

Conservation and Restoration

Curriculum

Diploma Degree Programme
Duration: 10 Semesters
Programme Number: 588

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

Version: Winter Semester 2026/27

Approved by the Senate of the University of Applied Arts Vienna
on 17 May 2019.

Last modified: see University News Bulletin (Mitteilungsblatt) No. 27
dtd 17 June 2026.

Only the version published in the University News Bulletin of the
University of Applied Arts Vienna is legally binding.

Table of Contents

§ 1.	Qualification Profile	3
§ 2.	Admission	3
§ 3.	Content, Extent and Academic Degree.....	3
§ 4.	Structure of the Programme	4
§ 5.	Course Examinations.....	4
§ 6.	Diploma Examination and Diploma Thesis	4
§ 7.	Final and Transitional Provisions	5
	APPENDIX: Distribution of Subjects by ECTS	6

§ 1. Qualification Profile

The study programme Conservation and Restoration prepares students for the continuously changing and expanding field of activity of the academic conservator-restorer.

The programme comprises the acquisition and training of practical, theoretical and social skills (soft skills) in accordance with the professional ethical standards¹. Students learn to independently carry out and/or supervise conservation measures and complex restoration interventions on the object — either as specialists in one of the fields of painting, object, stone, textile, archaeological finds or software conservation, or as generalists working across these fields.

On the basis of internationally recognised quality criteria², the programme conveys strategies grounded in conservation science, material science and cultural studies for a holistic understanding of art and cultural heritage and its sustainable preservation. Particular attention is paid to material, technology/technologies, conditions of production, manual knowledge, materiality and intangible meaning. The aim is critical reflection, positioning and research in current fields of action in regional and international cultural heritage preservation.

Graduates of the study programme are distinguished by a responsible approach to art and cultural heritage and by a methodical and structured way of working in the exercise of their profession. They are able to argue the strategies they have developed and to respond flexibly to the most diverse requirements of their field of activity.

§ 2. Admission

(1) Admission to the programme requires the successful completion of an entrance examination held before an examination board.

(2) Registration for the entrance examination takes place together with the submission of a portfolio of artistic works.

(3) The entrance examination consists of two parts:

1. Assessment of the artistic portfolio prepared by the applicants.
2. Practical and theoretical tasks as well as conservation and restoration exercises.

(4) The entrance examination is passed if both parts are assessed positively.

§ 3. Content, Extent and Academic Degree

(1) In accordance with § 54 para. 1 of the Universities Act (UG), the diploma degree programme Conservation and Restoration is assigned to the artistic fields of study and is understood as an artistic programme with a high academic content.

(2) The diploma degree programme comprises 300 ECTS credits, which corresponds to a duration of 10 semesters.

(3) The language of instruction is German; individual courses may also be held in English.

(4) On successful completion of the programme, the academic degree Magister or Magistra der Künste (Magister or Magistra artium, Mag.art. or Mag.*a art.) is awarded.

(5) According to the European Qualification Framework (EQF), the five-year diploma degree programme corresponds to Level 7 (Master Degree).

¹ E.C.C.O. - Professional Guidelines I - The Profession (2002), E.C.C.O. - Professional Guidelines II - Code of Ethics (2003) and E.C.C.O. - Professional Guidelines III - Conservation Education (2004).

² ENCoRE Clarification Paper (2001), E.C.C.O. – Competences for Access to the Conservation-Restoration Profession (2011) and ENCoRE Document on Practice in Conservation-Restoration Education (2014).

§ 4. Structure of the Programme

(1) The diploma degree programme Conservation and Restoration consists of two stages of studies. The exact distribution of the subjects by semester hours and ECTS is set out in the Appendix.

(2) The first stage of studies consists of the following compulsory subjects and comprises 58 ECTS:

1. Conservation Sciences and Preservation Practices (42 ECTS)
2. Material Sciences and Material Cultures (16 ECTS).

(3) The second stage of studies consists of a diploma thesis amounting to 30 ECTS, elective subjects amounting to 26 ECTS and the following compulsory subjects amounting to 186 ECTS:

1. Conservation Sciences and Preservation Practices (148 ECTS)
2. Material Sciences and Material Cultures (38 ECTS).

(4) Students in the first stage of studies are entitled to take courses from the compulsory subjects of the second stage of studies. The module "Conservation Practice 2 (ZKF)" is excluded from this.

(5) The programme is essentially characterised by the module "Conservation Practice (ZKF)".

(6) In the module "Conservation Practice (ZKF)" students acquire and train practical skills for the independent implementation and/or supervision of conservation measures and complex restoration interventions on the object - either as specialists in one of the fields of painting, object, stone, textile, archaeological finds or software conservation, or as generalists working across these fields.

(7) From the second stage of studies onwards, students are obliged to choose one of the four fields or to study across the fields.

(8) Within the elective subjects it is recommended to choose courses that convey general knowledge of the state of the discipline and/or in-depth knowledge in the compulsory subjects.

§ 5. Course Examinations

(1) The examinations in the compulsory subjects and in the elective subjects are course examinations.

(2) Course examinations are held by the course instructor. The examination content, examination methods and assessment criteria are to be announced in the online course catalogue before the beginning of each semester.

(3) Course examinations may be held orally and/or in writing.

(4) The course examinations in the module "Conservation Practice (ZKF)" consist of a continuous assessment of the work performed during the entire semester as well as a concluding examination at the end of the semester. For a positive overall assessment, both parts must be completed positively.

(5) A positive assessment of a course in the central artistic subject requires in any case attendance of at least 80 per cent of the scheduled teaching units.

(6) A positive assessment of the preceding course of the module "Conservation Practice (ZKF)" is the prerequisite for registration for the subsequent course.

§ 6. Diploma Examination and Diploma Thesis

(1) The first diploma examination consists of the examinations in the compulsory subjects prescribed for the first stage of studies.

(2) The second diploma examination consists of the examinations in the compulsory subjects prescribed for the second stage of studies and of the artistic diploma thesis.

(3) A positive assessment of the intermediate diploma examination (Vordiplom) in the second stage of studies is a prerequisite for the artistic diploma thesis.

(4) In the context of the diploma thesis, students independently solve a complex conservation and restoration problem on the basis of an object or a group of objects, or address relevant research questions in current fields of action. The diploma thesis consists of a practical and a written part.

(5) The topic of the artistic diploma thesis is to be taken from the chosen field within the module "Conservation Practice (ZKF)" or to be conceived across fields.

(6) Students are entitled to propose a topic or to choose a topic from two proposals made by their supervisor.

(7) The prerequisites for a positive assessment of the diploma thesis are:

1. Successful completion of the agreed conservation and restoration practical part.
2. Successful completion of the written conservation science part.

(8) The conservation and restoration practical part and the written conservation science part are to be assessed separately and combined into an overall grade. For a positive overall assessment, both parts must be completed positively.

§ 7. Final and Transitional Provisions

(1) From its entry into force, the curriculum applies to all students of the programme Conservation and Restoration. Stages of studies already completed remain unaffected.

(2) The amendment of the curriculum, including the equivalence table, enters into force on 1 October 2026.

APPENDIX: Distribution of Subjects by ECTS

1st Stage of Studies (2 semesters, 58 ECTS)	ECTS	SemH
Conservation Sciences and Preservation Practices	42	44
Introduction to Conservation and Restoration	1	2
Academic Work in Conservation Science	2	2
Photo Documentation in Restoration	1	2
ZKF - Conservation Practice 1 (KE) Courses with a practical focus on conservation and restoration in the fields of painting, object, stone, textile, archaeological finds and software conservation.	36	36
Manual Knowledge Courses on historical and current technologies in conservation-restoration.	2	2
Material Sciences and Material Cultures	16	13
Fundamentals of Natural Sciences in Conservation-Restoration Courses on chemical and physical fundamentals in conservation-restoration.	6	3
Fundamentals of Materials Science Courses conveying the fundamentals of various materials (for example stone, textile, metal, wood).	4	4
History of Art, Costume or Architecture Courses on the history of art, textiles or architecture.	4	4
Fundamentals of Artwork Analysis	2	2

2nd Stage of Studies (8 semesters, 242 ECTS)	ECTS	SemH
Conservation Sciences and Preservation Practices	148	148
ZKF - Conservation Practice 2 (KE) Courses with a practical focus on conservation and restoration in the fields of painting, object, stone, textile, archaeological finds and software conservation. The intermediate diploma examination (Vordiplom) must be completed by the end of the eighth semester.	126	126
Deterioration Processes and Preservation Strategies Courses on deterioration processes and preservation strategies with different material focuses (for example painting, stone, textile, glass, metal), complementing the courses with a practical focus on conservation and restoration.	6	6
Heritage Management, Documentation and Communication Courses on the preservation of monuments, documentation methods (for example conservation survey, evaluation, monitoring), analogue and digital documentation tools (for example mapping, 3D scanning, 3D printing) as well as methods of communication (for example communication, presentation) and management.	8	8
Sustainable Conservation-Restoration Courses on sustainability, climate change, preventive conservation, Conservation Management Plan (CMP), community-based conservation and the conservation-restoration of intangible cultural heritage.	8	8
Material Sciences and Material Cultures	38	38
Material Sciences Courses deepening the fundamentals of various materials (for example stone, textile, metal, wood) or opening up new groups of materials (for example composite materials, plastics).	6	6
Materials in Conservation-Restoration Courses providing an overview of the materials and groups of materials used in conservation-restoration (for example natural and synthetic polymers, solvents).	6	6
Examination Methods Courses on radiographic, analytical, instrumental, physical and technical testing and examination methods as well as their application to art and cultural heritage.	6	6
Tangible and Intangible Cultures in Context Courses on tangible and intangible aspects of materials, art, technology and everyday culture (history, meaning, contexts of injustice) as well as on source criticism. At least one academic seminar must be completed by the end of the eighth semester.	12	12

2nd Stage of Studies (8 semesters, 242 ECTS)	ECTS	SemH
Manual Knowledge Courses on historical and current technologies in conservation-restoration (for example goldsmithing, metal threads, gilding) that generate manual knowledge through the development and practice of practical skills.	8	8
Elective Subjects	26	26
Diploma Thesis	30	0