

Art & Science

Curriculum

Master Programme

Duration: 4 Semesters

Programme Number: 066 776

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

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1. Profile

The area of tension between art and science is multi-faceted and has a long history. Both spheres concern themselves with specific forms of searching for knowledge in and about the world, and despite all differences they agree on curiosity, eagerness to experiment and innovation as the main drive – past and present – for scientists and artists alike. Artistic practice and scientific research are different spheres, yet there is a valuable and little-used social potential in recognizing and understanding their connection.

Brought into close proximity, as enabled by the University of Applied Arts, both discourses generate a high form of energy that can be usefully applied in both art and science. In science, it becomes possible to better grasp complex interrelationships and overcome high levels of specialization; for art, the advantage of being close to science is that its focus can be directed to new topics outside the traditional canon of aesthetics, thus also opening up areas that have remained hidden until now. The Master programme “Art & Science” offers a lively and open platform for this.

The study programme thus sees itself as an experimental laboratory at the interface of social, aesthetic and technological development. The programme focuses on the exploration of the manifold interactions between art and science, the critical understanding of social and technological developments and the design of new methods and instruments in both discourses. In doing so, we actively participate in addressing the challenges of the 21st century, specifically issues of digitalisation, social justice, ecology and economy in a globalised postcolonial world.

The Master programme aims to investigate the relationship of artistic and scientific theory and practice and the methods and research approaches involved in order to develop new transdisciplinary approaches. An inter- and transdisciplinary approach, as well as the constant work in challenging projects enable to understand, compare, critically question and redefine the respective method and theory formation, as well as their practical implementation in both arts and sciences. The idea is to create preconditions for finding productive interactions between respective discourses and to create new knowledge on this basis.

One prerequisite for this analysis and production is knowledge of the relevant sections and perspectives of the history of art and science, which makes it possible to historically classify and understand the different interactions and interdependencies on each other of both forms of insight. Based on this, an examination of current artistic positions and their relevance in relation to scientific theory, research and practice can take place.

2. Qualification profile

With the skills they developed in their studies, graduates of the Master programme will be able to support and facilitate conceptual scientific or artistic research and development processes, enabling them to be effective as mediators between disciplines in society. Based on comprehensive knowledge and understanding of contemporary and historical practices and theories in the context of art, science and the broader cultural and social context, they will have developed an awareness that enables them to bring the following knowledge and skills to university science research laboratories, non-university research institutes and research companies, to the media, to their own art practice as well as to other professional fields and social areas.

Graduates

- can further develop a transdisciplinary practice that includes research, production, presentation, administration, self-organisation and participation in the art-making process
- have conceptual and practical skills that they can develop further according to the requirements of their own artistic and/or academic work
- have gained a sound knowledge and understanding of current developments in practices, discourses and contexts of contemporary arts and sciences
- have gained knowledge of technical skills and theories as well as organisational and communication skills relevant to artistic and/or scientific activity
- have acquired skills in inter- and transdisciplinary work and research
- can use strategies to generate ideas and develop experimental approaches in the use of appropriate media
- have gained an understanding of the systems of art and science and their mechanisms
- were taught the ability to engage in current discourses, on issues of art, culture, society and science

Students are supported with a wide range of courses to further specialise their studies according to their individual orientation, and in addition to all the artistic and scientific subjects offered they also gain the ability for:

- working academically
- carrying out a research project guided by themselves
- effective teamwork

3. Scope, duration, and structure of the programme

The programme consists of 120 ECTS credits with a duration of four semesters.

The programme is taught in English. However, for courses in the areas of "Practice and Theory" and "Free Electives" the language of instruction depends on the range of courses available.

Of central importance each semester is the "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science", which serves as an interface of the individual orientations within the study programme and provides the space to develop the artistic realisation as well as the associated confrontations. Transdisciplinary research with reflection on different methods is thus made possible and professionally accompanied.

In each academic year, cooperation with different international institutions, researchers and artists takes place in the practical and theoretical teaching, which makes the programme highly flexible and allows the focus of the content to be adapted to current developments. In the same way, this also applies to artistic reflection and artistic practice.

Students determine the individual focus of the programme and the balance and ratio between art and science through the courses they select from "Practice and Theory" and "Free Electives", plus in particular, through the topic of their Master thesis.

The curriculum is partly structured in a progressive manner. The central artistic subject "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science" is designed in such a way that the project work must be completed in a specific order. Successful completion of the course "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science I" is a prerequisite for participation in the course "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science II". Successful completion of the course "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science II" is in turn a prerequisite for participation in the course "Groundwork of Master Thesis". Successful completion of the course "Groundwork of Master Thesis" forms the basis for the Master's thesis and the completion of the degree programme. The project work in the first semester is accompanied by the course "Collaborative Exhibition Making I", the successful completion of which is a prerequisite for participation in the course "Collaborative Exhibition Making II", which accompanies the project work in the second semester. Additionally, for the study subject "Art & Science: Methods and Practices of Transdisciplinary Research", successful completion of the course "Transdisciplinary Expeditions I" is a prerequisite for participation in the course "Transdisciplinary Expeditions II". All remaining courses can be completed in any order.

The final assessment of the programme is the product of the assessments in the following modules:

- Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science
- Art & Science: Methods and Practices of Transdisciplinary Research
- Master Thesis

Course breakdown per subject:

Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science

Courses	Type	SH	ECTS
Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science I	PA	3	11
Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science II	PA	3	12
Groundwork of Master Thesis	PA	3	18

Art & Science: Methods and Practices of Transdisciplinary Research

Courses	Type	SH	ECTS
Collaborative Exhibition Making I/II	PA	4	8
Experimental Studies I-IV	SE	8	16
Methods of Sensing and Knowing	VO	2	2
Perspectives from Science and Art	VO	2	2
Transdisciplinary Expeditions I/II	VU	5	7
Introduction to the Philosophy of Science	VU	2	2
Art & Science Writing	SE	2	4
Art & Science Studio	SE	2	4
Practice and Theory			4
Free Electives			4

Master Thesis

Courses	Type	SH	ECTS
Master Thesis			24
Master Thesis Tutorial	KO	2	2

SH = Semester Hours

4. Admission

The "Art & Science" master programme is an art study programme in accordance with § 54, para. 1, subpara. 3 of the Austrian Universities Act.

Prerequisites for admission are evidence of artistic aptitude provided within the framework of the entrance exam pursuant to § 76 of the Universities Act plus graduation with a domestic diploma or bachelor degree or foreign equivalent in the fields of fine arts, media arts, design, architecture, engineering, humanities, natural, cultural or social sciences.

5. Recommended Study Route

1st Semester	Type	SH	ECTS
Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science I	PA	3	11
Collaborative Exhibition Making I	PA	2	4
Experimental Studies I	SE	2	4
Methods of Sensing and Knowing	VO	2	2
Transdisciplinary Expeditions I	VU	3	3
Introduction to the Philosophy of Science	VU	2	2
Practice and Theory from the following areas depending on current course offers: Programming, Computer Graphics, Science Visualisation, Electron Microscopy, Media Arts, Photography, Painting, Printmaking, Drawing, Sculpture, Video, Sound, Performance, Material Technology (Wood, Metal, Textiles, Ceramics, Paper) Art History, Art Theory, Media Theory, Cultural Studies, Transcultural Studies, Philosophy, Gender Studies			4

2nd Semester	Type	SH	ECTS
Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science II	PA	3	12
Collaborative Exhibition Making II	PA	2	4
Experimental Studies II	SE	2	4
Perspectives from Science and Art	VO	2	2
Transdisciplinary Expeditions II	VU	2	4
Free Electives: Courses at universities (national and international) of free choice			4

3rd Semester	Type	SH	ECTS
Groundwork of Master Thesis	PA	3	18
Experimental Studies III	SE	2	4
Art & Science Writing	SE	2	4
Art & Science Studio	SE	2	4

4th Semester	Type	SH	ECTS
Master Thesis			24
Master Thesis Tutorial	KO	2	2
Experimental Studies IV	SE	2	4

(SH = Semester Hours)

6. Examination regulations

6.1. Entrance exam

- 6.1.1. The entrance examination involves the assessment of exceptional artistic talent and the ability to link this talent with scientific processes.
- 6.1.2. Registration for the entrance examination takes place upon submission of a portfolio of independently produced sample work from preliminary studies as well as a letter of motivation with an accompanying curriculum vitae.

The entrance examination consists of three phases:

- The first phase includes the assessment of the artistic and/or scientific sample work prepared by the candidate.
- The second phase consists of a written test on creative tasks in the fields of art and science.
- In the third phase, the candidate's aptitude for the programme is reviewed in a personal interview.

- 6.1.3. The entrance exam is only considered to be successfully completed when a positive assessment is granted in all three phases.

6.2. Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science

- 6.2.1. The study subject "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science" is classed as the central artistic subject pursuant to § 68 para. 2 Universities Act.
- 6.2.2. Usually, project works are carried out by a single person. However, provided the project supervisors agree, project work may be executed by several students working together. In this case it must be ensured that the individual contribution of each student is recognisable and that the conceptual artistic-scientific parts contributed are of equal value.

6.3. Experimental Studies

- 6.3.1. "Experimental Studies" include formats for transdisciplinary networking and supervision, as well as supplementary, subject-related guest lectures. Grades will be issued by including the continuative formats for transdisciplinary networking on offer during the semester in question.

6.4. Master thesis

- 6.4.1. The programme concludes with the Master thesis.
- 6.4.2. The Master thesis consists of the development, the realisation with media technology and the theoretical foundation of a project of artistic research in an artistic-scientific field of application.
- 6.4.3. The Master thesis is supervised by one or more university teachers with *venia docendi* in the framework of an accompanying tutorial. Pursuant to § 19, para. 2, subpara. 2 of the Universities Act, the supervisors are appointed, at the request of the study coordinator, by the administrative body for study law. The students have a right of proposal.
- 6.4.4. The Master thesis may be produced by two students jointly provided the programme coordinator authorised this in agreement with the supervisors and provided the contribution to the Master thesis by each student is recognisable.
- 6.4.5. Following a public presentation of the results by the student, the Master thesis is to be assessed by an examination board consisting of at least three university lecturers from the relevant subject area. The supervisors are to be members of the examination board in any case.

6.5. Final examination

- 6.5.1. The final examination consists of the subjects "Interdisciplinary Project Work Art & Science" and "Art & Science: Methods and Practices of Transdisciplinary Research" as well as of the completion of the Master thesis.

6.6. Academic degree

- 6.6.1. Successful completion of the programme requires the evidence of successful participation in all of the courses stipulated in the curriculum and the approbation of the Master thesis.
- 6.6.2. Upon successful completion of the programme, the student is awarded the academic degree "Master of Arts" (MA).

7. Entry into force

- 7.1. This curriculum entered into force on 1 October 2011.
- 7.2. The amendments to the curriculum entering into force on 1 October 2026 shall apply to all students as of the date on which the amendments enter into force.