

Social Design

Arts as Urban Innovation

Master Programme

Duration: 4 semesters

Programme Number: 066 781

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

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§ 1. Objectives and principles

The objective of the Social Design master degree programme is the artistic research of challenges that emerge within urban social systems and the broad spectrum of related issues. The urban situation – exemplified by the city of Vienna and compared with other urban and rural contexts – forms both the field of work and the scale for the realisation of the individual projects. The programme generates links between varied disciplinary expertise and the problems posed by the urban realm.

Hence, work in transdisciplinary projects and teams is central in the teaching and learning approaches in the programme – students are trained to think and work in greater contexts, both on the basis of professional competences acquired in their respective previous studies and in interaction with the competences of the other team members.

The projects should be able to affect an immediate impact on the urban environment. Artistic practice in all artistic fields in synergy with project-related methods and knowledge from human, artistic, social, economic, and health sciences is seen as a tool for urban innovation. At the same time, artistic practice is strengthened as a positive force in the shaping of society, raising an awareness to take on social responsibility. Students thereby trigger positive and sustainable transformation and contribute to an increase of so-called “change-makers” in society.

Communication and interaction not only represent fundamental educational objectives and work methods for the students; art-based communication and interaction processes in social systems also lend certain forms of artistic practice a societal efficacy and relevance beyond the primarily market-oriented logic of creative industries, music business, and theatre production.

Building upon the artistic competences present at the University of Applied Arts Vienna (Angewandte), questions and issues that arise in the urban realm are identified and investigated in the contexts of the respective artistic and scientific disciplines required in the project.

The academic principle of research-oriented teaching also prompts research cooperations with non-university institutions. The potential of artistic-scientific projects is determined on the specific example of each project and should thereby stipulate the requirements from the responsible people in planning and public administration.

In addition to cooperations with other universities and educational institutions in the scientific realm, it is a stated goal to work with public administration and non-governmental organisations in order to develop and realise specific projects as close as possible to the actual social demands.

Networking amongst graduates and their involvement in the two universities and municipal planning processes are actively promoted already during their studies, which provides graduates and the universities with enduring possibilities for reflection and support.

§ 2. Legal basis, scope, and academic degree

(1) The Social Design master degree programme

is assigned to the group “Art Studies” in accordance with § 54, para. 1, Austrian Universities Act 2002. It comprises a total of 120 ECTS, which corresponds to 4 semesters.

(2) Upon successful completion of the programme, the academic title Master of Arts (abbreviated MA) is awarded.

§ 3. Qualification profile

Graduates will have undergone a process of transformation and conscientisation in their studies that enables them to define their artistic identity anew. In particular, they should be able to

- identify and analyse relevant questions and issues,
- assemble and organise competent teams of people from diverse professional backgrounds,
- design effective and socially responsible solution concepts,
- communicate the developed concepts, and
- put them into practice in the respective context where possible.

Graduates employ art as a tool of urban innovation and can design and realise projects in social-artistic fields with the participation of different target groups. They are qualified for work fields that involve the development of urban concepts and their realisation in diverse social contexts in cooperation with local authorities as well as various public and private institutions.

As the master degree programme is oriented towards graduates from a diverse range of previous studies, who would like to deal with the issues mentioned in the preamble with an inter- and transdisciplinary approach, a particular challenge is to build upon the students' varied competences. Appropriate forms of support for the students are essential: In addition to professionals from different fields of expertise, teachers with integrative analysis competence and breadth of vision provide knowledge about corresponding thematic fields, associate project-specific relationships, and develop these ideas together with the students.

Given the character of the programme, in addition to the abovementioned professional competences the graduates attain a high level of integrability into different disciplines and extensive skills in self-organised learning processes.

§ 4. Admission

(1) Prerequisites for admission to the master degree programme are graduation from a bachelor or equivalent programme at a recognised domestic or foreign post-secondary educational institution and proof of artistic aptitude in the framework of the entrance examination before the examination board.

(2) The examination consists of two parts. Positive assessment of the first part is a requirement for the second part of the examination.

1. Short biography and letter of motivation (written application):
 - Short biography: Applicants provide a written overview of their previous qualifications, competences, and main fields of activity.
 - Letter of motivation: Applicants describe their basic visions for art as urban innovation as well as their expectations from the Social Design programme and how they would apply the knowledge acquired in this field of study. In the process, they also explain in which areas their artistic and artistic-scientific interests are concentrated and illustrate potential action radiuses for project works and their social efficacy.
2. Group work and discussion (oral-practical):
 - Group work: In small, randomly composed groups, the applicants deal with a specified task and can thereby evidence their ability to work in a team.
 - Discussion: On the basis of a brief oral presentation of the submitted letter of motivation with a focus on the artistic and artistic-scientific interests, the artistic aptitude of the applicants is discussed with the examination board – especially their ability to acquire the competences formulated in the qualification profile during four semesters and on the basis of their previous qualifications. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to critically reflect upon the results of the previous parts of the examination.

(3) The entrance examination is passed when all parts of the examination have been positively assessed.

§ 5. Programme structure and subjects

- (1) In all four semesters, the programme is organised into:
 - expertise elements: In the introductory phase, workshops, and project works, experts – from four internally offered fields of expertise, which can be complemented with external experts upon request – provide impetus on specialised topics and supervise the project-related work process of the students. elements for individual reflection and reflection within the student group: During the entire course of the programme, students are asked to systematically reflect upon their progress and their personal educational objectives and receive support to this end.
- (2) After a one-semester introductory phase follow two project semesters. The master thesis is to be completed in the last semester in the form of a master project.
- (3) For the programme the following core fields of expertise are defined which can be extended through cooperation agreements with other institutions when required:
 1. Architecture
 2. Fine Arts
 3. Design
 4. Theory
- (4) The central artistic subject pursuant to § 68, para. 2, Austrian Universities Act 2002 consists of the module “Introductory Skills” and the project works.

§ 6. Teaching language

- (1) German and English are the teaching languages of the programme.
- (2) Students have the right to use either German or English in their work.
- (3) Courses and examinations can be held either in German or in English. The language must be announced to the students before the beginning of the semester.

§ 7. Introductory phase

- (1) In the one-semester introductory phase, the fundamental contents of the programme, inter- and transdisciplinary work methods, and project organisation and cooperation are conveyed in changing work groups.
- (2) The introductory semester comprises 30 ECTS. It consists of the programme-related reflection (4 ECTS) and the following three modules (together 26 ECTS):
 1. Introductory Theory (10 ECTS): held in the form of an interdisciplinary lecture series that introduces the topics of the programme from the perspective of the individual fields of expertise and includes an excursion to convey practical basics. By virtue of this module, students can identify and understand the relevance and the respective tasks of the individual disciplines in an urbanism theoretical context.
 2. Introductory Methodology (6 ECTS): consists of courses on project management and artistic- and scientific-theoretical methodology. By virtue of this module students can identify and understand the necessary steps in the planning and implementation of a transdisciplinary team project.
 3. Introductory Skills (10 ECTS): In addition to learning the fundamentals about group dynamics and acquiring relevant competences for interdisciplinary integrability, this module explores possible constellations of student teams in light of the following project semester on the basis of the letters of motivation submitted by the individual students in the framework of the entrance examination. By virtue of this module students can identify suitable project partners and define their role in an interdisciplinary team for themselves and for others. Work results are project descriptions (cf. § 8, para. 3) for the two subsequent project semesters and a study portfolio that initially contains work demonstrating competences acquired in previous studies and individual educational objectives, and forms the basis for an ongoing reflection on one's personal progress in the course of studies..
- (3) Successful completion of the entire introductory phase is a requirement for admission to the first project work.

§ 8. Project work

(1) Project works are to be organised in such a manner that a topic can be examined in the context of several fields of expertise; in this regard, the project is typically developed together by a group of students. The topic of the project work can be proposed by students, derived from current key issues by members of the expert groups, or also originate from outside, for instance in the form of an external commission addressed to the group of expertise.

(2) The scope of a project work comprises 22 ECTS, which consist of

- project implementation,
- project competences that must be acquired by all of the students participating in the project, and
- individual competences that each participating student needs to integrate into the planned project from the perspective of their native discipline.

(3) Before beginning the project work, students must write a project description containing the topic, the required fields of expertise, the project's main field of expertise, the needed support of additional artistic and scientific expertise if necessary, the clarification of institutional cooperation partners where applicable and the project and individual competences that need to be acquired. The project description can be updated in the framework of a midterm presentation (cf. § 12, para. 3).

(4) At the suggestion of the student the expertise team appoints a project supervisor from the university teachers or external experts in question. At the request of the project supervisor the expertise team assigns advising experts, respecting contentwise needs and budgetary resources.

(5) Students are supported in the implementation of the project by the project supervisor, by all experts assigned to the project, and also in the framework of the programme-related reflection if necessary.

(6) In order to acquire the project and individual competences, students can make use of the complete range of courses offered at the Angewandte; other means of acquiring the competences (e.g. in the form of an internship or informal learning in the context of the project) are likewise permissible.

(7) The project result, documentation of the project development including critical reflection, and the acquired project and individual competences are constituents of the final examination (cf. § 12, para. 2).

§ 9. Programme-related reflection

(1) Programme-related reflection to the amount of 4 ECTS per semester is stipulated in order to adequately support a sound further development of the students' varied initial competences. It consists of the following elements:

1. Students continuously update their study portfolio compiled in the module "Introductory Skills" by documenting the acquired competences and evaluating their progress in view of the desired educational objectives in the programme.
2. Towards the end of each semester, all students discuss and exchange their experiences in order to make the individual project experiences mutually beneficial. When possible, graduates also participate in this exchange. Thereafter, the project groups for the following semester are discussed and organised.

(2) Students can consult members of the expertise team to discuss on the basis of their study portfolio the realisation of individual educational objectives as well as experiences in work processes and team situations. If the demand is high, this consultation can be organised in small groups.

§ 10. Workshops

(1) Each semester, thematic workshops by international experts to the amount of 4 ECTS are organised to ensure the students' ongoing engagement in contemporary international discourse.

(2) Students document their insights from the workshops in their study portfolio.

§ 11. Master thesis

(1) The regulations for the project work also apply for the master thesis, however the master thesis amounts to 26 ECTS. It serves to evidence the ability to methodically and independently elaborate the content of a particular topic.

(2) Prerequisites for registration to the master thesis examination before the examination board are the submission of a completed study portfolio and positive assessment of both project works.

§ 12. Examination regulations

(1) Module examinations serve to assess the competences defined for the module. The examinations for the three modules in the introductory semester are held in the form of an examination before the examination board. The members of the board are the teachers involved in the modules. Students present the project sketches made during the introductory semester. During the course of the examination discussion, the chairperson must ensure that the integration of the competences of all three modules are sufficiently covered in the planned projects. A separate assessment of each of the three modules is made on this basis.

(2) Examinations for project works and master theses are held before the examination board. The board is composed from representatives of the four fields of expertise as well as from experts from other fields of expertise assigned to the project. When possible, external persons are also consulted. The assessment is based on the presentation of the results and the developed project design, the project documentation, and the study portfolio. Assessment criteria are the project objectives formulated in the project description, the application of the project and individual competences acquired by the student, and the fulfilment of the individual educational objectives in light of the qualification profile.

(3) Paragraph 2 applies analogously for midterm presentations of project works or master theses. In place of the assessment is the critical exchange with the students, which can also manifest where necessary in a mutual modification of the project description.

(4) The master examination represents the completion of the master degree programme. The assessment is based in equal parts on

1. the assessment of the master thesis and
2. the assessment of the two project works.

§ 13. Expertise team

(1) The rectorate appoints one expert for each field of expertise. All experts together constitute the expertise team.

(2) The expertise team is in charge of the following duties:

- a. Contentwise and organisatory responsibility for conception and execution of the introductory phase, the invitation of experts to conduct workshops (§ 10) and the programme related reflection
- b. Securing the required staff for the courses and supervision of projects in the different fields of expertise by teaching and supervising by themselves and by conducting nationally and internationally research for the assignment of further persons suitable for teaching and supervising,
- c. Proposing individuals to the rectorate for the assignment as teachers and as international experts
- d. Participate in examination boards,

(3) The expertise team elects a chairperson for a one year term of office that is responsible for the execution of the board's decisions and their external representation (as "Head of Programme").

(4) The expertise team can determine in its rules of procedure that certain duties can be looked after directly by the chair; in that case the chair has to report to the board regularly.

APPENDIX: COURSE OF STUDIES

1. Semester (Introductory Semester)	ECTS
Module “Introductory Theory”	10
Module “Introductory Methodology”	6
Module “Introductory Skills”	10
Programme-Related Reflection	4
TOTAL	30
2. Semester (Project Semester)	ECTS
Project Work	22
Workshops	4
Programme-Related Reflection	4
TOTAL	30
3. Semester (Project Semester)	ECTS
Project Work	22
Workshops	4
Programme-Related Reflection	4
TOTAL	30
4. Semester (Master Semester)	ECTS
Master Thesis	26
Programme-Related Reflection	4
TOTAL	30

Schematic Diagram
