A...kademie der bildenden Künste Wien
Quality Development

Design and Further Development of Curricula

CuKo Handbook

Version 1.2

Many thanks to all interview partners, the Senate chairpersons and CuKo chairpersons for their input and feedback!

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Abbreviations

BA	Bachelor's degree
CuKo	Curricula Commission
Dipl.	Diploma
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EX	Excursion
GU	Design Teaching (Gestaltungsunterricht)
KE	Individual Artistic Teaching (künstlerischer Einzelunterricht)
KU	Artistic Teaching (künstlerischer Unterricht)
LV	Course (Lehrveranstaltung)
MA	Master
ÖH	Students' Union at the Academy (Österreichische Hochschüler_innenschaft)
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PJ	Project Studies
PS	Proseminar
PT	Project
PV	Privatissimum
SE	Seminar
UE	Exercise (Übung)
VO	Lecture (Vorlesung)
VU	Lecture-Exercise (Vorlesung-Übung)
UG	Universities Act (Universitätsgesetz)

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Introduction

This handbook describes the design, revision and further development of curricula at the Academy. It provides members or prospective members of curricula commissions (CuKo) with information and assistance to quickly gain an overview of the topic.

The handbook is structured as follows:

First, Chapter 1 presents the bodies responsible for design and further development of curricula, primarily the Senate and the respective curricula commissions. Chapter 2 then describes the individual steps that make up the process of designing and developing a curriculum. Chapter 3 takes a closer look at the anchoring of equality, diversity and inclusion. Chapter 4 then provides an overview of the various components of a curriculum. Chapter 5 presents the support formats available at the Academy in the context of curriculum development. A glossary explaining common terms forms the final section. The appendix contains legal bases and sources.

Notes on reading this handbook:

- Terms whose definitions can be found in the glossary are shown in italics below.
- In the individual sections, legal bases and/or literature for further reading are listed with short titles under “More information”. The literature cited is available online and linked. The legal bases cited are provided with corresponding keywords in brackets to provide a quick overview of the content. The text passages on the cited legal bases are also collected in a separate supplementary document (Gestaltung und Weiterentwicklung von Studienplänen – Rechtliche Grundlagen) and can be read there (in German only).

This handbook brings together the existing knowledge of the CuKo members. We would therefore like to thank all interview partners and CuKo members for their input and feedback. At the same time, the idea behind this handbook is to develop it further together and keep it open to new content. We would therefore also like to thank you for your ongoing feedback and suggestions for improvements (contact: qe@akbild.ac.at).

1 Responsibilities

According to the Universities Act, the design of a new *curriculum* or the further development of an existing *curriculum* is the responsibility of the *curricula commission* set up for a field of study. *Curricula commissions* are commissions of the Senate with decision-making powers and are appointed by the Senate for the duration of its term of office (three years). The Senate can also initiate changes to *curricula*.

A *curriculum* drawn up or amended by a *curricula commission* must be approved by the Senate. The Rectorate has the right to comment. In addition, the Rectorate has the option of prohibiting a *curriculum* or changes to a *curriculum* if it contradicts the Development Plan or if it cannot be covered financially.

A planned new establishment or discontinuation of a degree program must be presented in the Academy's Development Plan (Entwicklungsplan). The Development Plan is drawn up every three years by the Rectorate, the Senate has the right to approve the draft and the University Council approves it.

More information:

- See the glossary term *Curricula commission.*
- UG § 13b (2) number 3 (introduction or discontinuation of studies) (in German only)
- UG § 22 (2) (duties of the Rectorate – rejection of decisions by other bodies (in German only)
- UG § 25 (1) (duties of the Senate) (in German only)
- UG § 25 (10) (collegial bodies) (in German only)

2 Six steps to a new or revised curriculum

Step 1 – Reflect on the curriculum: Reasons for a new or revised curriculum

Impulses for the design or further development of *curricula* can arise from changes in content or for organizational and practical reasons. In addition, new legal requirements make curricular adjustments necessary.

Changing competence requirements in the subject and in the professional fields

Further developments in the subject as well as developments in the professional fields relevant to graduates of the degree program and the associated changes in competence requirements should be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Sometimes new professional fields develop for graduates of a degree program, so that the *qualification profile* or the *curriculum* must be sharpened. Input and feedback is provided, for example, by academic or artistic research, expert opinions and relevant studies, graduate surveys, exchanges with representatives of other art universities or feedback from experts working in the subject or professional fields. Continuous cooperation with professional associations may be helpful. Important suggestions for the Education in the Arts degree program provide the cooperation partners, such as the participating schools and pedagogical universities.

Feedback from students and graduates

Feedback from students and graduates is provided to the *CuKo* in various ways: On the one hand, the results of surveys conducted by the Quality Development Department, such as the academy-wide graduation survey or the evaluation of *good study conditions*, provide important information on questions regarding the acquisition of subject-specific and/or didactic skills as well as on hindering and facilitating factors in the course of studies or generally on questions regarding the *studyability* of a *curriculum*. On the other hand, students are represented in the individual *CuKo* and thus play an active role in the design and further development of *curricula* as experts on their teaching and learning situation.

Legal requirements

New legal requirements relating to *curricula* or study law are a compelling reason to revise a *curriculum*. [1]

1 This was the case at the Academy, for example, in the Education in the Arts degree program due to the legal changeover from the diploma program to the bachelor's/master's system.

Overarching Academy's goals and development directions

The Academy's Development Plan (Entwicklungsplan) for the years 2025–2030 is based on five strategic development directions:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion (see Chapter 3 in this handbook)
- Internationalization and decolonization
- Sustainability and ecology
- Digitalization
- Recursiveness[2]

As framework concepts, they can provide suggestions for the design and further development of *curricula*. The development directions are specified in the Academy's corresponding strategy papers.

More information:

- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien (2023): Entwicklungsplan 2025–2030 (Development Plan 2025–2030) (in German only)
- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Satzung – Frauenförderungsplan und Gleichstellungsplan (Statute – Plan for the advancement of women and equal opportunities plan) (in German only)
- Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2025): Internationalization strategy
- Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2023): Digitalization strategy
- Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2022): Sustainability strategy
- Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2022): Preamble to Academy | Art | Public Sphere
- Molitor, Heike et al. (2023): Gelingende Verankerung von Hochschulbildung für nachhaltige Entwicklung in den Curricula (Successful anchoring of higher education for sustainable development in curricula) (in German only)
- Ionica Lavinia & Vissiennon, Marit & Budde, Jannica (2024): Studiengänge für eine digitale Welt (Study programs for a digital world) (in German only)
- Seidl, Tobias & Michel, Antje (2021): Curriculumentwicklung im Zeitalter der Digitalisierung (Curriculum development in the age of digitalization) (in German only)

Personnel changes

Closely linked to the Academy's Development Plan are strategic personnel changes, such as the reassignment of existing professorships or the establishment of new professorships or generally changed or updated requirement criteria for recruitments. If, for example, a new subject area is established through corresponding positions, this also has curricular effects. Ideally, the individual profiles of the individual lecturers should match the content of a *curriculum* and vice versa. It is therefore always necessary to critically examine whether the structure of skills and specializations of the teaching staff corresponds to the current requirements. In this respect, the competence requirements for new vacancies play an

2 Recursivness refers to the examination of public and political dimensions that also produce the conditions for one's own work. It is therefore about not only reflecting on the existing (e.g. professional or social) framework conditions, but also helping to shape them.

important role. The cooperation between the *CuKo*, the institute chairs and the Rectorate as the body responsible for job advertising is crucial here.

Step 2 – Draw up the qualification profile

The *qualification profile* is a legally defined part of a *curriculum* in the Universities Act. It must define the most important professional and methodological skills as well as social-communicative skills that graduates should have at the end of the relevant degree program. It should describe what a graduate is able to do with regard to the level (difference between *bachelor's* and *master's degree programs*) and, if applicable, in the context of professional fields. It is helpful to always formulate the relevant competencies using verbs. The literature provides assistance in formulating the *qualification profile* and *learning outcomes* (see references below).

The *qualification profile* refers to the entire degree program, i.e. it describes the learning outcomes at a higher level or against the background of a holistic perspective. At the same time, it should be formulated as precisely and as specific as possible.

The *qualification profile* is the core of the *curriculum*. It contributes to the fundamental orientation of the degree program by ensuring that the various elements of the *curriculum* (focus areas, *types of courses*, *courses*, etc.) are coordinated and aligned with a common goal. It forms the guiding basis for the positioning and profiling of the respective degree program as well as for the further detailed design and implementation of the *curriculum*.

The following questions may be helpful in drawing up the *qualification profile*:

- What do we want to give our graduates?
- What professional, social and personal skills characterize the graduates of the degree program?
- Which core skills and which specialist skills does the degree program teach?
- How can the five development directions defined in the Academy's Development Plan be anchored in the *qualification profile?*
- How do the graduates stand out from those of comparable studies?
- What skills do graduates need to overcome social and professional challenges?
- Which skills contribute to the further development of the subjects?
- What interdisciplinary skills should graduates have?
- What are the relevant professional fields for graduates and what developments are there in terms of skills requirements?

More information:

- UG § 51 (2) number 29 (definition of qualification profile) (in German only)
- UG § 58 (2) (qualification profile) (in German only)
- Hochschulrektorenkonferenz Deutschland (2015): Lernergebnisse praktisch formulieren (Formulating learning outcomes in practice) (in German only)
- Universität Passau (2021): Leitfaden zur Formulierung von Lernergebnissen (Guidelines for the formulation of learning outcomes") (in German only)
- See the glossary term *Learning Outcomes.*

Step 3 – Define focus areas

The focus areas form the broad structure of the *curriculum*, with the *qualification profile* as their point of reference. Overarching focus areas of the degree program are defined, which should reflect the *qualification profile*. A focus can relate to specialist skills (e.g. knowledge of art theory), methodological skills (e.g. software application skills) or social-communicative skills (e.g. gender and diversity skills). As with the *qualification profile*, the most important skills to be taught are also defined here, albeit at a higher level of differentiation. It is helpful for the further procedure if the focus areas are also specified on the basis of *learning outcomes*. The questions listed under "Step 2 – Draw up the *qualification profile"* also provide guidance for this step.

It is only through these content-related decisions that it is possible to carry out further concrete structuring steps, such as the allocation of *ECTS* points to individual content areas or subjects or the definition of *course types* and examination forms (see the following chapter).

Step 4 – Operationalization of the focus areas: Specify courses

This step deals with the question of how the overarching *qualification profile* and the focus areas derived from it can be implemented in concrete terms in a course of study. The various levels described are illustrated in the following diagram:



The focus areas form the basis from which the specific *courses* are derived. In a next step, the focus areas are therefore broken down and presented in the form of *courses, course* types, examination forms and *ECTS* credits. The way in which *course types* and *course formats* as well as forms of examination are designed and interact influences the students' acquisition of skills. The forms should therefore be chosen in such a way that they best support the acquisition of the desired competencies.

A tabular list is helpful for this purpose, showing how individual *courses* and their *learning outcomes* contribute to focus areas and how individual focus areas and their *learning outcomes* contribute to the *qualification profile.* It is also decided which *course types* are suitable for achieving the *qualification profile* or the learning and teaching objectives.

It is recommended to offer interdisciplinary and intercurricular *courses* in the *curriculum* as well as to integrate mobility windows and opportunities to complete internships. Likewise, elective and specialization options should be provided for the individual design of studies.

The specific *courses* are awarded *ECTS* points according to the workload. It is also important to consider which *course types* are suitable for the learning and teaching content and their didactic methods. Within the individual semesters, attention must be paid to an appropriate temporal and gradual structure.

The *courses* and their *learning outcomes* should be clearly defined so that lecturers can design their *courses* and teaching content accordingly.

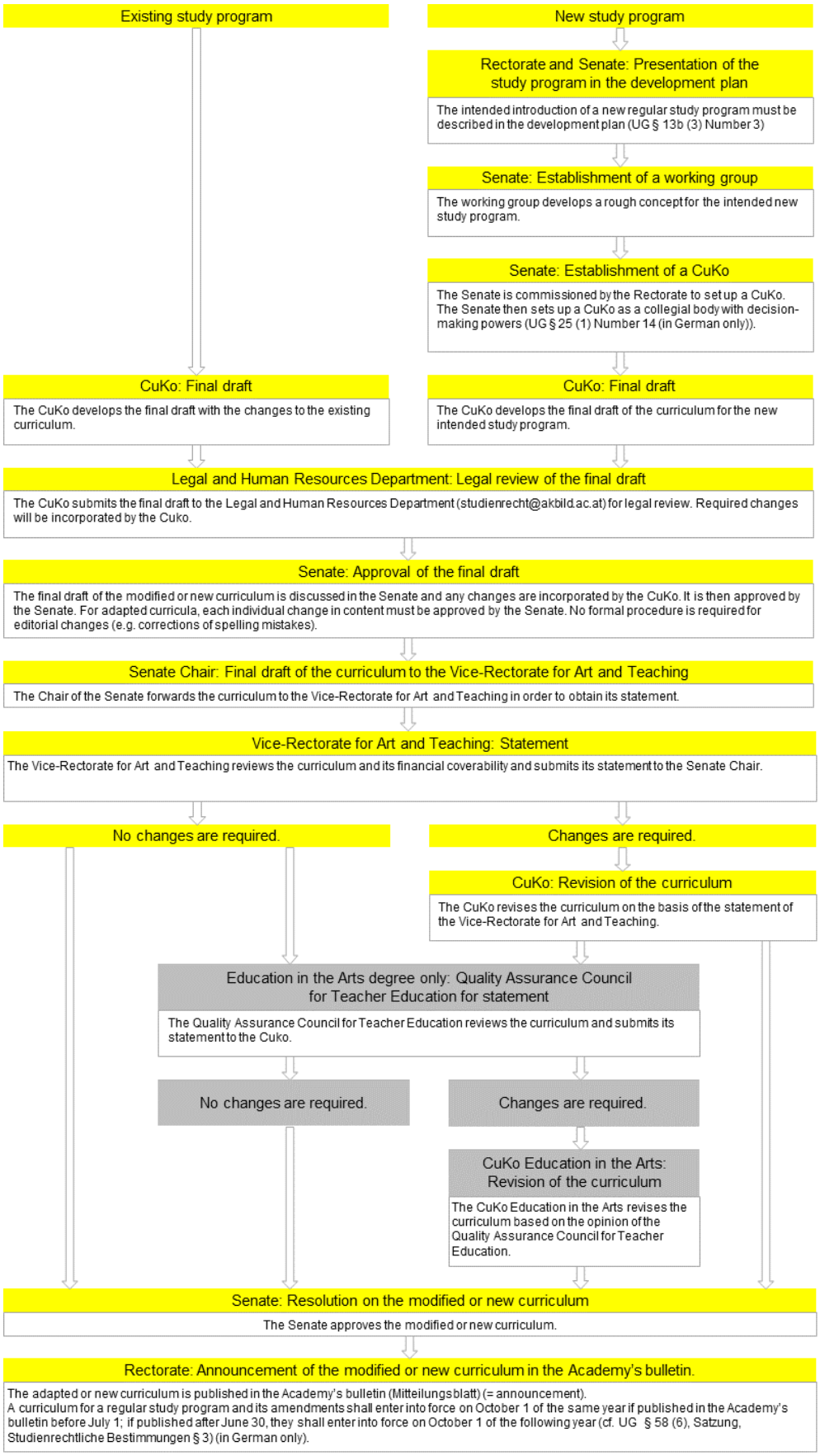
Step 5 – Approvals: Procedure at the Academy

The approval process shown on the next page illustrates the formal procedure for adapting an existing *curriculum* or establishing a new *curriculum*. However, this formal presentation does not reflect the actual complex exchange and discussion process between the *CuKo*, Senate and Rectorate. In this close interaction between the various commissions and governing bodies, much is discussed and clarified in advance.

More information:

- UG § 22 (1) number 12 (duties of the Rectorate – establishment and discontinuation of studies, opinion on curricula, prohibition of curricula or their changes) (in German only)
- UG § 22 (2) (duties of the Rectorate – rejection of decisions by other bodies) (in German only)
- UG § 25 (1) number 10, numbers 14–16 (duties of the Senate – issuing and amending curricula for studies, appointing collegial bodies, issuing guidelines for the activities of collegial bodies, approving the implementation of resolutions of the collegial bodies authorized to make decisions) (in German only)
- UG § 58 (5) (statement on curricula) (in German only)
- UG § 58 (6) (entry into force of curricula) (in German only)

Approvals: Procedure at the Academy



Editorial changes

No formal approval is required for editorial changes to an existing *curriculum* (such as the correction of spelling mistakes).

Discontinuation of a study program

Discontinuation of a study program means that a study program is no longer offered. When a person studies at a university, they formally conclude a contract with the university in which the university undertakes to ensure that they are able to study their chosen study program. If the university no longer offers a particular study program, *transitional provisions* must be issued. For example, in the case of discontinued *diploma degree program,* two study programs must be offered in parallel for the duration of the planned *duration of study* plus two tolerance semesters. This gives students who have started an expiring study program the opportunity to complete it.

The same approval procedure is required for the discontinuation of a study program as for the modification of an existing study program (see the figure above).

Step 6 – Implementation

In order to integrate the new *curriculum* into university operations, the implementation phase, in particular the communication of the *curriculum* by the *CuKo* to the Institute chairs and subsequently by the Institute chairs (which bears responsibility here) to the teaching staff, is a central step. As the teaching staff are to implement the new plans and ideas of teaching objectives and *learning outcomes*, it is necessary to involve them closely. This ensures a transparent and clear translation of the *curriculum*. For example, the *CuKo* for Education in the Arts conducts so-called *CuKo* accompanying *meetings* with all teaching staff in order to communicate and explain the content of the *curriculum*.

Changes to the *curriculum* can also result in changes to the required qualifications and skills of teaching staff. It is therefore important to take the *qualification profile* of the *curriculum* into account when advertising vacancies for new artistic and academic staff and to offer appropriate further training. In this context, close cooperation is required – both between *CuKo* and Human Resources Development and, in the case of job advertisements, between *CuKo* and the Institute chairs and Rectorate.

3 Excursus – Equality, diversity and inclusion

It is an explicit goal of the Academy to increase student diversity and to further promote equal opportunities in education and inclusion. In this context the *curriculum* is a key field of action. This includes diversity- and gender-appropriate language and imagery, making the transition from school to university as inclusive as possible and critically scrutinizing the *curriculum* for hidden, implicit exclusions (see the glossary term *Hidden curriculum*).

In addition to the existing courses in this subject area, the interdisciplinary gender and diversity-related courses, which are anchored in the Equal Opportunities Plan and organized by the Coordination Office for the Advancement of Women | Gender Studies | Diversity, provide a basis for developing gender and diversity skills. The prerequisite for participation by students in the respective fields of study is recognition in the respective *curriculum* as a *compulsory subject*, a *compulsory elective subject* or a *free elective subject*. In addition to being anchored in the *curriculum*, corresponding *recognition regulations* provide orientation for students.

More information:

- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Satzung – Frauenförderungsplan und Gleichstellungsplan, Abschnitt B – Gleichstellungsplan, § 20 Diversitätssensible Forschung und Lehre sowie Entwicklung und Erschließung der Künste, § 21 Zusätzliche gender- und diversitätsbezogene Lehrveranstaltungen (Statute – Plan for the advancement of women and equal opportunities plan, section B – Equal opportunities plan, § 20 Diversity-sensitive research and teaching as well as development and exploration of the arts, § 21 Additional gender- and diversity-related courses) (in German only)
- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien (2022): Leitfaden geschlechtergerechtes Formulieren und geschlechtersensible Kommunikation (Guide to gender-equitable wording and gender-sensitive communication) (in German only)
- Courses *Gender Queer Decolonial Studies Art*, website: https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/studies/gender-studies/gender-queer-decolonial-studies-arts?set_language=en

4 Components of a study plan

The following table lists the compulsory and optional components of a *curriculum*. Possible alternative names for the respective component are given in square brackets.

Component	Explanation	Legal basis (in German only)
Title	The title is given as follows: *Curriculum for the* [type of study (Bachelor's/Master's/Diploma/Doctorate/PhD program)] [title of study] *at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna*	-
Preamble (optional)	The preamble explains the general context and the self-image of the degree program. It also states whether the degree program is an artistic, artistic-academic or academic degree program. It is also often described to what extent the degree program is characterized by tasks and responsibilities in the social sphere and how the *qualification profile* of graduates contributes to reflecting or improving professional and social framework conditions.	-
Legal basis and scope of application	Indicates the legal basis on which the *curriculum* is based. The Academy of Fine Arts Vienna is named as the area of application. According to the Universities Act, the Education in the Arts study program are assigned to the group teacher training programs.	-
Table of contents (optional)	Provides an overview of the various components of the *curriculum*.	-
Duration and scope of the degree program	Provides an overview of the workload of the degree program in *ECTS* and the *minimum study period* in semesters.	UG § 54 (2) (new studies to be established, ECTS) UG § 54 (3) (workload)
Structure and organization of the degree program	Provides an overview of the structure, organization and course of study. If it is *a diploma degree program,* the number of study sections and the respective number of semesters are indicated here.	-

Component	Explanation	Legal basis (in German only)
Qualification profile	See Chapter 2, Step 2 – Draw up the *qualification profile.*	UG § 51 (2) number 29 (definition of qualification profile) UG § 58 (2) (qualification profile)
Admission to studies	Provides information on the requirements necessary for admission to the degree program. At the Academy, for example, admission to artistic studies requires a positive result in the admission examinations. Optionally, the admission procedure can also be described here. Furthermore, the required (relevant) *Bachelor's degree* or comparable degree is listed as an admission requirement for *Master's degree programs*.	UG § 58 (4) (admission requirements for bachelor's degree programs for teacher training programs and artistic studies) UG § 64 (3) (admission to a master's degree program) UG § 64 (4) and (5) (admission to a doctoral program) UG § 63a (1) and (2) (admission to master's degree programs) UG § 63a (3–6) (admission to master's degree programs in teaching) UG § 63a (7) (admission to doctoral studies)
Study plan diagram (optional)	The structure and the course of study are presented graphically and thus more clearly.	-
Academic degree	Indicates which academic degree is awarded upon completion of the degree program. See the explanations of academic degrees under the glossary term *Types of studies.*	UG § 51 (2) number 10 (definition of bachelor's degree) UG § 51 (2) number 11 (definition of master's degree) UG § 51 (2) number 14 (definition of doctoral degrees)

Component	Explanation	Legal basis (in German only)
Course types	Provides an overview of the different *course types* offered in the degree program (see the glossary term *Course types*).	-
Examination regulations	See the glossary term *Examination regulations.*	UG § 51 (2) number 25 (definition of examination regulations) Statutes – Study law, III, Study law Provisions § 5 – § 13 (examinations)[3]
Transitional provisions	See the glossary term *Transitional provisions.*	-
Entry into force	Indicates the date on which the *curriculum* comes into force. Please note the following: A *curriculum* and its amendments shall enter into force on October 1st of the same year if announced in the Academy's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt) before July 1st; if announced after June 30th, they shall enter into force on October 1st of the following year. If a degree program is discontinued, the *curriculum* shall cease to be in force at the end of September 30th of the same year if the announcement is made in the Academy's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt) before July 1st; if the announcement is made in the Academy's bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt) after June 30th, this *curriculum* shall cease to be in force on September 30th of the following year.	UG § 58 (6) (entry into force of curricula) Statutes – Study law, III Study law provisions § 3 (entry into force of curricula)

3 Note: Due to their scope, these legal passages are not cited in the document "Design and further development of curricula - legal basis".

5 Support at the Academy

Intercurricular meetings

Intercurricular meetings are held regularly at the Academy, which serve as a platform for intercurricular cooperation and the mutual exchange of knowledge. Participants are the chairs of each individual *CuKo* and of the Senate. The meetings take place approximately twice a semester at the invitation of the Senate.

Expertise in study law in the Human Resources and Legal Department

The contact person in the Human Resources and Legal Department offers legal advice on study law issues and all related legal areas. In addition, they accompany the legal process involved in setting up study programs (study plans) and ensure compliance with the legal framework.

More information:

- studienrecht@akbild.ac.at

Evaluation results of the Quality Development Department

The results from the ongoing surveys of students and graduates provide diverse and detailed information for the further development of *curricula*. There are both academy-wide and study-specific or institute-specific reports. Of particular note are the monitoring of admission procedures (opportunities monitor), the institute-specific evaluation of *good study conditions*[4], the academy-wide graduation survey and the graduate survey, which focuses on the transition phase from study to work.

More information:

- Quality Development Department: Opportunities monitor. Monitoring of the admission procedures
- Quality Development Department: Graduation survey
- Quality Development Department: From study to work: Career paths of graduates

4 The evaluation of good study conditions is carried out using several questions that are integrated into all Course Feedback questionnaires throughout the Academy. The evaluation results are sent to the institutes every two years as part of the overall report on Course Feedback.

Services offered by the Quality Development Department

The Quality Development Department offers the following surveys and analyses for the design and further development of *curricula*:

Expert surveys
The feedback and input from experts from professional fields or artistic disciplines relevant to the degree program – i.e. the view from the outside – forms the central starting point. The practical experience of experts is methodically collected through focus discussions and/or guideline-centered interviews and made accessible for *curriculum* development.

Student and graduate surveys
The feedback and reflections of students and graduates, e.g. on the course of study or the competencies and skills taught, provide helpful first-hand insights and suggestions for the further development of a *curriculum*. The experiences of graduates in the transition from studying to working life or in their professional careers also provide helpful input.

International comparative analyses
These analyses provide an overview of comparable degree programs in the international university landscape. The comparison of the own *curriculum* with degree programs at other higher education institutions provides suggestions for integration (e.g. for cooperation) or differentiation in an international context as well as for profile development in general.

More information:

- Quality Development Department: qe@akbild.ac.at
  Support for the design and further development of curricula:
  https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/university/quality-development/curriculum-development

International Office

The International Office supports the development, implementation and promotion of internationalization as part of *curriculum* development. This includes topics such as decolonization and internationalization of the *curriculum*, student mobility, international cooperations and partnerships (e.g. initiation, preparation, concretization, implementation of international partnerships and cooperations, e.g. for *joint study programs*) or the acquisition of third-party funding.

More information:

- International Office: international@akbild.ac.at
  https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/university/international/international-office?set_language=en

AG barrier-free working and studying (AG bAS)

Addressing the issue of the normativity of (non-)disability in studying and teaching and promoting barrier-free and inclusive studying are enshrined in law and are important goals of the Academy.

In connection with barrier-free and inclusive studies, the following rights for students with disabilities, impairments or chronic illnesses, for example, should be emphasized: Students with disabilities, impairments or chronic illnesses have the right to different examination methods. Furthermore, the law stipulates that students with a disability or impairment do not have to achieve the minimum study performance of 16 ECTS within the first four semesters and therefore may not be excluded from their chosen degree program. In order to inform students with disabilities, impairments or chronic illnesses as transparently as possible about these rights, it is recommended that corresponding passages be included in the *curriculum*. It should also be taken into account that the *curriculum* is designed as an accessible document.

The members of the AG bAS and the Disability Officer for Students offer advice on questions relating to barrier-free studying.

More information:

- AG bAS:
  accessibility@akbild.ac.at
  https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/university/accessible-academy?set_language=en
- Contact person for students at the Student Welcome Center:
  studentwelcome@akbild.ac.at
- Christina Fasching: Alternative Mode of Assessment and Teaching
- Patricia Wiesner-Ledermann (2022): (2022): Leitfaden zur Erstellung barrierefreier Dokumente in Word (Guide to creating accessible documents in Word) (in German only)
- UG § 58 (10) (reference to the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities) (in German only)
- UG § 59 (12) (right to a different examination method) (in German only)
- UG § 59a (1) and (5) (minimum study performance, exemption for students with disabilities) (in German only)

Coordination Office for the Advancement of Women | Gender Studies | Diversity

The Coordination Office for the Advancement of Women | Gender Studies | Diversity offers support and assistance with questions relating to gender and diversity-related courses and its integration into the curriculum.

More information:

- Coordination Office for the Advancement of Women | Gender Studies | Diversity: fgd@akbild.ac.at
  https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/university/administration/coordination-office-for-advancement-of-women-gender-studies-diversity

Art | Research | Support – Doctoral Center

The Doctoral Center, located in the Art | Research | Support Department, offers support and advice in connection with doctoral studies.

More information:

- Doctoral Center: doktoratszentrum@akbild.ac.at
  https://www.akbild.ac.at/en/research/center-for-doctoral-studies

6 Glossary

Reading notes: The terms are listed in alphabetical order. Abbreviations (mostly German) are in round brackets, synonyms for individual or related terms are in square brackets.

Academic degree [academic title]

See the explanations of academic degrees under the glossary term *Types of studies.*

Bologna process [Bologna reform]

The Bologna process and the associated measures have made a decisive contribution to uniform framework conditions in the European Higher Education Area and thus to the internationalization of higher education. These include the uniform three-stage study structure (*bachelor's*, *master's*, *doctorate/PhD*), the introduction of the *ECTS* system and the orientation towards *learning outcomes*, which has improved the transparency and comparability of academic achievements throughout Europe. An important goal of the Bologna Process is to promote the mobility of students (and graduates), for which the European Commission has set up the Erasmus+ mobility program, among other things.

More information:

- European Higher Education Aera (EHEA): https://ehea.info
- Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (2020): National mobility and internationalization strategy for higher education 2020–2030
- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Erasmuserklärung zur Hochschulpolitik (Erasmus declaration on higher education policy) (in German only)
- UG § 58 (9) (Bologna-compliant design of curricula) (in German only)

Consecutive degree program

A consecutive degree program is a degree program consisting of a *Bachelor's degree program* and a *Master's degree program* based on it, whereby the *Bachelor's program* is considered an *undergraduate degree* and the *Master's program* is considered a *postgraduate degree*. The *Master's degree program* following the *Bachelor's degree program* offers the opportunity to deepen and specialize in a particular subject. The Academy offers consecutive degree programs in the two study fields of Architecture and Education in the Arts. In Conservation-Restoration, there are plans to convert the *Diploma degree program* to a consecutive Bachelor's/Master's degree program.

With the aim of creating a single European Higher Education Area, the *Bologna Process* is the driving force behind a standardized consecutive model within the European Union. The aim is to remove obstacles to mobility for studying abroad or for study-related stays abroad and to ensure the comparability of studies.

Course (LV)

A course is a content unit (a lecture, seminar or similar) led by one or more lecturers, which concludes with a performance assessment of the individual participating students.

A course is the smallest unit of a *curriculum*. Good content-related and organizational interaction between courses and lecturers is therefore an important requirement for the successful implementation of a *curriculum*.

Course format [teaching form]

All course formats offered at the Academy are listed and defined below. The definitions given are an attempt to standardize the sometimes differing definitions in the *curricula*. It is recommended that the individual course formats be defined uniformly in all *curricula* of the Academy. As can be seen, the individual course formats are not always clearly differentiated; in some cases, different terms are used for almost identical formats. The terminology could be standardized here to make it easier for students to find their way around.

It should be noted that the course formats are not defined by law. The universities or *CuKo* can decide independently which course formats are offered in the degree program.

Lecture (VO)

Lectures impart basic, advanced or in-depth knowledge and/or methodological skills. In particular, it is their task to address the most important different doctrinal opinions, taking into account the current scientific or artistic discourse. Lectures consist of presentations by one or more lecturers with interactive elements. In a lecture series, different lecturers give lectures on an overarching topic.

Exercise (UE)

Exercises serve to teach, test and practice scientific, technical, artistic, creative and practical skills. The focus is on independent work or teamwork by students under the guidance of a lecturer. Exercises are courses with an immanent examination character.

Lecture-exercise (VU)

Lecture-exercises are courses with lecture and exercise character (see: *Lecture*, *Exercise*).

Proseminar (PS)

Proseminars are a preliminary stage to a seminar and serve to impart basic knowledge of the subject and academic work. Proseminars offer an introduction to an in-depth artistic, scientific or theoretical examination of a sub-area or a special topic of the subject, usually with the inclusion of specialist literature. A central aspect is the students' contribution in the form of discussions, presentations or papers.

Seminar (SE)

Seminars provide an in-depth examination of a sub-area or a special topic of the subject. They also teach research methods. Seminars accompany and support reflection and discussion as well as the development of independent artistic-scientific or theoretical questions, usually with the inclusion of specialist literature. A central aspect is self-study and the students' contribution in the form of discussions, presentations, papers or written work.

Artistic (individual) teaching (KU/KE)

Artistic individual teaching or artistic teaching is the central course format within the central artistic subject (ZKF) for artistic studies. This course format can take place as individual teaching or as small group teaching. In artistic (individual) teaching students work on individual problems and concerns arising from their independent artistic or artistic-academic work in intensive and regular exchange with the lecturer. Regular feedback as well as support and supervision are central – from the conception of artistic or artistic-scientific work to its development and implementation.

Project (PT)[5]

The focus is on the independent work of the students, the conception of the artistic, artistic-scientific project, its development and implementation. Lecturers provide regular feedback and accompany and supervise the progress of the project.

Project studies (PJ)

The aim of project studies is to plan and carry out independent artistic and creative work and/or educational mediation projects individually or in a group. Students are given theoretical impulses in the group. Project studies can be transdisciplinary in nature.

Project lecture (PV)

Project lectures are thematically related to the projects and deepen the respective project-specific questions and knowledge. Together with the project, this course format forms a module that can only be successfully completed in combination with the project.

Design lessons (GU)

Design lessons serve the practical examination of creative-artistic and/or pedagogical problems and their theoretical foundations. Students are taught theoretical content in the group and are supported in their artistic, creative, technical and/or educational work through individual supervision.

5 Definition in the Bachelor's and Master's Architecture curricula: The design project is at the heart of the course. In the course of a project, students learn to combine, test and evaluate acquired knowledge and ideas. The design projects are taught in small groups. Intensive personal supervision allows the students' individual skills and ideas to be taken into account. Team teaching is encouraged because students and teachers are confronted with different views, encouraged to think in variants and alternatives and motivated to take a stand. The projects immanent to the examination are assessed by the lecturers as part of the ongoing supervision and commented on by external specialists. Together with the respective project lectures or project seminars, the design project forms a module that can only be successfully completed in combination with these.

Excursion (EX)

Excursions are courses in which students visit facilities and locations outside the place of study. They serve to illustrate teaching content in a real-life context.

Internship (PR)

An internship is a temporary (paid or unpaid) employment outside the university, e.g. in an institution, a company or an association. An internship is not supervised by a lecturer. The aim of an internship is to acquire and deepen knowledge relevant to your degree program through practical (professional) application.

Privatissimum (PV) (diploma and doctoral programs only)

A privatissimum provides individual supervision and support between students and their supervisor during the thesis, dissertation or PhD project phase. It can take place as individual or small group lesson. Regular feedback and exchange on the progress of the thesis is central.

Course types

Compulsory subject

A compulsory subject is a clearly defined *course* that must be completed in order to graduate.

Compulsory elective subject (compulsory elective area)

A compulsory elective subject is a *course* that can be selected from a fixed contingent of courses. A compulsory elective subject gives students the opportunity to set their own priorities from certain predefined content.

Free elective subject (free elective area)

If free elective subjects are part of a *curriculum*, students are free to decide which *courses* they would like to attend. At the Academy, any *course* from the Academy's range of courses or from a domestic or foreign institution that has been successfully completed is recognized as a free elective in a *curriculum*. Like the compulsory electives, the free electives also offer students a good opportunity to design their studies individually or to focus on specific subjects. In addition, free electives promote interdisciplinarity and convey teaching and learning content across disciplinary boundaries.

Curricula commission (CuKo)

A curricula commission (CuKo) is a so-called collegial body and has the central task of issuing and amending *curricula*.[6] The respective CuKos of the Academy are commissions of the Senate and are set up for the duration of the Senate's term of office (three years). The respective CuKo decide on behalf of the Senate and must submit their decisions to the Senate for approval.

The CuKo, which is composed on a parity basis, is made up of equal numbers of two to four representatives from each of the following groups:

- University professors
- University lecturers and artistic/scientific staff
- Students

On a parity basis means that each group is equally represented, whereby “equal” refers to the number of members on the one hand and means that each group has the same rights on the other. The members are not bound by any instructions or orders when exercising their function. However, the approval of the Senate is required for the resolutions of a CuKo. In addition, the Senate has an advisory function.

The representatives are to be nominated by the respective group in the Senate. If you are interested in becoming a member of a Cuko representing university professors or artistic/academic staff, simply send an email to the Senate Office (senat@akbild.ac.at). The Senate Chair will then establish contact with the relevant CuKo. The student representatives are to be delegated by the Students' Union (ÖH) at the Academy.

Attention must be paid to a gender-balanced composition of both members and substitute members. In accordance with the Academy’s Equal Opportunities Plan (Gleichstellungsplan) care must also be taken to ensure that members who are structurally affected by (multiple) discrimination are represented in a CuKo.

For student representatives, two ECTS credits per semester must be credited for their work in a CuKo within the quota of a compulsory elective subject or a free elective subject of their degree program (cf. Universities Students Act § 31 (1–4)).

The members elect a chairperson and a deputy chairperson by a simple majority of votes. The members and deputy members as well as the chairs of the individual CuKo are published in the Academy's bulletin. The current chair and deputy chair are listed by name on the Academy's website under the menu item “Studies” for the respective field of study.

6 Other tasks of curricula commissions include, for example, the recognition of examinations and academic achievements.

A CuKo has been set up for each field of study at the Academy (six in total).[7] The four doctoral programs are an exception, for which there is an overarching CuKo (according to the Universities Act, a CuKo can also supervise several fields of study).[8] The CuKo meetings take place with varying frequency depending on the field of study, usually two to four times per semester. There will initially be one working group each for the three newly planned Master's degree programs „Vermittlung als soziale und ästhetische Praxis" (Mediation as Social and Aesthetic Practice), „Transcultural Studies", „Science and Technology in Art and Conservation" (all working titles).

More information:

- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Satzung – Studienrecht, II. Curricula-Kommission, § 1 Curricula-Kommissionen (Statute – Study law, II curricula commission, § 1 Curricula commissions) (in German only)
- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Satzung – Frauenförderungsplan und Gleichstellungsplan. Abschnitt A – Frauenförderungsplan, § 11 Geschlechtergerechte Zusammensetzung von Kollegialorgangen (Statute – Plan for the advancement of women and equal opportunities plan. Section A – Plan for the advancement of women, § 11 Gender-balanced composition of collegial bodies) (in German only)
- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Satzung – Frauenförderungsplan und Gleichstellungsplan. Abschnitt B – Gleichstellungsplan, § 19 Zusammensetzung von Gremien und Kommissionen (Statute – Plan for the advancement of women and equal opportunities plan. Section B – Equal opportunities plan, § 19 Composition of committees and commissions) (in German only)
- UG § 20 (3) (freedom from instructions, election of the chairperson) (in German only)
- UG § 20a (2) (gender-equitable composition of collegial bodies) (in German only)
- UG § 25 (1) number 14 (duties of the Senate) (in German only)
- UG § 25 (8–10) (Senate, collegial bodies) (in German only)
- Hochschüler- und Hochschülerinnenschaftsgesetz – Rechtsfolgen der Tätigkeit als Studierendenvertreterin oder Studierendenvertreter, § 31 (1–4) (Students' Union Act – legal consequences of acting as a student representative) (in German only)

7 (1) Cuko Architecture for the Bachelor and Master of Architecture, (2) CuKo Fine Arts, (3) CuKo Scenography, (4) CuKo Conservation-Restoration, (5) CuKo Education in the Arts for the Bachelor and Master Art and Education and for the Bachelor and Master Design in Context, (6) CuKo Master in Critical Studies; (7) CuKo Doctoral Studies for the four doctoral studies (Doctoral Studies in Philosophy, Doctoral Studies in Technical Sciences, Doctoral Studies in Natural Sciences, PhD in Practice).

8 The number of curricula commissions is not regulated by law and varies between universities. There are Austrian universities that have only one curricula commission.

Curriculum [study plan]

A curriculum provides the framework for the specific structure of a degree program's teaching, *courses* and examinations. Among other things, a curriculum defines the *qualification profile*, the admission requirements and the duration and scope of a degree program. In addition, the structure and content of the focus areas or *courses* that make up the respective degree program, as well as the *course formats* used and the *examination regulations* are outlined.

A curriculum provides structure and an overview of the degree program until graduation. In this respect, the curriculum is an important tool for students to plan their studies. On the other hand, the curriculum provides lecturers with orientation for designing their *courses* against the background of the parameters defined therein (e.g. *qualification objective*, *ECTS*, relation to other *courses*). A curriculum is legally binding.

More information:

- UG § 51 § 2 number 24 (definition of curriculum) (in German only)

ECTS [European credit transfer and accumulation system]

ECTS is the European credit transfer system that documents the amount of time required to achieve *learning outcomes* or academic achievements and thus makes them comparable both nationally and internationally. The ECTS system is an important basis for facilitating student mobility within the European Higher Education Area.

ECTS credits (ECTS points) describe the estimated workload that an average student has to complete for a degree program. ECTS credits are determined both for the entire degree program and for all partial achievements, e.g. *courses*. The workload for an academic year is defined in the Universities Act as 60 ECTS credits or 1.500 real hours. One ECTS credit therefore corresponds to an average workload of 25 hours.

The workload includes all activities that are part of a course of study and are assessed by means of proof of performance, such as attendance times in the course, self-study (workload outside the *course*), exam preparation, final theses and final exams. It should be noted that the assessed workload represents a typical workload. The actual amount of work required to achieve the *learning outcomes* may vary for individual students.

When implementing a *curriculum*, it is important that lecturers take into account the ECTS credits or workload specified for their *course* when designing the teaching/learning concept. Particular attention must be paid to this aspect if *courses* can be credited to different *curricula*.

More information:

- UG § 54 (2) (new studies to be established, ECTS) (in German only)
- UG § 54 (3) (workload) (in German only)
- UG § 58 (12) (ECTS allocation) (in German only)
- European Commission (2015): ECTS Users' Guide

Equivalence list

See the glossary term *Recognition regulations.*

Examination regulations

The examination regulations are a legally prescribed component of a *curriculum*. They define the framework conditions and requirements for examinations, the various types of examinations and assessment methods. The examination regulations form the basis for the study regulations, which define the structure of the degree program.

The most important regulations for conducting examinations at the Academy are set out in the Statutes. These regulations include the conduct of oral, written and board examinations, dates and definitions of diploma examinations, rigorous examinations and courses with an immanent examination character. The regulations apply to all *curricula* and reference should be made to these regulations in the *curriculum*.

Further provisions on examinations and assessment methods that are not regulated in the Statutes must be explained in the examination regulations of the *curriculum*. These include, for example, provisions on the framework conditions and requirements for the admission examinations.

More information:

- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien: Satzung – Studienrecht, II Studienrechtliche Bestimmungen (Statute –Study Law, III Study law provisions) § 5 – § 13 (examinations) (in German only)[9]
- UG § 51 (2) number 25 (definition examination regulations) (in German only)

Extension study

If an Education in the Arts study is supplemented by a third teaching subject, this is referred to as an extension study. According to the Universities Act, a separate *curriculum* does not have to be issued for an extension study to supplement an Education in the Arts study program. However, admission to the extension study requires the positive completion of an entrance examination in this teaching subject. All studies offered at the Institute of Education in the Arts can be completed as an extension study. The completion of an extension study is only possible after the completion of an Education in the Arts study program and is not associated with the acquisition of an academic degree. Academic achievements already completed can be recognized for the extension study.

More information:

- UG § 51 (2) number 5a (definition of extension studies) (in German only)

9 Note: Due to their scope, these legal passages are not cited in the document “Design and further development of curricula – legal basis”.

- UG § 54a – 54c (extension studies for the extension of teacher training studies)[10] (in German only)

Good study conditions [studiability]

In a narrower sense, good study conditions mean that the framework conditions of a *curriculum* and generally those of the university make it possible to complete the degree program within the planned *minimum study period*. In this understanding, an appropriate workload and an appropriate distribution of *ECTS* credits are central. However, in the context of good study conditions, other factors are often taken into account in addition to this time component. Good study conditions can then mean offering all students an inclusive and equitable learning and teaching experience and providing them with the best possible support and assistance throughout their studies. A key goal is to recognize and promote student diversity and create a positive study environment for all. Curricular aspects that tie in with this are, for example, appropriate flexibility of studies, the avoidance of *prerequisite chains*, the possibility of setting priorities and also the compatibility of studies with other areas of life (employment, caring responsibilities). Advice, guidance and support for students before and during their studies is also relevant. The term structural good study conditions is often used in this broader sense.

More information:

- AQ Austria (2019): Studierbarkeit (Good study conditions) (in German only)

Hidden curriculum

Hidden curriculum refers to the blind spots of a *curriculum* and is related to institutionally produced social inequality (e.g. gender, class differences, postcolonial structures). The term refers to those dimensions of a *curriculum* that are not made explicit and that are taught and learned alongside the official *curriculum*. The concept of the *hidden curriculum* assumes that a *curriculum* and the associated teaching and learning processes produce certain forms of knowledge, values, norms, practices, skills and mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion that remain unspoken and unquestioned.

More information:

- Annette Krauss (2015): To be hidden does not mean to be merely revealed - Part 1 Artistic research on hidden curriculum
- Byron G. Massialas (1996): The hidden curriculum and social studies

10 Note: Due to their scope, these legal passages are not cited in the document “Design and further development of curricula - legal basis”.

Internationalization at home

Internationalization at home refers to the integration of international dimensions into studying and teaching at home. The term encompasses both formal and informal aspects. These include, for example, the multilingualism of documents (e.g. *curricula* in German and English), multilingualism in teaching (e.g. *courses* taught in German and English), international exchange programs via digital formats and other internationalization offers for students on site (e.g. corresponding events, workshops, courses), the foreign language skills of teaching staff, the international diversity of students and teaching staff, international guest lecturers, excursions abroad and, in general, the consideration of international and decolonial perspectives in the design and implementation of *curricula* or individual *courses*.

Anchoring internationalization at home in *curricula* and teaching thus offers all students the opportunity to gain international experience – regardless of whether they participate in mobility programs or not. Internationalization at home thus promotes non-discriminatory studies, as the measures are aimed equally at all students and international experiences are therefore not an exclusive option.

More information:

- Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (2025): Internationalization strategy
- Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (2020): National mobility and internationalization strategy for higher education 2020–2030
- Simon Weiser (2024): Mobile Ungleichheit (Mobile inequality) (in German only)

Jointly established study programs [jointly established degree programs]

Jointly established study programs are regular study programs that are carried out on the basis of agreements between one or more Austrian universities. In contrast to *joint study programs* (see below), jointly established study programs must have the same *curriculum* at all participating universities. There are currently no jointly established study programs at the Academy.

More information:

- UG §51 (2) number 27 (definition of jointly established study programs) (in German only)
- UG § 54e (jointly established study programs)[11] (in German only)

11 Note: Due to their scope, these legal passages are not cited in the document “Design and further development of curricula - legal basis”.

Joint study programs (joint degree, joint programs double degree, multiple degree)

Joint study programs are regular studies that are offered and carried out on the basis of agreements between two or more domestic or foreign universities. The partner universities jointly develop the course content and the study program. It is possible either to combine parts of an already established course of study with parts of corresponding courses at a partner university to form a framework *curriculum* or to redesign an entire course of study as a joint program. There does not have to be an identical *curriculum* at all participating universities. A joint study program can lead to multiple degrees or to a joint degree.

The International Office offers support and advice for international joint study programs.

At the Academy, the Education in the Arts study program are run as national joint study programs on the basis of a cooperation agreement between the Academy and the University of Education Vienna. There is no identical *curriculum*.

More information:

- UG § 51 (2) number 26 (definition joint study programs) (in German only)
- UG § 54d (joint study programs)[12] (in German only)
- Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien & Pädagogische Hochschule Wien (2019): Kooperationsvertrag (Cooperation agreement) (in German only)

Learning outcomes [learning objectives]

Learning outcomes describe the competencies that students should have acquired at the end of a learning process. Learning outcomes are statements about what students can do after successfully completing a degree program or a *course*. Learning outcomes can be assigned to the following competence areas:

- technical skills
- methodical and organizational skills
- social/communicative/personal skills

Well-formulated learning outcomes make the requirements and results of a learning process transparent. The formulation of learning outcomes is therefore a central starting point when designing a *curriculum* from the macro level (*qualification profile*) to the micro level[13] (*course*).

More information:

- European Commission (2015): ECTS Guide. 3.3 The programme learning outcomes, p. 23

12 Note: Due to their scope, these legal passages are not cited in the document “Design and further development of curricula – legal basis”.

13 At micro level, the learning outcomes should also be made accessible and transparent to students in the individual course descriptions in AcademyOnline. A separate field (Objective – expected results of study and acquired competences) is available for this purpose.

- Universität Passau (2021): Leitfaden zur Formulierung von Lernergebnissen (Guidelines for the formulation of learning outcomes) (in German only)
- Hochschulrektorenkonferenz Deutschland (2015): Lernergebnisse praktisch formulieren (Formulating learning outcomes in practice) (in German only)

Minimum study period [minimum duration of study, standard period of study]

The minimum study period refers to the period of time defined in the *curriculum* to complete the study and obtain the desired degree. If students take longer than average to complete their degree, this may indicate structural obstacles in the *curriculum*. In this case, more attention should be paid to the question of *good study conditions* of a degree program.

More information:

- Quality Development Department: The Academy in numbers – average study period per degree program

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Postgraduate degree [postgraduate study, postgraduate program]

A postgraduate degree is a degree that lead to a further, usually consecutive, university degree based on a first degree. A master's degree is a postgraduate degree that usually builds on a completed bachelor's degree. Similarly, a doctoral degree is a postgraduate degree that usually builds on a completed master's degree.

More information:

- See the glossary term *Consecutive degree program.*
- See the glossary term *Types of studies.*

Precondition chain

If there is a precondition chain this means that registration for a further *course* and examination is only possible if the respective preconditions, such as certain prior knowledge through the positive completion of an introductory lecture, are proven. In order to ensure that a study is as obstacle-free as possible, precondition chains in the *curriculum* should be avoided as far as possible.

More information:

- UG § 58 (7) (definition of requirements for registration for courses) (in German only)

Qualification profile [graduate profile, study objective, educational objective]

See corresponding explanations in Chapter 2 “Step 2 – Draw up the qualification profile”.

Recognition regulations

Recognition regulations govern the recognition of courses that affect a large number of students. It often becomes relevant in the case of a *curriculum* reform by comparing *courses* from the old *curriculum* with *courses* from the new *curriculum* using equivalence lists and thereby regulating which *courses* that no longer exist in the new *curriculum* or whose titles or *ECTS* points have changed are to be treated as equivalent (on an equal footing). An equivalence list is legally binding.

More information:

- CuKo Künstlerisches Lehramt: Anerkennungsverordnungen (recognition regulations) (in German only)
- CuKo Bildende Kunst: Anerkennungsverordnungen für die Gender-, Queer-, Decolonial und Disability Studies sowie dem Lektor innenprogramm (recognition regulations for gender, queer, decolonial and disability studies and the lecturer program) (in German only)

Structured doctorate

A doctorate is considered structured if the following six criteria are met:

- Submission of an exposé within the first year after admission to the degree program
- Public presentation of the dissertation project
- Conclusion of a dissertation agreement including a time and work plan
- Advice and support from a team
- Separation of the supervision of the dissertation and its assessment
- An exposé and public presentation of the dissertation project are the prerequisites for concluding a dissertation agreement.

More information:

- Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Forschung (2022): Der Gesamtösterreichische Universitätsentwicklungsplan 2025–30 (The Austrian university development plan 2025–30), p. 31 (in German only)

Student-centered learning

The concept of student-centered learning focuses on the needs of students and their learning processes. This approach implies a changed self-image of the teaching role and new, diversity-sensitive methods of university didactics, moving away from instruction towards supportive learning environments and learning situations. Students are given responsibility and therefore autonomy for their own learning process. Active rather than passive forms of learning are central. In the context of learning as the acquisition of knowledge and skills, the focus is on the acquisition of learning strategies and the understanding of content. This goes hand in hand with the promotion of self-organized learning, taking into account the social aspects of learning.

More information:

- Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), 1.3 Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Transitional provisions

Transitional provisions are particularly necessary in the case of major changes to a *curriculum*. These include, for example, graduation deadlines for students in the old *curriculum* and for transferring from the old to the new *curriculum*. In the event of a transfer from the old to the new *curriculum*, additional *recognition regulations* or *equivalence lists* must be drawn up.

More information:

- See the glossary term *Recognition regulations.*
- See the glossary term *Equivalence list.*

Types of studies

Bachelor's degree program (BA, B.A.)

The Bachelor's degree program is the first, *undergraduate degree* in the consecutive Bachelor's/Master's structure. According to the Universities Act, a Bachelor's degree program comprises at least 180 *ECTS* credits, which corresponds to a study duration of six semesters. For the Bachelor's degree program Education in the Arts, the workload is 240 *ECTS* credits, which corresponds to a study duration of eight semesters, although from the 2026/27 academic year, the workload will also comprise 180 *ECTS* credits.

The *academic degree* Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) is awarded upon successful completion of an artistic Bachelor's degree program, the *academic degree* Bachelor of Education (BEd) is awarded upon successful completion of the Bachelor's degree program in Education in the Arts and the *academic degree* Bachelor of Architecture (BArch) is awarded upon successful completion of the Bachelor's degree program in Architecture.

More information:

- See the glossary term *Consecutive degree program.*
- See the glossary term *Undergraduate degree.*
- UG § 51 (2) number 4 (definition of Bachelor's degree programs) (in German only)
- UG § 51 (2) number 10 (definition of Bachelor's degrees) (in German only)
- UG § 54 (3) (workload) (in German only)

Master's degree program (MA, M.A.)

The Master's degree is the second degree in the Bachelor's/Master's structure and is also referred to as a *postgraduate degree*. A Master's degree program can either build on a relevant *Bachelor's degree program* (*consecutive degree program*) or have an independent, usually very specialized focus based on a relevant or equivalent degree.

The prerequisite for admission to a Master's degree program is a relevant *Bachelor's degree* or another equivalent degree (from a university or university of applied sciences). The *curriculum* must specify which studies are recognized here and which criteria must be met.

According to the Universities Act, a Master's degree program comprises at least 120 *ECTS* credits, which corresponds to a study duration of four semesters. An exception to this is currently the Master's degree program Education in the Arts with a workload of at least 90 *ECTS* credits. From the 2026/27 academic year, this will be adjusted and the workload will then also comprise 120 *ECTS* credits.

The *academic degree* Master of Arts (M.A.) is awarded upon successful completion of a Master's degree program, the *academic degree* Master of Education (MEd) is awarded upon successful completion of the Master's degree program in Education in the Arts, and the *academic degree* Master of Architecture (MArch) is awarded upon successful completion of the Master's degree program in Architecture.

More information:

- See the glossary term *Consecutive degree program.*
- See the glossary term *Postgraduate degree.*
- UG § 51 (2) number 5 (definition of Master's degree programs) (in German only)
- UG § 51 (2) number 11 (definition of Master's degrees) (in German only)
- UG § 54 (3) (workload) (in German only)
- UG § 63a (1–2) (admission to the Master's degree program) (in German only)
- UG § 63a (3) (admission to Master's degree programs in teaching) (in German only)

Diploma degree program (Dipl.)

In Austria, before the start of the standardization of European higher education as part of the *Bologna Process* and the associated introduction of the Bachelor/Master structure (since 1999), the diploma degree program was the standard *type of study*. At the Academy, after much political discussion and in critical dissent to the *Bologna Process*, the diploma degree program was retained in the two artistic studies of Fine Arts and Scenography.[14] There are plans to convert the diploma degree program in Conservation-Restoration to a Bachelor's/Master's structure. According to the Universities Act, new degree programs may no longer be run as diploma degree programs.

The *academic degree* Magister_Magistra artium (Mag.art_Mag^{a} art) is awarded upon successful completion of an artistic diploma degree program.

More information:

- UG § 54 (2) (new studies to be established) (in German only)
- UG § 124 (1) (established studies) (in German only)

Doctoral programs (doctoral studies, PhD program, PhD studies)

According to the Universities Act, doctoral studies serve to further develop the ability to carry out independent scientific or artistic work and to train and promote young scientists or artists. The doctoral programs offered at the Academy – the Doctorate in Philosophy (Dr.phil.), the Doctorate in Natural Sciences (Dr.rer.nat.) and the Doctorate in Technical Sciences (Dr.techn.) are scientific studies. The PhD in Practice is a scientific-artistic degree. Currently the Academy does not offer an artistic doctorate.

The requirement for admission to a doctoral program is a relevant *diploma* or *master's degree* or a relevant degree with at least an equivalent level of education.

According to the Universities Act, doctoral programs take at least three years. The *ECTS* credits required for a doctoral program are not regulated by law.

Upon successful completion of a doctoral program, the *academic degree* Doktor_in (Dr_Dr^{in}) is awarded; upon successful completion of a PhD program, the *academic degree* Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is awarded.

More information:

- UG § 51 § 2 number 12 (definition of doctoral programs) (in German only)
- UG § 51 § 2 number 12a (definition of artistic doctoral programs) (in German only)
- UG § 51 § 2 number 13 (definition of dissertations) (in German only)
- UG § 51 § 2 number 13a (definition of artistic dissertations) (in German only)
- UG § 51 § 2 number 14 (definition doctoral degrees) (in German only)
- UG § 54 § 4 (minimum duration of a doctorate) (in German only)
- UG § 64 § 4 (admission to a doctoral program) (in German only)
- UG Section 83 (1) (dissertations and artistic dissertations) (in German only)

14 https://unibrennt.at/ueber-unibrennt/rueckblick

- European University Association (2005): Bologna Seminar on “Doctoral Programs for the European Knowledge Society”
- ELIA (2017): The Florence Principles on the Doctorate in the Arts

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Undergraduate degree [undergraduate study, undergraduate program]

An undergraduate degree is a degree that lead to a first university degree and form the basis for further studies. A bachelor's degree and a diploma degree are undergraduate degrees.

More information:

- See the glossary term *Consecutive degree program.*
- See the glossary term *Types of studies.*

Workload

See the glossary term *ECTS.*

7 Appendix

Legal basis

See also the supplementary document: Gestaltung und Weiterentwicklung von Studienplänen – Rechtliche Grundlagen (Design and further development of curricula – Legal basis) (in German only)

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Strategy papers

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Links

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European Higher Education Aera (EHEA): https://ehea.info

Hochschulforum Digitalisierung Deutschland (University Forum on Digitalization Germany): https://hochschulforumdigitalisierung.de

Qualitätssicherungsrat für Pädagoginnen- und Pädagogenbildung (QSR) (Quality Assurance Council for Teacher Education): https://www.qsr.or.at