

# Academy of Art and Design, University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland

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Rooms, stagings, images, artworks, writings, visual messages, objects, fashions and media – they all have the power to shape. Creatively and innovatively they produce the culture of the present day.

In this sense our Academy of Art and Design is part of present-day culture. We contribute to the expression of our culture, lending it a face with artistic and creative means. We create and produce valued goods and works for the future while we are embedded in the cultural discourse of the present and with history. We act responsibly and with deliberation, because we know that every work and every product is also a socio-cultural establishment of value.

Education at our Academy is based on tradition and innovation – which on the basis of its history, extending back to the 18th century, it measures the pulse of its age. On this the Academy measures itself; for it is also a place of cultural diagnosis, one of reflection as well as of speculation and meditation.

We strive to hold practice and discourse in a sensible balance. Practical doing must hold up under appraisal and examination through contextual knowledge. It must draw on theoretical foundations or develop them anew. And it should hold its own before the balance of history. Belonging to education are a cultural-historical and a perception-oriented formation, as well as a confrontation with the context of art and design.

Some 600 students are enrolled at the Academy of Art and Design of the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, who receive their education in Basel or Aarau at the bachelor's or the master's level.

We offer the following courses of study at the B.A. level at seven institutes in the area of art and design:

- Fashion Design
- Visual Communication
- Interior Design and Scenography
- Industrial Design (Aarau)
- Hyperwerk
- Art
- Teaching Art and Design

We offer four continuing master's level programmes in the areas of Design, Art and Art Interpretation:

Design: M.A. Visual Communication and Iconic Research

Design: M.A. Master Studio Design, Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland

Art: M.A. Fine Arts

Teaching Art and Design: M.A. Teaching Art and Design, Higher Vocational Education Certificate

This diversity and richness are distinctive for our Academy. Students benefit from this comprehensive offering. Cross-disciplinary curiosity is inspiring and stimulating for one's own creativity.

The objective of the educational course is the advancement of individual talent, of the students' own creative potential, of intellectual flexibility and the desire for innovation. We want to inspire the finding and implementation of creative formulations on the basis of a pronounced sensually perceptive capability, and the reflection of one's own vision and understanding. At the Academy of Art and Design UAS Northwestern Switzerland, designers, artists and cultural scientists are the instructors. Most of the lecturers are at the same time practicing, independent designers, architects, artists or cultural scientists. As a result, current practice and the cultural debate flow into instruction and theory and into project work.

# Bachelor studies at the Academy of Art and Design, University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland

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Studies at the Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland as a minimum and generally take six semesters for completion of the bachelor's degree. Studies are concluded with the University of Applied Sciences Diploma "Bachelor of Arts."

This demanding course of studies demands a considerable amount of energy, initiative and endurance, as well as regular attendance of the courses offered.

The evaluation and crediting of study performance is carried out according to ECTS (European Credit Transfer System). The primary purpose of ECTS is the facilitation of student mobility both domestically and in foreign countries through comparability of study performance.

The Academy of Art and Design and its institutes foster exchange among students at other institutions of higher education in Switzerland, and the targeted exchange with educational institutions in other European countries and overseas.

## **Registration dates, admissions requirements and acceptance procedures**

The registration deadline for studies beginning in the fall is respectively in the 1st quarter of the calendar year; the exact date can be found on our homepage [www.fhnw.ch/hgk](http://www.fhnw.ch/hgk).

For admission to the acceptance procedure, a federally recognized occupational qualifying certification, a federally recognized university qualifying certification or a comparable education is required.

In the area of Design a further prerequisite is a minimum of a one-year practical occupation in a profession corresponding to the course of study, the attendance of a one-year artistic preparatory course or an equivalent degree.

A proficiency test of creative and artistic capabilities is carried out for all admitted candidates.

A requirement for study at the Institute for Teaching Art and Design is a diploma which allows enrolment at the University of Basel (university qualifying certification or a primary school

teacher's diploma).

More information about studies at the Academy of Art and Design, University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland and requirements can be found in the student handbook or on our homepage [www.fhnw.ch/hgk](http://www.fhnw.ch/hgk). Here you can also order the student handbook and download the registration form. Both can also be ordered by telephone at +41 (0)61 695 67 71.

We recommend attendance of our informational events held at the beginning of each calendar year. Our secretariat as well as the management of the institutes are pleased and available to receive inquiries.

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Academy of Art and Design  
Vogelsangstrasse 15, 4058 Basel  
P +41 61 695 67 71, F +41 61 695 68 00  
[info.hgk@fhnw.ch](mailto:info.hgk@fhnw.ch), [www.fhnw.ch/hgk](http://www.fhnw.ch/hgk)

# Art

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As a location of study, Basel today provides one of the liveliest and most diverse art scenes in Switzerland; and the city can look back on a long tradition as a cultural centre.

Students at the Institute of Art on the Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland benefit from this environment of historical and contemporary influences.

The three-year course of studies for the bachelor's degree offers a diversified study programme which focuses on the development of one's own artistic work. Broad offerings in the form of workshops, seminars, lectures and forum events expand the course's structure in theory and practice. In the practice-oriented courses there are introductions and immersions in the handling of artistic media such as drawing, painting, installation, object, photography, video, experimental film, performance, audio, net art, electronic works in image or sound, or mixed media. The practical offerings are linked with media-specific findings and theoretical knowledge within the context of art.

## **Personal initiative and the culture of discourse**

The bachelor's degree course emphasizes the personal initiative and self-responsibility of students, whether in studio work or in the execution of projects and participation in exhibitions.

The Art Forum establishes a framework for a deepened examination of content among students and instructors. Regular presentation of personal artistic work in Forum groups is extended through collective visits to exhibitions or thematic discussions of art and society.

## **Open and communicative**

The Art Institute of the Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland is renowned for its openness. Each year, six acclaimed artists are invited as guest lecturers for study weeks. All major examinations within the course of studies are evaluated by external expert juries.

The public lecture series GUEST CORNER has existed for more than ten years. In the series, national and international speakers and artists express topical positions. Targeted partnerships, among others with the University of Basel, expand the Institute's own offerings.

SCHALTER, an art room, functions as the Art Institute's public window. The room's programme of exhibitions and events is curated by students.

Diverse and focused

The bachelor's degree programme is divided into six semesters.

The first year serves as an orientation to various media and to initial experiences with technical know-how. The Institute's comprehensive offerings in the area of contextual knowledge examine fundamental cultural techniques of artistic perception and reflection. The thesis prepared at the end of the first year serves to examine initial approaches to artistic work within the framework of a first public exhibition.

The second year of study intensifies the artistic work with media-specific knowledge. The first cohesive works are developed and employed in projects offered by the Institute or in a free art context. Offerings in the area of contextual knowledge introduce questions of art as business and of an economy of art.

The third year of study is devoted to concentration on artistic work, directed toward development of a major work or of a cycle for the bachelor examination at the conclusion of B.A. studies. The bachelor thesis also comprises a reflexive written paper as an intellectual examination of one's own artistic approach.

Following the bachelor thesis there is the possibility of entering a two-year master's programme.

## **Professional prospects**

The study of art is oriented toward free artistic practice. Beyond this, graduates also find positions in art interpretation operations and in art production (museums, galleries, art fairs, artistic studios, artistic-technical production businesses, and film or media production companies). Due to broad-based artistic competency coupled with media-specific knowledge and technical capabilities, a diverse sphere of activity presents itself in the area of contemporary art creation and in the art business.

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Academy of Art and Design  
Art Institute  
Offenburgerstrasse 1, 4057 Basel  
P +41 61 666 61 11, F +41 61 666 61 10  
info.kunst.hgk@fhnw.ch

# HyperWerk

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HyperWerk is an interdisciplinary laboratory which utilizes the current metamorphosis of the information society and develops new forms of work and education from it. We call this process-oriented design work Post-industrial Design. The uncertainties accompanying globalisation are comprehended in the Hyperwerk not as paralysing threats, but rather as options for creative action. The project-oriented course of study drafts and develops implementable proposals for partners and clients from various areas of society. The arrangement of what emerges from globalised flows of information presents a primary objective of process design; collectively we work on the development of a culture that knows how to use technology without being consumed by it. Sought-after is the merger of process design and project development, in order to understand the interplay of technological developments and social change, and from this to foster new forms of action.

## **Annual themes and high mobility**

Each academic year is marked with an annual theme that is dealt with by the entire HyperWerk. This framework supports the positioning of conveyed content, approached for the most part on a problem-related basis. Since all modules are led by external figures, who within the context of the annual theme are sought after on an international basis, the HyperWerk makes the impression of a globally active, virtual organisation. And the composition of the modules as continuous periods of time of roughly five week respectively enables high mobility.

## **Interdisciplinary mix of experience**

A good international reputation and a great many external lecturers create an open atmosphere in Hyperwerk's baroque villa. Hyperwerk makes conscious use of the interdisciplinary mix of experience of its students. This occurs not only with regard to the professional world, but also as relates to the diversity of cultural and lingual regions, to gender roles and depths of experience, all of which consolidate and complement in the Hyperwerk, yielding surprising questions.

Hyperwerk seeks the approximation of a theoretical basis for process design. How do attractive constellations and their accompanying time windows for transformational work make themselves apparent and optimally exploitable? The means of

prognostic evaluation of dynamic, interactive structures are still missing; the conflict between binding plans and mobile action remains unresolved. To intervene in transformational processes and release existing potential requires an analytical means of evaluating multi-layered realities: dynamic relationships need mobile strategies.

## **Committed process design**

Hyperwerk needs committed students, who dare to design processes, and our students need an environment, which demands and promotes entrepreneurial action. Empowerment – this poorly translatable expression embodies the credo behind HyperWerk.

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Academy of Art and Design  
HyperWerk Institute  
Totentanz 17/18, 4051 Basel  
P +41 61 269 92 30, F +41 61 269 92 26  
info.hyperwerk.hgk@fhnw.ch

# Visual Communication

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Visual communication is the intentional design of imagistic messages with the objective of comprehension. Visual communication thereby stands in the centre of the flood of images in daily life brought about by digitalisation.

Products of visual communication can appear in multifarious forms: as designed print products such as posters, books, magazines and newspapers, as visual installations in (public) space for orientation or information, as an arrangement of image sequences for film and video, as media composition for the internet, for information kiosks and interactive installations.

## **Images and effects**

The imagistic messages of visual communication can induce entirely different effects. We react emotionally to pictures in photo journalism or an advertising campaign and thereby unconsciously direct our attention to an event or a product. We read visualisations, maps or graphs consciously and gather knowledge that cannot be gained through text or numbers. We project experiential data onto the brands of products and companies, although their distinctive signs themselves are free of value. We decode letters and are able to interpret these as a sequence of sounds in a language. We are ensnared by moving pictures because in them we presuppose a more direct representation of reality than in a static one. Through the interactive manipulation of image sequences we plunge into another category of experience than that in the linear medium of film.

The capability to generate these and many other forms of effect intentionally through the design of images is the educational objective of the bachelor course of studies Visual Communication. The fabrication of images for communication requires manual skills, technical knowledge, artistic talent and contextual understanding for the analysis of image designs. In order to achieve these demanding learning objectives, the programme requires a high level of motivation and personal responsibility.

## **Three areas of concentration**

The course of studies offers three areas of concentration, which can be chosen following two semesters of basic study: Interaction, Image and Typography.

The concentration area Interaction is composed both of moving pictures in the form of video and single-image animation as well as with the design of interfaces between human beings and machines. The area of concentration Image deals with the fabrication of photographic, graphical or information-graphical image messages and their interpretation. At the focus of concentration area Typography is the notation of language with an alphabetic writing system, handling such themes as font design all the way to publication design.

The four semesters of advanced study convey core domains of visual communication alongside instruction in the area of concentration. These domains fall under the topic areas Imagination, Identity, Information and Intervention.

## **Tradition and perspectives**

The Basel Visual Communication Institute carries on the tradition of the “Basel School of Design” and its international orientation, keeping it up to date from a contemporary perspective of image and media studies.

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Academy of Art and Design  
Visual Communication Institute  
Vogelsangstrasse 15, 4058 Basel  
P +41 61 695 67 51, F +41 61 695 67 51  
vis\_com.hgk@fhnw.ch

# Fashion Design

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“The wearer can feel it, if the clothes are free-spirited.”

Rei Kawakubo

## **Independent Fashion Design**

The Fashion Design Institute offers a bachelor degree study course with the objective of independent fashion design.

If independence is striven for in a world confronted with major political, economic, cultural as well as aesthetic challenges, then a course of study in fashion design must challenge and foster free spirit, the joy of invention as well as a sense of responsibility.

One approach is the courageous and radical questioning of conventions within the context of a notion of design as an intellectual as well as a manual activity, the precision of which accrues with a joy in professionalism.

At the centre of study are a number of questions:

- what does it mean to design an order for oneself, where do the freedoms and boundaries of idea generation lie, as well as the interpretation of the market, of target groups and the spirit of the time?
- what is inspiration really, and what purpose does it serve?
- what does it mean to make design decisions on one hand in two dimensions, and on the other hand in three?
- what does pattern technology have to do with reproduction and communication?
- what happens in concretisation due to the three-dimensional design? How do materiality, function, refinement and precision interplay?
- how does one develop relevant criteria for review, and can someone really be his or her own critic?
- what role do kinships in thinking and methods play, particularly to architecture, but also to visual communication, the visual or the performing arts?
- through which communication strategies do products on the way to market find their positioning?

The goal is the design of innovative collections, with focus on the development of an individual design language which communicates a relevant fashion statement. This encompasses a confrontation with fashion in the context of cultural and social developments as well as the representation, interpretation and staging of developed products under the aspect of an innovative disposition to a (future) proprietary business situation.

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Academy of Art and Design  
Fashion Design Institute  
Kasernenstrasse 23, 4058 Basel  
P +41 61 683 18 45, F +41 61 683 18 48  
info.modedesign.hgk@fhnw.ch

# Teaching Art and Design

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We find ourselves in an era of cultural upheaval. Images are increasingly employed for argumentative purposes. New media and codes must be explored and integrated in our understanding of culture and art. Developing alongside this is a realm of design with new possibilities and significance. Teaching in the area of art and design is thus becoming more important, growing richer. The educational programmes at the Institute for Teaching Art and Design are oriented towards this. The bachelor course as basic study forms along with the subsequent master course a branch of education of advanced teacher training. With the master's as standard degree, certification for the teaching profession in visual design at the secondary level II (gymnasium level) is achieved.

## **The bachelor's degree course for Teaching Art and Design**

Teaching art and design entails a broad, interdisciplinary range of competencies. Accordingly, the 6-semester bachelor's degree course encompasses the practical and theoretical confrontation with art, culture, design, media, technology and communication in a profile of competencies. Students thereby assemble their own diverse background of experiences.

In this course of studies, the creative capacity of expression in diverse media, manual and technical skills, knowledge of artistic and creative theory, comprehension of interpretive questions as well as understanding of creative processes and strategies are developed. These competencies are assembled through one's own creative action, exploration and reflection. The quality of the products developed stands as much in focus as the paths which lead to them.

## **The master's degree programme in Teaching Art and Design, teaching certificate for qualifying secondary schools**

The 4-semester master course, oriented toward theoretical, exploratory and practical immersion in art and design as well as development of competence in educational science, didactics and practice in instruction, follows the bachelor's degree course "Teaching Art and Design."

The master course of studies is offered in collaboration with the Teacher Training College of the UAS Northwestern Switzerland within the framework of the secondary level II course of studies.

In the portion of the course of studies completed at the Academy of Art and Design, students prepare their master's thesis, deepen expert competencies, individually expand knowledge in particular subjects and carry out exploratory projects or research. In those portions of the course of studies conducted at the Teacher Training College, focus lies on justifiable, scientifically-documented preparation and competent conveyance of artistic-cre-

ative content. The additional cooperative offerings of the art academies in Bern, Lucerne and Zurich expand the discourse and the international network in the interpretive field of art and design.

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Academy of Art and Design  
Institute for Teaching Art and Design  
Gründenstrasse 40, 4132 Muttenz  
P +41 61 467 45 40, F +41 61 467 44 65  
info.lgk.hgk@fhnw.ch

# Interior Design and Scenography

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With a view toward the acceleration processes in our society driven by new media, and thereby as a result the rapid change in the basic standpoint of art and design, the Interior Design and Scenography Institute drafted and positioned an adaptable curriculum. It accommodates the emergence of new fields of activity in the area of design. The notion of overcoming fixed disciplinary borders stands at the centre – the occupational image of scenographic/interior architectural designers, who capably move through the borderland of scenography, interior design, furniture design, architecture, exhibition, performance, installation and event. The location of their interventions, interventions and arrangements is always the room. The central element in this is scenography, which deals with “using spatial means to bring stories to a dramatising performance” in which objects, environments or presentations coalesce to atmospheres or milieus of experience with the instruments—among others—of light, sound or moving pictures.

## **Motivation, enthusiasm, self-responsibility and team spirit – perceiving, supporting, advancing.**

The Institute demands intuition, talent, openness for what is new and above-average motivation from its bachelor’s degree students. In confronting the material of study, it is expected that students formulate their own learning goals, and that they develop personal initiative as they carry out unusual tasks. Curiosity and enthusiasm should guide students in the formulation of innovative solution approaches, spurring them to implement what has previously been “unimaginable.” The ability to work in teams is a core condition for accomplishment of complex design tasks. This capability facilitates collaboration for future interior and scenographic designers with specialists from neighbouring disciplines such as architecture, theatre, film, museology and art. Exploiting this rich know-how supports brainstorming in the drafting process and generates manifold synergy effects.

During bachelor studies at the Interior Design and Scenography Institute, individual talents are discovered, fostered, and creative potential developed. Creative flexibility and desire for innovation are thereby supported in a targeted manner. The indispensable knowledge of implementation required for this is conveyed. Studies are project-oriented and implementation-driven, providing beyond this the chance to test acquired theoretical capabilities in practice, possible in projects realised on a 1:1 scale.

## **Lived discourse – the linkage of practice and theory**

Creative practice has need of reflection, requires knowledge in its own area of expertise of the “state of the art,” as well as a foundation of knowledge extending beyond its own realm in order to legitimate and position one’s own work. Theoretical knowledge should not merely be accumulated, but should precipitate directly into practical, creative efforts, thus making a critical contribution in the finding of one’s own position and definitively supporting the quality of designs.

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Academy of Art and Design  
Interior Design and Scenography Institute  
Spitalstrasse 8, 4056 Basel  
P +41 61 268 93 93, F +41 61 268 93 90  
info.in3.hgk@fhnw.ch

# Industrial Design

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Industrial designers create consumer and capital goods for industrial and serial fabrication.

Giving form to something is a multi-layered, complex process. The most diverse factors must be consolidated in an object suitable for daily life: the plastic shape, aesthetics, readability and functional indication, the look-and-feel and emotional impression, materiality and producibility as well as ethical considerations and the values embodied in the use of form. Designed products also model operating processes, however, as well as strategies of action. Because of this industrial design is a transdisciplinary process, from initial drafting to implementation.

## **Operating processes and strategies of action**

A central topic of industrial design is the drafting of industrially fabricated serial products through a targeted, creative and interdisciplinary development procedure: the design process. Beyond pure form and function, designed products convey intentions and meanings, and more still: they model operating processes and strategies of action. The course of studies imparts conceptual, methodical and manual capabilities for the process of design and enables independent design work.

The core competencies lie in the creative, prob-

lem-oriented design process, to which the communicative and representational capabilities of drawing, modelling and virtual simulation also belong. In order to be able to assume an active role in a profession in rapid flux, students learn both self-confident procedure in their own discipline as well as an expertly and socially competent intercourse with bordering disciplines.

## **Course objectives**

The following core competencies are to be achieved in the course of studies:

Creative competence

- the ability to think of innovations
- the ability to formulate innovations
- the ability to represent innovations

Aesthetic competence

- command of creative resources
- sensibility for aesthetic currents
- development of one's own aesthetic position

Methodical competence

- problem-oriented thinking
- systematic procedure
- targeted action

In the basic study course (1st year), technical, manual, methodical and creative knowledge is conveyed parallel to project work. Students learn various working methods and models. Simple and brief projects are realised, complemented through targeted exercises and lectures. Advan-

ced studies consist in the majority of project work. There are three types of projects: introductory projects, practical projects and visionary projects, which vary in complexity and length of time. Through targeted selection of study modules (elective courses), students can set individual concentrations.

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Academy of Art and Design

Industrial Design Institute

Bahnhofstrasse 102, 5000 Aarau

P +41 62 832 66 66, F +41 62 832 66 65

info.industrialdesign.hgk@fhnw.ch

# Master's degree programmes at the Academy of Art and Design

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## **Master of Fine Arts**

Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland / Bern University of the Arts

The Master of Fine Arts programme of the Academy of Art and Design in Basel advances primarily individual artistic authorship. The programme should lead to artistic maturity, the basis for long-term developmental strength, in order to hold one's own in the public domain and the art market. The master's programme proceeds from a formulated artistic assessment. The lessons of the M.A. Fine Arts in Basel range in the suspenseful realm between experiment, research and critical self-reflection. The content, media and approaches support self-responsibility in education.

The master's programme includes group instruction in courses, seminars, creative practice workshops and colloquia, offered in blocks. The primary portion of studies is constituted by one's own artistic confrontation in discourse with mentors and the art world.

The course of studies comprises 120 ECTS credits and is completed in 4 semesters.

## **M.A. Visual Communication and Iconic Research**

This course of studies is a collaborative offering of the Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland, Visual Communication Institute and eikones, National Centre of Competence in Iconic Criticism at the University of Basel. At the centre of this course concept is the link between practice-oriented design with aspects of iconic theory and iconic

research. Students enter the course either with a bachelor's degree from an academy of art and design or with a bachelor's degree oriented toward cultural studies from a university. Graduates from a design-oriented degree course deal in their focus subject with complex questions of design against the backdrop of iconic research and theory. The students with degrees in cultural studies focus in the main on conceptual-strategic questions of visual communication. The intimate link and complementary extension of practical and analytical iconic competence is fostered through cooperation in interdisciplinary project teams. This course of studies qualifies graduates for engagements in the broader economy and the cultural industry as well as in teaching and research at an academy of art and design.

The degree programme encompasses 120 ECTS credits and is completed in 4 semesters.

## **M.A. "Master Studio Design," Academy of Art and Design, UAS Northwestern Switzerland**

With the Master Studio, the design institutes of the Academy of Art and Design collectively offer a master's degree program in design that is interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary in orientation.

Present forms of globalisation enable a virtually unlimited exchange of knowledge, goods, technologies and cultural assets. This has consequences for the realm of design: projects are becoming more complex, swifter, constellations of personnel and content change more frequently. Due to cross-disciplinary cooperation, new, innovative fields of design emerge that make professional design pro-

cesses and consequently design products and services possible which bear up well in a world of intense national and global competition. Students of all participating design disciplines have a comprehensive production, research and discourse forum available to them.

The course programme in the Master Studio deepens the competencies in the studied discipline and introduces interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work. The implementation of content is carried out according to the concept:

Context – orientational knowledge in the areas of design research, design processes and the culture of design.

Immersion – deepened confrontation with professional profiles and fields of activity.

Project – individual profile of study, established in conjunction with the programme administration.

Research – examination of issues and conditions in design research.

The degree programme comprises 90 ECTS credits and can be completed in 3 or 4 semesters.

## **M.A. Teaching Art and Design, teaching certificate for qualifying secondary schools**

The master's degree programme at the Institute for Teaching Art and Design is an integral component of the degree, required for teaching activity at the secondary school level II. Please see teaching professions in art and design.

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More information on M.A. degree programmes can be found on our homepage, [www.fhnw.ch/hgk](http://www.fhnw.ch/hgk).