Study Regulations Master's Degree Programme in Digital Communication Environments

of 1 September 2023

Based on the regulatory framework regarding the degree programmes at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) of 2 February 2015 (as of 21 June 2021) and the regulatory framework regarding the limitation of study places in the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes at the FHNW University of 24 August 2020, along with the Study and Examination Regulations regarding the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes at the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW of 1 September 2022 (StuER), the director of the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW (HGK Basel FHNW) issues at the request of the head of the degree programme the following study regulations for the Master's degree programme in Digital Communication Environments.

Part 1: General Remarks

Section 1   Scope

The following Study Regulations, in complement to the Study and Examination Regulations concerning Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes at the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW of 1 September 2022 (StuER), govern the legal conditions concerning admission, aptitude assessment, enrolment, studies (structure, process, duration, academic performance), performance assessment, and the acquisition of the degree "Master of Arts FHNW in Digital Communication Environments" at the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW. The module guide in the appendix is an integral part of these Study Regulations.

Part 2: Studying

Sect. 2   Admission requirements

Admission requirements

1 The requirements regarding admission to the Master's degree programme Digital Communication Environments are defined in section 3, para. 18 of the Study and Examination Regulations for degree programmes at the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW (StuER).

Proof of language competence

2 The language of tuition is English. Applicants are required to submit proof of their language proficiency in English in the form of a certificate (B2 according to the standard European reference framework or equivalent) or otherwise (e.g. first language or education in an English-speaking country) before they commence their studies. Applicants with a Swiss school certificate are not required to provide evidence of their language competence.

Registration

3 To register for the Master's degree programme in Digital Communication Environments, candidates are asked to submit documents in accordance with the specifications listed on the registration portal, i.e. in particular:
- Proof of compliance with admission requirements
- Motivation letter
- Samples of work (portfolio)
- CV in tabular format
- Text sample

Sect. 3   Aptitude assessment

Aptitude assessment: prerequisites

1 In the context of the aptitude assessment, it is ascertained whether a candidate has sufficient artistic / creative potential to qualify for the Master's degree programme.

2 Participation requires the following preconditions:

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| | | a. Compliance with the admission requirements pursuant to sect. 2, para 1 of these Study Regulations;
b. Submission of complete registration form pursuant to sect. 2. |

Admission decision 3 If the admission requirements pursuant to para. 2 are met, the application documents are submitted to the respective commission for review. If the admission requirements pursuant to para. 2 are not fulfilled, a negative admission decision according to sect. 12, para. 1 of the StuER shall be issued in the form of a ruling, including the appropriate information on legal remedy.

Admissions commission 4 For the planning and carrying out of the aptitude assessment, the head of the degree programme shall appoint a responsible commission.

Procedure of aptitude assessment; criteria re the evaluation of the individual aspects of the assessment. 5 The aptitude assessment is carried out in two steps:
- Part 1: Appraisal of the submitted portfolio, motivation letter, and text sample by the commission;
- Part 2: Suitability interview with a focus on the submitted portfolio, motivation letter, previous education/experience, study goals, and career prospects.

Part 1 of the aptitude assessment 6 The two parts of the aptitude assessment are evaluated on the basis of the following criteria on a 2-point scale as either "pass" or "failed" and on a point system (ranging from 1 to 10 for each position):

Positions, part 1	Evaluation criteria
1. Work samples (Portfolio)	- Conceptual competence - Relationship between form and content - Innovativeness - Presentation
2. Text sample	- Content relevance - Scientific quality - Autonomy of approach - Language quality
3. Motivation letter	- Persuasiveness of content - Language quality of text - Formal presentation

Positions, part 2	Evaluation criteria
4. Interview and motivation	- Structure of presentation - Language competence - Compatibility of study objective and range of studies on offer

To attain a "pass", a candidate has to attain a sufficient number of points.
The three positions of part 1 are weighted equally in the overall assessment.

Decision part 1 7 Candidates who do not score the necessary number of points and are therefore rated as "failed" shall receive a negative admission decision in the form of a ruling, including the appropriate information on legal remedy. Candidates with a sufficient grade shall receive an invitation to part 2 of the aptitude assessment.

Part 2 of aptitude assessment 8 Part 2 of the aptitude assessment includes an interview about the submitted portfolio, the applicant's motivation, previous training/experience, study goals, and career prospects. Rating is based on the evaluation criteria listed in para. 6, part 2.

Negative decision 9 Applicants who do not reach the afforded number of points and whose aptitude assessment has therefore been rated as "failed", shall receive a negative admission decision in the form of a ruling, including the appropriate information on legal remedy.

Retake 10 The admission procedure can be repeated twice.

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Sect. 4 — Enrolment procedure

Ranked order of admission

1 In the enrolment procedure, the available study places are assigned to the candidates that fulfil the admission requirements and have passed their aptitude assessment according to a ranking system and their overall achievement in the assessment. Candidates who were not awarded a study place on the basis of their ranking in the assessment, receive confirmation that they figure on the ranked waiting list. Candidates who definitely cannot be assigned a study place are handed a negative admission decision in the form of a ruling, including the appropriate information on legal remedy, latest before the start of the degree course.

Ranked waiting list

2 With the start of each new academic year, the current ranked waiting list is deleted definitely.

Eligibility of ECTS credits

3 When a student transfers to the Master's degree programme Digital Communication Environments from another degree course at HGK Basel FHNW or from a different university, the head of the degree programme shall decide on whether and how the already completed achievements are to be rated and how the achieved ECTS credits are to be credited.

Sect. 5 — Study design

Structure

1 The degree programme is modular in structure and involves a total of 120 ECTS credits.

Module groups

3 Modules can be combined to form module groups. Module groups have a common focus. From each module group, students must attain a minimum number of ECTS credits as specifically required in the respective degree programme. Details are specified in the module guide (see appendix) of the Study Regulations.

Types of modules

4 The Master's degree programme Digital Communication Environments recognizes three types of modules:
   a. Compulsory modules that must be attended in the sequence as specified in the module guide.
   b. Compulsory modules of choice, to be selected in a certain number from a group of modules;
   c. Elective modules as listed in the module guide or offered by other HGK Basel FHNW degree programmes or by other universities.

Module descriptions

5 Pursuant to sect. 4, para. 6 of the StuER, the module descriptions are published before the start of a new semester in the course catalogue of HGK Basel FHNW.

Academic year

6 The lecture-free period as defined by the HGK Basel FHNW academic calendar can, according to sect. 7, para. 3 of StuER can, to a limited extent, be used to conduct parts of modules. In particular, this refers to exams, study trips, the realization of implementation projects, catch-up work, work on and submission of project documentations, as well as individual feedbacks.

Sect. 6 — Course of studies

Course of studies

1 The course of studies including the scheduled time sequence of the modules to be completed, the respective type of modules, the associated module groups as well as the number of required ECTS credits can be drawn from the module guide in the appendix of the Study Regulations.

2 The degree programme is a full-time study. Dividing up study time is only permitted in consultation with and approval of the head of the degree programme There is no automatic entitlement to dividing up study time.

Specialization: Submission of Master's thesis topic

3 By submitting the topic of their thesis in the 3rd semester, students opt for one of the two possible specializations:
   a. Applied basic research in the field of image, media, concept and design research;
   b. Reflective design practice in analogue and digital visual communication.

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	4	At the beginning of each semester, a Learning Agreement is concluded with every student, in which the course of study is specified and the respective specialization is reflected upon.
Interruption of studies	5	Pursuant to sect. 6, para. 3 of the StuER, any interruption of studies shall be regulated as follows: a. The respective application must be submitted in writing to the head of degree programme for approval at least two months before the start of the semester; b. As a result, the duration of studies is extended by at least one year; c. The interruption may not exceed the duration of 4 semesters. The time out is not factored in when determining the overall duration of studies.
Intellectual property and IRF	6	Regarding intellectual property rights to student works, the provisions in sect. 7, paras. 21 to 23 of the StuER apply. Any alternative arrangement as well as supplementary details must be agreed upon in writing between the student and the head of the degree programme.
Tools	7	From the start of their studies, students have to be in possession of a computer (laptop) that is capable of processing the programmes commonly used at HGK Basel FHNW.

Sect. 7   Academic performances

Performance assessments	1	Type, form, and rating of performance assessments as well as the mode by which modules are assessed are set out in the module guide. The module descriptions therein are listed in the HGK Basel FHNW's course catalogue.
Attendance and reporting duty	2	If attendance is described as compulsory in the module description, even excused absences are treated as absences according to sect. 10, para. 4 of StuER. If the rate of excused absences exceeds 20%, students are given the chance to compensate for the absence by conducting a follow-up performance. However, there is no entitlement to this. The decision lies within the competence of the lecturer responsible for the module in consultation with the head of the degree programme.
	3	In order to pass a module, students must not only deliver a satisfactory performance, but also fulfil any mandatory attendance requirements. If it becomes evident that the compulsory rate of attendance in a module cannot be met, a student may be excluded from participating in performance assessments.
Retake and revision	4	Failed modules can be repeated in the following year at the earliest. Any revision must be made in accordance with sect. 7, para. 10 of the StuER and in consultation with the lecturers responsible for the module.

Sect. 8   Graduation

Prerequisites	1	Students are eligible for the Master's thesis if they have successfully completed all the prescribed modules according to the module guide and attained the required number of ECTS credits.
Master's thesis	2	Students submit to the head of the degree programme a proposal in which they outline the topic of their Master's thesis, select one of the programme's two specializations in accordance with sect. 6, para. 4, and define the work's key points in terms of content and form.
Registration for Master's thesis	3	Registration for the Master's thesis is to be submitted in time with the form and all the required documents to the head of the degree programme.
	4	Irrespective of the specialization, the Master's thesis is made up of the three following modules; these are graded on a 6-point scale and weighted equally in the overall evaluation: 1. Practical design work and presentation 2. Process documentation 3. Theoretical part

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Examination panel	5	The head of the degree programme is responsible for defining the content and correct organizational procedure of the Master's thesis and nominates the internal and external members of the examination panel.
	6	The examination panel for the Master's thesis is made up of: • the head of the degree programme (chair) • two of the degree programme's lecturers • three external experts
Additional provisions	7	The additional provisions specify the deadlines and dates as well as the IRF assignment according to sect. 7, para. 23 of the StuER. The respective current document is handed out to students before their thesis semester.
Assessment criteria Master's thesis	8	The modules of the Master's thesis are graded on the basis of the following criteria on a 6-point scale; they are weighted equally in the overall rating:

Positions	Evaluation criteria
1.1 Practical design work	- Quality of content - Conceptual quality - Autonomy of approach - Relationship between practical design work and theoretical part - Significance of experiments for the question at hand - Relevance of work for the practice of visual communication - Complexity of task - Aesthetic quality
1.2 Presentation	- Structure - Language competence - Analytical and argumentative skills - Scope of reflection - Ability to answer critical question
2. Process documentation	- Relevance of content - Structure - Scope of design investigation - Scientific quality - Autonomy of approach
3. Theoretical part	- Quality of content - Structure - Quality of language - Scientific quality - Autonomy of approach - Relevance of issue addressed - Relationship between practical design work and theoretical part.

Grading conference	9	Pursuant to para. 4, the three modules are assessed by the examination panel in a grading conference. The average from the three module ratings yields the overall grade of the Master's thesis.
Exam documentation	10	The evaluation of the modules that make up the Master's thesis are recorded in assessment sheets, and completed and signed by the internal and external members of the examination panel.
Retake and amendments	11	If a module of the Master's thesis is rated as insufficient, it can be retaken in the following year at the earliest. Any amendments are to be made in accordance with sect. 7 para. 10 of the StuER and in consultation with the head of the degree programme, and must be submitted within 6 weeks. The revision of the work has to be done without the support of mentoring, after the examination panel has explained wherein deficiencies lie. In this case, the student is excluded from taking part in the MA thesis exhibition.

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Graduation 12 The following requirements must be met for a successful completion of the Master's degree programme Digital Communication Environments:

 a. Attainment and successful completion of 120 ECTS credits in total in accordance with the module guide;
 b. Fulfilment of all the requirements in accordance with the Study Regulations;
 c. Attainment of at least 60 ECTS credits as well as the Master's thesis at HGK Basel FHNW.

Part 3:   Final and transitional provisions

Sect. 9   Entry into Force

These Study Regulations enter into force as of 1 September 2023. They replace the Study Regulations for the Master's degree programme in Digital Communication Environments of 15 September 2022.

Basel, 28 August 2023
Upon request of:

Prof Michael Renner
Head of Master's degree programme Digital Communication Environments

Basel, 30 August 2023
Issued by:

Prof Dr Claudia Perren
Director Basel FHNW Academy of Art and Design

Please note:

The document is the English translation of the original German Study and Examination Regulations Concerning Degree Programmes at the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW. Only the original German version published on the website of HGK Basel FHNW and bearing the signatures of the President of the FHNW Board of Directors and the Director of the Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW is valid in law (in force as of 1 September 2023). According to Section 13 of the HGK Basel FHNW Study and Exam Regulations, the common language of the Complaints Commission is German; accordingly, complaints submitted in advance must be written in German; any subsequent hearing before the Commission is also held in German.

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