

Expanded Museum Studies

Curriculum

Master's Programme

4 Semesters

§ 1 Preamble

In establishing the programme *Expanded Museum Studies*, the University of Applied Arts is instituting a field of study and research that aims to examine, expand and redefine the notion of museum.

With regard to both study content and organisation, the four-semester master's programme is supervised by the Department for *Expanded Museum Studies* and is offered in cooperation with various academic and artistic institutes and departments of the University (including Collection and Archive) as well as external institutional partners. A fundamental aspect of the programme is its emphasis on the interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary practical intertwining of various approaches adopted in the areas of museology, art and cultural studies, conservation, and art-research methodology. The central focus is on critical analysis of the historical and current models of what museums have been or could be and of museums seen as contact zones and places where true value can make itself felt – and this in an explicitly broad sense, that is, in the context of the various forms of practice, the various configurations, the various forms of discourse connected to these places of contact, and also in the context of the demands that are placed on them. The programme of study is based on topics of current academic and artistic interest as well as on a society-oriented understanding of art and culture in a global and cross-cultural perspective, an orientation that is particularly strong at the University of Applied Arts.

The essential elements comprising the programme of study are: the range of courses offered by the Department for *Expanded Museum Studies*, various forms of internal and external cooperation partnerships specifically aligned with the programme structure, and a *Platform for Inter- and Transdisciplinary Exchange*, which accompanies the entire course of study and serves as a transparent space for reflection and action in addition to offering the opportunity to share work in larger contexts. Moreover, the entire range of

courses offered at the University of Applied Arts is put to advantage within the framework of this programme.

The subjects of study are not thematically limited to the fine or applied arts. On the contrary, the programme of study very much encourages looking at cultural production and its material/immateral museum-related infrastructures from multidisciplinary points of view that also take intersectionality into account. Exploration of the museum as a concrete field of work is aimed at addressing fundamental questions related to current and historical processes of upheaval in society as a whole. These and other aspects of inquiry are dealt with within the framework of various forms of individual and collaborative reflection that are connected with practical, experimental, theoretical and mediating activities.

Ideally, the students should become actively involved in orienting the programme of study with respect both to subject matter and to methodology as well as in conceptualising and organizing public events (e.g., within the framework of the *Platform* that accompanies the programme), thereby helping to strengthen the programme's democratic structure.

§ 2 Legal Basis, Credit Points and Academic Degree

Pursuant to § 54 para. 1 Z 11 of the Universities Act, the master's programme in *Expanded Museum Studies* is assigned to the category of interdisciplinary studies. The programme of study comprises 120 ECTS credit points; this corresponds to a minimum duration of study of four semesters. Pursuant to § 51 para. 2 Z 11 of the Universities Act, the title of "Master of Arts", abbreviated as "MA", is bestowed after successful completion of the programme of study. As the programme of study has been established within the framework of an arts university, evidence of eligibility within the meaning of § 4 of the Curriculum is required for admission.

§ 3 Qualifications Profile

Graduates are able to work in interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary contexts and to analyse artistic and academic forms of practice, infrastructures and discourse that are related to museums. They are familiar with the current demands of museum work and are able to reflect critically and constructively on museums as institutions, with the aim of exploring the notion of museum itself and giving it new orientation.

On the basis of such reflection, they are able to identify development potential, devise alternative concepts for specific areas of interest, find new ways to approach and solve problems, and support or initiate efforts aimed at defining new orientation. This relates in particular to: collection policy; decolonisation and cultural heritage; forms of artistic practice and discourse; digitalisation; ecology and technological innovation; cultural diversity; accessibility and engaging with the public.

Graduates have the practical and theoretical knowledge needed to work towards enabling museums to meet the demands placed on them as vibrant places of inspiration, discussion and production and as (self-) critical institutions of learning that are both socially relevant and socially engaged.

Graduates are prepared to carry out work and research in a spirit of scientific inquiry, whether independently or as members of a team, and in compliance with current professional standards, and also to be able to put ideas into practice. They are familiar with possible areas of application and also with the process of expanding their own investigative horizons and developing their own strategies for finding answers. In addition, they are able to combine different kinds of expertise in collaborative work. As a result, numerous fields of work open themselves up to them in various areas of professional activity both within the museum framework and in a larger environment of professional activity connected with museums, as well as in art and cultural institutions and related spaces for discussion and action.

§ 4 Admission

For admission to the master's programme, applicants are required to provide, within the framework of a board entrance exam pursuant to § 75 of the Universities Act, evidence of their ability to analyse and contextualize artistic and social relationships by both visual and verbal means.

Other requirements include:

- completion of an academic bachelor's programme at a recognised postsecondary educational institution in or outside Austria with a specialised area of study that permits a connection with the master's programme or
- completion of an artistic bachelor's programme or diploma degree programme at a recognised postsecondary educational institution in or outside Austria with a

- specialisation that permits a connection with the master's programme, on the condition that the applicant can provide, in the course of the admission process, sufficient evidence of their ability to perform independent academic work;
- knowledge of English at the level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) required for making sufficient study progress; however, this level of English-language knowledge is considered to have been attained by completion of levels 12 or 13 at an Austrian secondary school (*Österreichische Höhere Schule*, levels 12 or 13) or by an equivalent secondary school qualification from a member state of the European Union;
 - The board entrance exam is divided into two parts. A positive evaluation given for the first part as well as confirmation that the specialisation of the applicant's previous study permits a connection with the master's programme are required in order for the applicant to proceed to part two of the exam.

1. Documents to Be Submitted

Applicants are to submit a concise, tabular curriculum vitae accompanied by the official certification in respect of the completed previous study to serve as an entitlement for participation in this master's programme or a confirmation credibly establishing that that course of study is about to be completed, as well as selected samples of work (these can include, for example, seminar work, study projects, publications, exhibitions, organised events or art projects) and an outline (max. 8,000 characters) of a programme-related project proposal or research proposal that gives a good indication of the applicant's aptitude and interests. (In the case of admission to the master's programme, the enrolled student will be under no obligation to implement these proposals.)

2. Personal Interview

Based on the documents submitted, the interview serves the purpose of assessing the applicant's aptitude and defining more closely where their interests lie.

§ 5 Study Programme Structure

The study programme consists of four pillars (**86 ECTS**) and a final phase consisting of the master's colloquium, the master's thesis and the board examination (**34 ECTS**).

- (1) **Expanded Museum Studies (24 ECTS)**: courses in the Department for *Expanded Museum Studies* devoted to specific study topics;
- (2) **Project-Bound Seminars (24 ECTS)**: a transdisciplinary course format offered alternately by various departments of the University (e.g., Collection and Archive, Conservation and Restoration, other art and theory departments) as well as by external cooperation partners – a format that combines the approaches of scientific inquiry, art research and the practice of conservation. A primary aim of these set-up is to promote teamwork.
- (3) **Platform for Interdisciplinary and Trans-Disciplinary Exchange (18 ECTS)**: An open space for action, discussion and reflection that spans across all semesters of the programme except the last. The students, together with the head of the Department for *Expanded Museum Studies*, shape a programme that can be in various formats (lectures, performances, exhibitions, etc.). Particular emphasis is placed on cooperation with external guests (artists, theorists, etc.) and museum institutions.

The Platform

- encourages exchange with representatives of the various artistic and academic fields of study at the University on subjects of concern within the framework of *Expanded Museum Studies*;
- is designed to encourage interconnection with issues of public debate;
- ensures the integration of approaches of scientific inquiry and those of actual practice;
- provides an essential opportunity for reflection on work done collaboratively.

Structurally, the Platform is conducted as a university course and is considered as a central artistic subject (*Zentrales künstlerisches Fach*) pursuant to § 68 para. 2 of the Universities Act.

- (4) **Courses to Be Selected by the Student (20 ECTS)**: The study programme includes courses to be chosen from courses offered in compulsory subject areas as well as free electives.
- (a) **Compulsory Subject Areas (12 ECTS)**: Students are to select courses from the range of courses offered by the following departments: Art History, Art

Theory, Cultural Studies, Transcultural Studies, Philosophy, Media Theory, Theory and History of Architecture, Design History and Theory, Art and Knowledge Transfer, Conservation and Restoration, as well as courses offered in the subject areas Cultural Heritage; Global Challenges and Sustainable Development Goals; Gender Studies.

In any event, one course must be selected from each of the following subject areas: (1) Legal Matters* and (2) Collection Care* (*see § 9 Organisational Framework).

(b) **Free Electives (ECTS 8):** Free electives amounting to a total of 8 ECTS can be selected from courses offered at the University of Applied Arts as well as courses offered at other Austrian and non-Austrian universities (as far as conditions for admission allow.)

(5) **Master's Colloquium, Master's Thesis and Board Examination (34 ECTS)**

(a) **Master's Colloquium (8 ECTS):** The master's colloquium is to be attended over a period of two semesters. Part 1, in the third semester of study, serves to lay the groundwork for – and prepare the student for – the master's thesis. This can be done in conjunction with a practical internship at a partner institution. Part 2 serves to monitor the progress of the master's thesis and allows the student to engage in collective reflection on their work.

(b) **Master's Thesis (25 ECTS) and Board Examination (1 ECTS):** The students are to produce an academic master's thesis (25 ECTS) on a topic in the field of *Expanded Museum Studies*. The thesis, which can also incorporate practical (artistic) methods, must then be presented and defended during a board examination (1 ECTS).

§ 6 Study Route

SEMESTER	PILLAR 1 <i>Expanded Museum Studies, courses in the department</i>	PILLAR 2 Project cooperation with alternating departments and external partners: <i>Project-Bound Seminar</i>	PILLAR 3 <i>Inter- and Trans-Disciplinary Exchange, structured collectively by the students and department faculty</i>	PILLAR 4 Supplementary, in-depth courses: free electives (elec) and compulsory subject areas (comp)
	24 ECTS	24 ECTS	18 ECTS	24 ECTS
1	8 ECTS	8 ECTS	6 ECTS	(comp) 4 ECTS (elec) 4 ECTS
2	8 ECTS	8 ECTS	6 ECTS	(comp) 4 ECTS (elec) 4 ECTS
3	8 ECTS	8 ECTS	6 ECTS	(comp) 4 ECTS
	Master's Colloquium 4 ECTS			
4	Master's Colloquium	4 ECTS		
	Master's Thesis	25 ECTS		
	Board Examination	1 ECTS		

§ 7 Languages of Instruction

German and English are the languages of instruction.

§ 8 Examinations

(1) Course Exams

Course exams will be carried out in written or oral form by the appropriate head of the course. Exam contents, methods, and assessment criteria will be communicated in an appropriate format prior to the beginning of each semester.

(2) Master's Exam

The master's exam constitutes the conclusion of the master's study programme.

The master's exam consists of

(2.1) successful completion of all compulsory courses of the master's programme (*courses in the Department for Expanded Museum Studies; Project-Specific Seminars; Platform for Interdisciplinary and Cross-Disciplinary Exchange; courses chosen from compulsory areas of study and free electives; master's colloquium*);

(2.2) the master's thesis in the field *Expanded Museum Studies* as well as its presentation and defense before an examination board. The examination board will in any case include the supervising tutor of the master's thesis, as well as colleagues from subject areas covered by the student during the study programme.

§ 9 Organisational Framework (as per the University Statutes)

The head of the Department for *Expanded Museum Studies* will be in charge of managing the operational tasks of the study programme. The department head shall

- ensure that proposals for teaching assignments within the framework of Pillars 1, 2 and 3 are submitted to the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs and that, in particular, the assignments within the framework of Pillar 2 (Project-Specific Seminar) are made after timely and thorough consultation with the cooperation partners concerned;
- for each term in question, provide a list of courses recommended in the subject areas of Legal Matters, Collection Care, Cultural Heritage, as well as Global Challenges and Sustainable Development Goals (see § 5 Compulsory Subject Areas) to the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Affairs;
- ensure coordination between internal and external cooperation partners;
- make proposals to the Office of the Dean of Studies for the composition of the entrance examination board and the MA examination board.

§ 10 Effective Date

The Curriculum comes into effect on 1 October 2021.