. 2 the assessment of the board examination is carried out by the members of the examination committee.

§ 9. Entry into force

This curriculum is valid from 1 October 2011.

APPENDIX: Course of study

		ECTS per sem.	ECTS total	Free Topics 10 ECTS
1st – 4th semester				
Architectural Design 1 - 4		15	60	
Expertise	from the subject group Architectural Science: courses to be selected	6	24	
	from the subject group Theory: courses to be selected	4	16	
	From the subject group Instrumentarium: courses to be selected	4	16	
5th semester				
Architectural Design 5		15	15	
Integration of Expertise	from the subject groups Architectural Science, Theory, Instrumentarium: 3 integrated courses, each consisting of 3 ECTS	9	9	
6th semester				
Master thesis		30	30	
		Total ECTS: 180		