

Admission statutes for the BA DESIGN and MA DESIGN study programs

Section 1: General/Applicability in combination with the Enrollment Statutes:

Admission to the BA and MA Design programs at the Hochschule für Gestaltung / University of Art and Design requires proof of artistic or outstanding (in the absence of a university entrance qualification) artistic aptitude for the BA or MA Design, which must be demonstrated in an aptitude test. Any examination passed at another university to determine (outstanding) artistic aptitude is not recognized at the University of Art and Design.

The deadlines and other requirements for enrollment are governed by the Enrollment Statutes, while language requirements are governed by the Language Statutes.

Section 2: Application

- (1) Prospective students shall submit their application for admission with all supporting documents to the design department's admissions committee.
- (2) The admission procedure can be started even if language certificates required for the study program are not yet available, provided that language skills equivalent to level B2 (see Language Statutes) can nevertheless be demonstrated in German or English.
- (3) The admission procedure for the MA Design can be started if the first degree has been completed as scheduled by the start of the program and at the time of application no more than 30 CPs are missing for achievement of the first professional qualifying degree. In the case of admission, the degree certificate must then be submitted subsequently in accordance with the requirements of the Enrollment Statutes. In exceptional cases, the admissions committee may allow the submission of the certificate by the end of the first master's semester. In these cases, confirmation from the examination committee as to when the bachelor's degree will be completed as scheduled must be submitted for the application. If the certificate is not submitted in time, enrollment will not be possible or the student will be deregistered.

(4) For the Bachelor's program, submission must be digital:

- Portfolio as PDF depicting conceptual, design, artistic, and drawing skills (landscape format, min. 20 pages, 20 MB), to then also be submitted in analog form (original) later in the application process, see below.

In the case of collaborations or works that use material not produced by the applicant themselves, the applicant's own contribution and/or authorship must be indicated.

As an alternative or in addition to the workbook, an assignment can be requested by the admissions committee to be completed independently within a specified period of time (only possible for applicants with a university entrance qualification).

- Letter of motivation with reasons for study
- Digital version of the university entrance qualification certificate or the last schoolleaving certificate
- Proof of a craft-technical and/or digital-technical internship (e.g., in a craft workshop, an industrial company, or an agency for media and media production) of at least 8 weeks. Further regulations on this matter are contained in the internship regulations of the Department of Design. Proof of the internship can be submitted later up to the beginning of the second semester of study. In order to prepare for the studies, it is recommended that students complete the internship by the beginning of the program.
- Detailed résumé
- Language certificates according to the Language Statutes
- If applicable, classification of the Academic Examination Office (for educational certificates from China, Mongolia, and Vietnam)

(5) For the Master's degree program, the following must be submitted in digital form:

- Portfolio as PDF, including evidence of the applicant's own design, artistic, or theoretical projects (landscape format, min. 20 pages, 20 MB), to also be submitted in analog form (original) later in the application process, see below.

In the case of collaborations or works that use material not produced by the applicant themselves, the applicant's own contribution or authorship must be indicated.

- PDF exposé, a detailed letter of motivation explaining personal goals and interests in design, as well as a description and justification of the self-selected and planned MA topic (250 to 500 words maximum, 2 MB).
- Digital version of the certificate of the previous degree (or, if the degree certificate is not yet available: transcript of records) or the last school-leaving certificate
- If applicable, job references regarding professional activities in the field of study
- Detailed résumé
- Language certificates according to the Language Statutes
- If applicable, classification of the Academic Examination Office (for educational certificates from China, Mongolia, and Vietnam)

Section 3: Admissions committee

(1) The departmental council appoints an admissions committee for admissions to the bachelor's and master's degree programs. The Dean of Studies is an ex officio member of the admissions committee, in addition to whom the committee usually includes two further professors and one staff member according to sections 65 and 66 of the Hessian Higher Education Act (HHG), as well as three students who are nominated by the respective group in the departmental council. The students participate in an advisory capacity. The admissions committee elects a professorial chair from among its members, whose vote is decisive in the event of a tie.

Section 4: Admission procedure for a Bachelor's degree

- (1) The admissions committee examines the formal admission requirements as well as the portfolios or assignments of the applicants and decides on admission to the further procedure of aptitude testing.
- (2) After applicants have passed the portfolio examination, the admissions committee invites them to an examination day. This comprises a design or drafting examination consisting of one drawing task, one constructive-design task, and one conceptual task. The admissions committee evaluates the design or drafting examination, with the different sections of the exam weighted equally in the evaluation.
- (3) The examination day also includes a technical discussion with the admissions committee usually lasting half an hour, which may take the form of a group examination. In exceptional cases, the admissions committee may invite applicants whose artistic aptitude is sufficiently evident from the portfolio directly to the technical discussion without a design or drafting examination.

The previously submitted portfolio must be presented in analog form for the technical interview. The admissions committee evaluates the technical interviews.

- (5) Assessment is based on:
 - a. Abstraction ability, transformation ability
 - b. Ability to visually represent own design/artistic ideas
 - c. Ability for differentiated observation
 - d. Creativity and improvisation skills
 - e. Motivation and sensitivity
 - f. Imagination and envisioning
 - g. Technical ability and understanding
 - h. Ability to express oneself linguistically in the context of one's own creative/artistic work

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- (6) The aptitude test is evaluated as “outstanding pass” (up to 1.7, only in the absence of a university entrance qualification), “pass” (up to 4.0), or “fail” (from 4.3). The evaluation corresponds to the evaluation of the technical discussion or, if a design or drafting examination has taken place, to the arithmetic mean of the two evaluations. Anyone who has passed the examination with “outstanding” has demonstrated the requirement for outstanding artistic aptitude within the meaning of section 54 para. 4(3) of the Hessian Higher Education Act.
 - (7) Minutes must be taken of the examination, and these must make clear the basis for the assessment. The minutes must be signed by the chairperson of the admissions committee, which shall notify the applicant in writing of the result of the examination. A negative decision must be accompanied by reasons for the outcome as well as instructions on how to appeal. It can be issued digitally in accordance with the requirements of the Hessian Administrative Procedure Act.
 - (8) The examination may be repeated once. The determination of artistic aptitude is valid for two years.

Section 5: Admission procedure for Master’s degree

- (1) Admission to the Master’s program requires proof of a successfully completed domestic or foreign university degree (bachelor’s degree/diploma) or another equivalent degree. The previous university degree should normally comprise at least 210 CPs and have been obtained in the following fields of study: Digital Design, Information Design, Industrial Design, Integrating Design, Material Design, and Urban Design, or other equivalent design disciplines.
- (2) The admissions committee examines the formal admission requirements as well as the portfolios and exposés and decides on admission to the further procedure of determining aptitude. It may admit graduates of degree programs with 180 CPs or design-related degrees to the application procedure if they can demonstrate sufficient basic knowledge and/or relevant professional experience in design project work.
- (3) If artistic aptitude cannot yet be adequately assessed on the basis of the portfolio, the admissions committee may invite students to take a design or drafting examination. This comprises one drawing, one constructive, and one conceptual

- (4) task. The admissions committee evaluates the suitability of the applicants, whereby the different parts of the examination are weighted equally.
- (5) After applicants have passed the portfolio examination and, if applicable, the design or drafting examination, they are invited to a technical discussion with the admissions committee usually lasting half an hour, in which their design and theoretical skills are assessed. The technical discussion can take place as a group examination. In addition, the previously submitted portfolio must be presented in analog form. The admissions committee evaluates the suitability of the applicants.
- (6) Assessment is based on:
 - a. Abstraction ability, transformation ability
 - b. Ability to visually represent own artistic/design ideas
 - c. Ability for differentiated observation
 - d. Creativity and improvisation skills
 - e. Motivation and sensitivity
 - f. Imagination and envisioning
 - g. Technical ability and understanding
 - h. Ability to express oneself linguistically in the context of one's own artistic/creative work
- (7) The aptitude test is evaluated as "outstanding pass" (up to 1.7, only in the absence of a first university degree), "pass" (up to 4.0), or "fail" (from 4.3). The evaluation corresponds to the evaluation of the technical discussion or, if a practical examination has taken place, to the arithmetic mean of the two evaluations.
- (8) Minutes must be taken of the examination, and these must make clear the basis for the assessment. The minutes must be signed by the chairperson of the admissions committee, which shall notify the applicant in writing of the result of the examination. A negative decision must be accompanied by reasons for the outcome as well as instructions on how to appeal. This may be issued (additionally) in digital form.
- (9) The examination may be repeated once. The determination of artistic aptitude is valid for two years.

- (10) The admissions committee may admit graduates of degree programs with fewer than 240 CPs and/or design-related degree programs under the condition that basic knowledge and competencies in the amount of up to 60 CPs are made up in the first year of study. The condition may include, among other things, an internship of up to 30 CPs in the field of design before the start of the study program. In these cases, the standard program duration for the master's degree program is extended by one or two semesters depending on the extent of the requirements. Crediting of achievements in the elective area of the master's program is excluded for the fulfillment of requirements.
- (11) In exceptional and well-founded cases, the admissions committee may admit applicants who have acquired the aptitude required for the study program at work instead of through a university degree. The formal prerequisite for the determination of suitability is proof of approx. three years in an activity that has sufficient correlations of content with the master's degree program and which, in particular, has taught the applicant knowledge and skills that are conducive to the degree program. Admission without a previous degree is subject to the condition of subsequent qualification in theory and design in accordance with paragraph 9. Strict standards are to be applied in the assessment of the correlations of content and the knowledge and skills to be credited. The possibility of admission without a degree cannot be combined with the admission to study without a university entrance qualification as permitted by state law in the case of special artistic aptitude, i.e., for the master's degree program, proof of a university entrance qualification must be provided in any case and may take the form of a completed university degree in accordance with the HHG.

Section 6: Entry into force

The Admission Statutes for the BA and MA DESIGN come into force on the day after publication on the website of the HfG and apply to all application procedures for the BA and MA Design beginning from 1 January 2026

Offenbach, 28.02.2026

Prof. Dr. Brigitte Franzen
President

Disclaimer

The English translation of the “Admission statutes for the BA Design and MA DESIGN study programs” is an informal translation of the original German version and is not legally binding. In case of any inconsistency or conflict of interpretation in relation to or among original and the translation, the original shall always prevail.