

STUDY WITH US BASEL ACADEMY OF ART AND DESIGN FHNW

HGK BASEL
FHNW

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The University of Applied Sciences
Northwestern Switzerland FHNW includes
the following Schools:

School of Applied Psychology FHNW
School of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geomatics FHNW
Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW

School of Life Sciences FHNW
Basel Academy of Music FHNW
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School of Social Work FHNW
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University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland FHNW
Basel Academy of Art and Design
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The Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW (HGK Basel) at Campus Dreispitz offers a creative environment for education, research, continuing education, outreach as well as services in the fields of art and design.

In various BA, MA, PhD programmes students are given all the freedom they need to grow as individuals, at the same time they develop an awareness for pressing societal issues and the challenges of peaceful coexistence. HGK Basel sees itself as inextricably linked with the values of civil society and addresses the issues this entails.

The students are taught manual and technical skills by means of experimental approaches. Open-ended and process-guided methods in design and art research provide the foundation for socially relevant and reflective action along with an understanding of historical and current discourses. In this context, the topics of digitality, diversity, and sustainability play a key role.

HGK Basel is equipped with a professional infrastructure including workshops, multifunctional performance spaces, 24/7 accessible studio facilities, a media library, and highly specialized photography, video, and sound studios, thus providing the roughly 1,000 students, teachers, and staff excellent conditions for their learning, teaching, and research activities.

‘TANK’, HGK Basel’s exhibition space, presents projects that have been developed specifically for the site by both artists and students. And with CIVIC, a discourse and exhibition space, HGK Basel is creating a social infrastructure for and with students, researchers, employees and the public.

HGK Basel is located close next to a number of other leading cultural institutions and creative enterprises such as the library of the SfG Basel School of Design, the HEK (House of Electronic Arts Basel), the studios of the international scholarship programme Atelier Mondial, Radio X, the archives of the architectural practice Herzog & de Meuron, along with the adjacent exhibition venues Kunsthaus Baselland and Schaulager.

As a leading city of culture, Basel offers an exceedingly rich, high-quality, and internationally renowned range of cultural events and institutions. The prolific museum landscape, the art and design fairs, a young creative scene, the proximity to Germany and France, the Basel art education tradition, the many local and international networks along with the wide-ranging and inspiring study programmes, and the projects in research and innovation make HGK Basel a singular place to study.

→ fhnw.ch/hgk
→ fhnw.ch/hgk/study

BACHELOR

Arts and Design Education
The study programme combines artistic and creative practices with a theoretical examination of art, design and education. The students engage with art, culture, design, media and communication at a practical, theoretical and educational level. They test creative processes, develop an understanding for teaching issues, and create spaces for experiences and knowledge. Collaborations with regional, national, and international partners from the fields of art, design and education forge links to professional practice. The study programme qualifies students to take up professional work in sociocultural fields, exhibition contexts, off spaces, teaching and public youth work. The bachelor’s degree also qualifies the student for the master’s programme Arts and Design Education, Teaching Diploma for Secondary Schools.

Fashion Design
‘Doing Fashion’ is seen as a culture and fashion design as a cultural practice. Fashion is a global and social system that produces paradoxes that cannot always be resolved. Fashion confronts people with its own contradictions. How can we design, produce, buy, teach and learn sustainably? How can we coordinate aesthetic and circular methods and processes when we ‘do’ fashion? And how can we confront demands for diversity and accountability within the context of postcolonial discourses – and underscore our critical perspective? In addition to emphasising performance and performativity, the study programme is characterised by a strong focus on the body and the perception of it, on movement and body-based design methods, as well as on ‘bodily knowledge’. We examine other bodies, including other bodies of fashion in the midst of debates that are rebalancing the confrontation between humans and machines. What are artificial and technological modifications of the human body? How does the body of fashion move in the metaverse?

Fine Arts
Studying Fine Arts helps students to develop a distinct, individual artistic position. In the studio, in workshops, and through projects and exhibitions, students learn to shape their own artistic language. The programme builds on a high degree of self-initiative. Studying art implies becoming familiar with art. Artists are pioneers by connecting worlds, which appear to have nothing in common, in new and surprising ways. They redefine the language of traditional media, materials, and technologies through experimentation, by formulating new concepts, writing essays, consulting archives, or choreographing bodies in spatial configurations. Artists are forever intent on engaging with and exploring what contributes to our extended perception of so-called reality, thus make a meaningful contribution to society.

Industrial Design
Aesthetics, utility, materiality, emotional impact, readability, the value of form: the design of serial products builds on the knowledge and expertise of different disciplines. In view of playing an active role as designers in a rapidly changing lifeworld, students learn to act with self-confidence in their own subject field and to interact with neighbouring disciplines with the necessary expertise and social competence.

In the Basic Study Course, students are taught the conceptual, methodological and hands-on skills required in creative, problem-focused design processes as a foundation to their own future independent and critical design work. The main study course comprises in-depth project work centred on the ‘Introduction, Practice and Vision’ projects, which can be chosen freely. Industrial Design students have access to three labs to tackle relevant current and future topics. The Design Culture Lab provides students with the opportunity to apply critical thinking skills and understand new design perspectives; the Material@Sustainability Lab deals with sustainability; and the Digital Integration Lab gives students an expanded perspective of and infrastructure for the digital transformation. Students get to experience the latest design technologies hands-on, whether 3D sketching, project presentations in virtual space or coding.

Interior Architecture and Scenography
The transformation towards a fossil-free, carbon-neutral world and the cultivation of responsibility stand as major design challenges: they include making our spaces worth living again in their social, ecological as well as economic dimensions. One of the core elements of the degree programme includes the establishment and testing of sustainability. The work of interior designers and scenographers includes advancing positive concepts and concrete visions towards societal change: they design both interiors and public urban spaces with an eye to social exchange, cohabitation, and coexistence. In the course of the programme, students acquire a broad foundation of theoretical knowledge and work on their skills in research, analysis, and critical thought and reflection. They learn about the design of public spaces not merely in studios, workshops, and course rooms – rather, they are given the opportunity to realize and implement their concepts in collaborative projects on a 1:1 scale.

Process Design at HyperWerk
As designers we shape the world: formulating a thought, conducting our relationships, or building our organizational structures – everything in our world is designed. In the Bachelor course of studies Process Design at HyperWerk students learn to develop different forms of co-living and initiate social change. How can we use the manifold possibilities of design for the ways in which we deal with our environment? Process designers are open and curious to attend to the issues and subject matters that come as challenges with our co-living. During their studies, students make them visible through self-initiated projects and show opportunities for change. Thematic focal points are on sustainability, justice, and digitality.

Visual Communication and Digital Spaces
In this degree programme, students reflect on and develop visual messages for everyday and specialized communication uses. The aim is to learn how to create, assess, and apply visually perceptible messages; notably, deviations from familiar images play a key role in the practice of visual communication throughout. In the specialization ‘Visual Communication’, students create and design visual messages with the aid of blueprinting, drawing, collage,

photography, typographical composition and its counterpart, digital software tools. In the specialization ‘Digital Spaces’, the focus is on the design and workability of digital media. This includes technical instruction that goes beyond the use of standard software products. The technical possibilities of human computer interaction, digital animation, and generative design, etc. serve as starting points for the design of applications for digital communication channels.

Cocreate
CoCreate is the study programme-wide teaching programme encompassing all HGK Basel’s bachelor’s degree programmes. In the roughly 140 courses offered each year, students work collaboratively, interdisciplinarily and experimentally in groups. Students and representatives from all study programmes are involved in the development of the course contents and teaching formats each year. What can art and design make when do to shape the future and make it visible? CoCreate answers this question by teaching discursive frameworks and future skills such as cooperation skills, sensemaking, self-efficacy or digital literacy. CoCreate relies on open-ended, interdisciplinary and experimental working methods.
→ fhnw.ch/hgk/cocreate

MASTER

Arts and Design Education, Teaching Diploma for Secondary Schools
Students hone and expand their scientific, artistic and creative skills in the fields of art and design education as well as artistic research. In the Arts and Design Education master’s programme, professional discourse, theoretical reflection and hands-on experiences intertwine with the students’ own art, design and educational projects. Students engage with the field of art education and communication in the context of cross-regional network modules as well as practice and research-guided study courses. In the courses offered in cooperation with the FHNW School of Education, they learn how to prepare artistic and design-related contents in a scientifically and didactically sound manner, and then get the chance to apply their new skills in school internships. An MA degree qualifies graduates to take up teaching art at Level II Secondary Schools, work as an art educator in museums, or go on to conduct in-depth research in the field of Art and Design Education.

Digital Communication Environments
The degree programme allows students to expand on their competences in the fields of design practices, technical know-how, research methods, and theoretical knowledge in the context of digital communication channels. Based on the pedagogical principals of the Basel School of Design, current and socially relevant issues are addressed. The focus of the programme is on a practical, theoretical, critical, and researched-based examination of pictorial messages along with their production and dissemination in digital media. The competence to engage with practical, theoretical, and research-related issues in digital communication environments is based on the manual-technical ability to visualize large amounts of data, design virtual and augmented realities, develop user experiences for specific appliances, generate images through creative coding, experiment with deep learning technologies and databases, and handle time-based formats of digital animation and video technology. After attaining 120 ECTS credits and their MA degree, students are formally qualified for third cycle training.

Fine Arts
An in-depth examination of one’s own artistic practice and related issues is at the heart of the MA programme. Students reflect and elaborate on them and relate them to current and historical art discourses. The programme is situated at the intersection of experiment, research, theory, and critical self-reflection, and takes on the form of plenary sessions, seminars, symposia, as well as workshops and mentorships. The students’ artistic engagement continues to evolve in the discourse with mentors and experts from the wider field of art. The MA in Fine Arts is offered in collaboration with the Bern University of the Arts.

Masterstudio Fashion Design
The advanced study programme is based on the holistic concept of ‘Doing Fashion’. In this programme, fashion is understood as a cultural design practice that critically mirrors societal changes and drives them forward in a responsible manner. ‘Doing Fashion’ means engaging in this process – in a radically individ-

ual way, with a workable design vision and a relevant conceptual context in contemporary fashion scenarios. Interdisciplinary modules spanning the three Masterstudios of Industrial Design, Fashion Design and Scenography complement and expand the design perspectives the students have acquired.

Masterstudio Industrial Design
The content of the Masterstudio Industrial Design degree programme focuses on three main thematic areas of the present: Digital Integration, Design Cultures and Circular Design. Discourses on global crises such as climate change or social inequality are the basis for specific research topics and design solutions on sustainability and ecology, shaping the future and technology, interaction and materiality. We take a stance on these issues, define our values and reposition design. Interdisciplinary modules spanning the three Masterstudios of Industrial Design, Fashion Design and Scenography complement and expand the design perspectives the students have acquired.

Masterstudio Scenography
In Masterstudio Scenography, students develop the ability to competently translate complex content and ideas into spatial images you can walk into and to develop staged spaces with narrative qualities. Parallel to the acquisition of the methods and tools of scenography design in space, practically oriented projects involving renowned experts are offered. Studio Scenography pursues the goal of enabling independent designers to take progressive positions within the context of scenography. Relevance in terms of ‘social scenography’, the economic use of resources and the practice of contemporary production techniques lay the foundation of the project-based, exploratory work. Interdisciplinary modules spanning the three Masterstudios of Industrial Design, Fashion Design and Scenography complement and expand the design perspectives the students have acquired.

Transversal Design*
In the research-oriented, transdisciplinary degree program Transversal Design, students develop speculative models, alternative media, practices of care and solidarity, new kinships, and radical proposals for societies and worlds in transition. Students work on self-developed projects and receive mentoring and support in the Critical Medial Lab and HyperWerk. They design, film, draw, code, make games, build, research, organize, or write – addressing processes and possibilities, focusing the why, how, and for whom in theory and practice.

PHD

MAKE/SENSE: The PhD programme in collaboration with the University of Art and Design Linz
The PhD programme MAKE/SENSE advances practice-guided research in art and design, focussing on three future-oriented topical fields: planetarity, materiality, and response-ability. In individual projects and through collective discussions, PhD students explore the potentials of practice-based research in art and design in pursuit of socio-cultural, political and ecological transformation.

→ makesensephd.ch

CONTINUING EDUCATION

International Master of Design: Graphic Design I / Graphic Design II
In the MAS, students consolidate their experience in design through practice-guided teaching units and advance their analytical skills by engaging with historical and theoretical fields of knowledge. The continuing education programme is open to graphic designers and practitioners in visual communication and media design with a BA or equal diploma. The English-based programme is conducted in cooperation with the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). The students are enrolled at UIC, the teaching takes place at the HGK Basel. Upon successful completion of the MAS, graduates are granted an internationally accredited Master of Design (MDes) from the University of Illinois Chicago and two MAS certificates from the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW.

Modular CAS / Workshops
Numerous workshops on topics and methods relevant to art, design and society give participants the opportunity to continue their education in specific areas of competence. The alternating topics offered can be combined individually in modules to become a CAS.

CAS Artistic Literacy
The CAS in Artistic Literacy opens up new perspectives on participants’ own teaching and artistic work and the shared cultural shaping of the world with others. Participants are introduced to artistic and educational strategies

and acquire the ability to make creative discussions effective for social processes. The topics offered integrate methods from the fields of education, digitality, visual arts, design, art education and participative practices, and can be combined to form a personalised further education programme. The CAS will be held with experienced international art and culture makers, educators, artists and lecturers of the HGK Basel.

CAS Circular Literacy*
An important approach to reducing CO₂ emissions in the sense of the net zero target is provided by circular models. Creative thinking and practice - from art to design to architecture - is also experiencing a paradigm shift here. The CAS Circular Literacy introduces specific fields of sustainable design and imparts the necessary current competences and skills. Based on practical design and critical reflection, the CAS offers important insights into circular concepts, the resource-saving use of materials and constructions, principles of the circular economy and the handling of life cycle assessments.

CAS Digital Literacy
With the increasing spread of digital tools and communication channels, the question of how to design them is becoming more and more important. The CAS Digital Literacy imparts knowledge, competences and skills that enable the design of diverse digital communication channels. Courses on Creative Coding, UX/UI,

Immersive Environments, AI/Deep Learning, Digital Participation, Video Documentation and Moving Graphics provide an up-to-date insight into the applied practice and theoretical reflection of digital design in this CAS.

CAS Visual Literacy
The visual has become increasingly important as the range of digital tools and communication channels continues to grow. Visual messages in analogue and digital media are shaping communication and the associated contents and interpretations of our world more than ever. The CAS Visual Literacy introduces specific fields of visual communication and teaches currently required competences and skills. Visual messages in the context of typography, photography, video, posters, publications, websites, and UX/UI are designed in an applied manner and reflected upon in a theoretically analytical way.

→ fhnw.ch/hgk/continuingeducation

*Subject to def. approval by University Board; start autumn semester 2024/2025

** CAS in preparation