
BA/ VISUAL COMMUNICATION

weißensee

kunsthochschule berlin

Study Program Visual Communication

Prof. Steffen Schuhmann (Graphic design)
Prof. Barbara Junge (Interactive Media)
Prof. Wim Westerveld (Typography)
Prof. Kyung-Hwa Choi-Ahoi (Illustration)
and additional contract teachers
as well as artistic assistants

THE STUDY

The Visual Communication degree programme is not aimed at specialisation - it has a generalist structure. It is intended to enable students to develop independent creative positions in constantly changing fields of work. The basis for this is a broad understanding of visual culture and its significance in society. Visual communication encompasses a broad spectrum of media: printed (such as books or posters), interactive (such as websites, e-books or interactive installations), three-dimensional (such as exhibitions or orientation systems) and performative (such as actions in public spaces). Students learn to critically scrutinise communicative tasks and content and to conceive and implement the resulting answers in a creative and media-appropriate way.

The project-orientated course requires an intensive interaction between practical, creative work and theoretical examination of the effects of visual and verbal communication as well as cultural and social issues. In this way, students not only develop an independent critical position towards their own work, but also a theoretical and historical frame of reference, which is essential for the formation of quality standards and assessment criteria, and the creative and theoretical foundations of visual communication are of particular importance. Students learn professional working methods during their project studies by working on specific tasks that are realised in collaboration with external partners. With increasing independence, students set their own priorities and define their own topics. Conception and design are

at the centre of the course. The interdisciplinary exchange with other departments is promoted by the close proximity and a corresponding range of projects. Numerous co-operations with partners from research and practice are cultivated.

Even if the boundaries between the disciplines are becoming increasingly blurred, specific conditions are constitutive for design. Social and functional parameters provide the framework within which the functions and effects of products are conceptualised. It is the designers' task to interpret, reformulate, bend or partially break these parameters. They also define what convention is, remains or becomes. Design with its specific methodology has gained relevance as a catalyst for generating and visualising new thinking and solutions in many areas of science, business and society. The fields of activity for prospective designers today are correspondingly diverse and demanding.

The Bachelor's degree programme prepares students for a career in this dynamically developing professional field. The aim is to train competent designer personalities who are able to act responsibly and independently in social, economic, cultural, technological and ecological terms. In the first year of the four-year Bachelor's degree programme, artistic and design fundamentals are taught in an interdisciplinary manner together with students from other degree programmes at the art academy. The following three years are organised on a project-oriented basis. The project topics on offer form the framework for students to develop their own questions. Using analogue and digital design techniques, use-oriented solutions are developed for the defined context. The workshops offer the best opportunities for simulation and realisation in the design process. Critical thinking and analytical thinking and working are important aspects of the project work. In addition to the central components of „conception and design“, comprehensive theoretical, methodological and creative knowledge and skills are

taught. The interdisciplinary exchange with other departments is promoted by the close proximity and the corresponding project programme. Numerous co-operations with partners from research and practice are cultivated.

Foundation Course (first year of studies)

The foundation year are completed by students from all degree courses together in mixed groups and are one of the special features that define the profile of the weißensee academy of art berlin and, in addition to elementary artistic knowledge, are intended to enable communicative action that goes beyond the individual degree course. Students can test sensual-immediate and analytical-systematic working methods in a practical comparison and reflect on them theoretically. The central subject is the teaching of the fundamentals of art and design. In addition to the necessary technical skills, creative and artistic processes are experienced from as many different perspectives as possible in lively practice. Basic courses: Drawing, Visual Artistic Design, Spatial and Plastic Design, Digital Media, Anatomy/Morphology and Photography.

Program structure / course of study

The Visual Communication degree programme is divided into a four-year Bachelor's and a two-year Master's degree programme.

The two-semester joint foundation programme is followed by the subject-specific basics of visual communication. During this year, students deal with the basics of type and typography, photography and drawing, web design and animation and spatial design.

In the main course, students on the Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes develop an individual approach to the topics set and select the appropriate media for each. The design projects are always about shaping social communication. As

part of international co-operations and interdisciplinary projects, students get to know other cultural positions. The diverse cultural backgrounds of the students as well as workshops and lectures by guest lecturers and exhibitions allow students to reflect on their own work in a differentiated and critical way.

In the final year, it is important to find a topic for the Bachelor's or Master's thesis (B / M) - the final thesis is often the ticket to professional life and the first success outside the university. Bachelor's theses therefore mark a decisive point in the careers of young designers.

The study plans and module handbooks are available at www.kh-berlin.de under
>Studies >Study organisation
>Study organisation >Study regulations

Studio Workshops

In addition to the individual departments, the 19 excellently equipped workshops and studios offer training in the craft of printing, casting, weaving and knitting techniques as well as in solid digital technologies. The academy's research laboratories focus on experimental research and networks on sustainable design strategies and media and information technologies. In the workshops, artists and designers can try out artistic and creative designs on models or objects. In the workshops, artists and designers can try out artistic and creative designs on models or objects. The workshops provide an introduction to basic craft skills and have the material equipment for the most important techniques.

There is a bookbindery, a screen printing, gravure printing and lithography workshop, an Elab for interactive technologies, a wood, ceramics and metal workshop, a model making workshop, a metal welding workshop and a photography workshop. The art college also has its own library and a computer studio with a wide range of printing facilities.

Theory and history

„Theory and History“ is compulsory for all students from the first semester onwards. The aim is to be able to recognize the difference between academy-based learning and independent study right from the start. For this reason, almost all courses in the BA-programs are compulsory elective courses for the entire duration of the study. Basic historical and theoretical knowledge is taught in the first study phase. During this study phase, the course „Introduction to Academic Work“ is compulsory once. In the second study phase, courses are offered for advanced students that deal with more specific topics and thus impart more detailed and in-depth knowledge. When choosing courses, students should not only consider their future career choice, but also the possibility of acquiring comprehensive knowledge.

Practical orientation

Practical relevance is an essential element of many project offerings in the main study period. To this end, cooperation projects are offered in which real-life tasks are worked on. During the program, students can also complete an internship in the 6th or 7th semester as an elective. In this internship, students perform job-related tasks in design-oriented companies, agencies, or offices. The internship is intended to give students an overview of possible activities and prepare them for their future field of work.

Study abroad

The weißensee academy of art and design berlin has an intensive student exchange program with more than 120 partner universities and academies in Europe, Asia, the USA and Canada. We recommend that students spend a semester abroad. This allows them to expand their professional skills in a different teaching and learning culture. They also prepare themselves for an increasingly international job market. Students in the second stage of their studies can find

out about exchange places on the ERASMUS program or other opportunities to study abroad at the International Office of weißensee academy of art.

Master's program

Graduates who have successfully completed their bachelor's degree have the opportunity to continue with a four-semester master's program. In the master's program, students deepen their knowledge and skills and expand their creative potential in the field of social and cultural communication. The program is project-oriented and does not focus on individual media, but rather selects the appropriate media to suit the chosen topic and objectives.

The application period for the master's degree programs in design is from March 1 to April 30. Admission is only for the winter semester. Further information can be found at: www.kh-berlin.de under >Application >Study application >MA Design

[Applicants/students with disabilities, chronic illnesses or special needs \(e.g. also care leavers or carers of relatives\)](#)

Applicants and students with special needs can arrange individual compensation for disadvantages in consultation with the relevant department and the Student Advisory Service in cases where the application procedure, examinations or courses cannot be completed in the intended form due to the illness or disability.

Applicants are welcome to contact Susan Lipp, student advisor and representative for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses at the weißensee academy of art berlin.

Social Affairs

In addition to advice from the Student Affairs Department, StudierendenWERK Berlin offers a wide range of services. Information: www.stw.berlin

Support and advice:

- for all students in coping with personal problems in times of crisis
- for international students and students with a refugee background
- for students with disabilities, chronic illnesses and special needs
- for student parents / maternity leave
- for students with financial difficulties / on support options

Enrolment/fees

There is a semester fee of currently around €360, which is made up of an enrolment or administration fee, social contribution, ASTA and the German semester ticket for public transport in Germany. No other student fees are charged.

Financial study support

Students can apply for financial aid from StudierendenWERK BERLIN on the basis of the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG). Advice, application and other funding opportunities can be found on the StudierendenWERK website: www.stw.berlin
For further scholarship programs and funding opportunities, please contact us: studienberatung@kh-berlin.de

Info days and portfolio counselling

Current dates for our information days and advisory services can be found on the website: www.kh-berlin.de (link/ QR code on the back). The annual RUNDGANG in July and the public graduation and annual exhibitions of the departments offer a wonderful opportunity to find out more about studying at the university and to gain an ideal insight into the premises as well as study and degree work.

APPLICATION PROCESS

November 1 to January 5 (12:00 noon)
Start of studies: winter semester 2026/27

You can always apply from November 1st in the online application portal of the weißensee academy of art berlin.
Link: www.cms.kh-berlin.de

Please note: applications for the undergraduate degree programs are only made once a year and admission is only granted for the winter semester, starting in October.

1

After creating your user account in the campus management system (CMS), you can create your application in the desired department and fill out the forms.

2

Together with your application, you also upload your digital portfolio, which includes your artistic or design work. You can find the current design guidelines on our website. (Link/ QR code on the back)

In the next section you will find further information on the application documents and portfolio submission.

The application deadline as well as the digital portfolio submission ends on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 12:00 noon (CET).

3

After the application deadline, the respective admissions committee will review your portfolio. Based on your work, the next step is to decide whether you will take part in the entrance exam.

If you pass the portfolio examination, you will receive an invitation to the artistic entrance exam at the end of January, which is expected to take place between 16 and 20 February 2026. We will inform you of the exact date in the invitation letter.

4

The artistic entrance exam will include both practical tasks and an interview with the admissions committee. This will be based on your portfolio and your motivation.

5

Once you have passed the exam, you will receive a letter of admission and enrolment instructions via the online portal; all original documents - such as your degree certificate - will be submitted in March.

Application documents / digital portfolio submission

Together with your application, you must upload a digital portfolio and, if applicable, a homework assignment (in the design departments) by January 5.

Further information on designing your digital portfolio, helpful tips on the portfolio and details on the homework can be found at the start of the application process on the website: www.kh-berlin.de: (Link/ QR code on the back).

The following documents must be uploaded with the online application:

- Curriculum vitae with details of your previous school or study history, internships, jobs and work experience in the field relevant to your studies
- School leaving certificate (if already available, can be submitted later)
- for international applicants: a language certificate or a confirmation of the current language course at a minimum level of 2, at the start of studies the B2 examination certificate

General notes on portfolio creation

Apart from the number of approx. 20 artistic or creative works, no topics or forms are specified by the departments. The individual design of the portfolio is important.

In addition to your artistic aptitude and creativity, it should also reflect your interest in the desired department. A good selection of works is crucial, as the first task when applying for a place at art academy is to take a close look at your own artistic identity, talents and objectives. It is not the quantity that is important, but a consciously curated selection. Choose your strongest works that combine technical skill, creative concepts and diversity in medium and expression and show your creative depth. Artistic and creative work samples that demonstrate a certain continuity and intensity are very welcome.

More over, you can also include short texts, such as sketches or explanatory descriptions. In these, you explain the idea behind a work, a creative piece or a project, the steps you have taken, the questions you have pursued and the techniques you have used. In this way, you provide an insight into your creative process and show that you are critical of your working methods. In addition, drawings and sketchbooks are highly valued in all degree courses, as they are an important medium for visualizing and developing ideas and concepts.

Our student projects and works on the website and the tour in July can serve as inspiration. We also recommend that you actively seek feedback. Visit our portfolio consultations and information days! Creative people in your area can also support you.

ARTISTIC ENTRANCE EXAM

Date: February 16 - 20, 2026

Location: weißensee academy of art berlin
The invitation to the artistic entrance examination with the exact information and notes on the examination days will be sent to all accepted applicants (after the portfolio review) by e-mail at the end of January.

The one to three-day examination serves to determine the required aptitude. In addition to practical artistic tasks, it also includes an interview with the admissions committee, which usually relates to the portfolio, professional development and motivation of the participants.

International applicants who require a visa are requested to request confirmation of their application for the examination in good time.

Applicants with physical or mental disabilities, special needs or chronic illness can apply for compensation for disadvantages before the exam. We will be happy to advise you on this. Susan Lipp can be reached at the e-mail: studienberatung@kh-berlin.de or by telephone on +493047705372 from Tue-Thu from 10 am to 4 pm.

Admission

Admission to the course can only be granted after passing the entrance exam. Suitable applicants will receive an application for admission, which must be sent with the relevant documents by March 31. There is no allocation of study places via the Foundation for University Admission, according to numerous *clausus* values, waiting semesters or lottery procedures. Once the admission procedure has been completed, applicants are informed in writing of their admission and receive the enrolment forms. Proof of artistic aptitude, which is acquired through the examination, remains valid for three years.

Admission requirements

- Proof of general higher education entrance qualification, applicants without a high school diploma can also be admitted to the course if they provide evidence of particular artistic talent in the entrance examination

- artistic aptitude
(passed entrance examination)

- for international applicants:
proof of German language proficiency, z. e.g. TestDaF 3, DSH 1, telc B2 or the B2 certificate of the Goethe-Institut

>Proof of language proficiency at level A2 is sufficient for registration for the entrance examination. The corresponding examination certificate should be provided by the start of the course in October at the latest. Native German speakers and applicants who have a German Abitur or a German university degree are exempt.

Transfer Students

A transfer to weißensee kunsthochschule berlin is possible after completion of the second semester in a comparable degree program. The application for a transfer must be submitted online via the Campuscore application portal. This is possible in December for the summer semester and in May for the winter semester. The admissions committee of the department decides on admission and semester classification.

Whether the procedure will be opened for the respective semester is always announced shortly before the start of applications. It is advisable to contact the student advisory service beforehand.

Application process:



Information on the
entrance exam/portfolio:



see

Info days and
counseling services:



Susan Lipp
General Student Advisory Service
studienberatung@kh-berlin.de

weißensee academy of art berlin
Bühningstr. 20 - 13086 Berlin
old building, 1st floor, room A1.03

Telephone availability:
Tel +49 30 4 77 05 -342
Tue - Thu 9 am - 4 pm and Tue until 5 pm

Personal consultation hours:
Tue 2-5pm and Thu 10am-12pm
and by appointment

Web: www.kh-berlin.de
Instagram: [@kunsthochschuleberlin](https://www.instagram.com/kunsthochschuleberlin)