



BA Fine Arts (BA FA)

Fine Arts by its unique nature enriches our lives, culture and society. It is the means by which people communicate with one another in a visual form, passing on shared values that help to generate a sense of identity and belonging. If you want a course in which knowledge, imagination, appreciation and evaluation are skillfully combined, then the Fine Arts course is for you.

The Department of Visual Arts

The Department of Visual Arts is recognised for its academic and creative excellence. It strives to be inclusive, enabling, socially responsible and value-driven, always acknowledging its mandate to be relevant to the wider community. Moreover, the Department aims to be a leading visual arts department, acknowledged as the department of choice by its students, graduates, employers and peers. It seeks to function as a model multidisciplinary department that fosters a creative, intellectual, professional, critical and reflective climate for its staff and students.

The Department of Visual Arts' three divisions – Fine Arts, Information Design and Visual Studies – play key strategic roles in shaping knowledgeable, responsible, independent and innovative citizens. Its purpose is therefore to train and educate students who can contribute meaningfully to society. Driven by humanistic and intellectual imperatives, the Department provides an environment where students can learn and grow to contribute to the well-being of the broader community. Each of the Department's divisions seeks to attain these outcomes by means of focused research strategies, encouraging both individuality and communal responsibility.

The Fine Arts course

The BA Fine Arts (FA) course covers a broad spectrum of professional art practices. The studio-based component of the degree is divided into two areas: Fine Arts (subject code BKK) and Professional Art Practice (subject code VIT). These two studio-based subjects are offered as separate disciplines with specific goals and assessment criteria, but are often combined in one project.

The studio subject Fine Arts (BKK) is a four-year subject that incorporates traditional and experimental areas of art practice under the disciplines of painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, new media, and photography. Once fundamental aspects of the different media are grasped, increasingly more challenging goals are set that require contextual skills and interdisciplinary approaches. Students are encouraged to experiment and to find a niche within the entire range of contemporary practices, including installation, stop-frame animation, participatory and performance art.

The first two years of FA are project-based; the third year focuses on personal development of medium, context and content; in the fourth year students work towards their first solo exhibition of the highest academic standards.

The studio subject Professional Art Practice (VIT) is a three-year subject that is offered together with BKK in the first three years of the BA FA programme. The subject focuses on vocational preparation, which includes technical training, art management and community projects. VIT aims to equip students with pragmatic technical, management and marketing skills, by means of lectures, tutorials and exposure to various networks within the local art industry. Furthermore, students are given the opportunity to apply creative and artistic skills in a real-world brief, commission and/or community project. VIT represents the direct application of studio practice to a wide variety of everyday visual experiences.

The theory-based component comprises core modules from Visual Culture Studies (VKK) for the first three years of the course. An elective module is compulsory in first year. The fourth year theory offering, Visual Communication 401 (Contemporary Discourses in Fine Arts) is a closed module specifically tailored for Fine Arts students. The final year of the BA FA programme is equivalent to a NQF level 8 qualification, thus graduates are able to pursue postgraduate studies in MA Fine Arts under prescribed conditions.

Teaching philosophy

The fundamental philosophy that shapes the undergraduate FA degree is that visual art is an evolving field that requires a flexible, critical approach in order to adapt, innovate and remain relevant. Students of FA are therefore encouraged to take responsibility for becoming conversant in the articulation of multiple generative perspectives of studio practice. In general, the BA FA programme is geared towards a comprehensive integration of the practical, technical and theoretical skills of Fine Arts practice, and aims to give young artists the tools they need to succeed in the challenging and competitive field of visual art.



Career opportunities

Fine artists can:

- work as professional artists and establish their own markets through having exhibitions, carrying out commissions or pitching for public artworks organised by private sources, non-profit organisations, private and corporate collectors and public-private partnerships.
- work in the art management sector as a curator, art gallery director or as an art consultant.
- work in the educational sector as a teacher/lecturer or establish an art school.
- work as a creative facilitator in related creative arts organisations such as the new media industry.

Minimum requirements for admission:

To be accepted for BA Fine Arts, you need a National Senior Certificate with full university exemption and an APS score of 30. Art as a school subject is not essential, but prospective students must be able to demonstrate their creative potential and commitment to their chosen field of study.

The BA Fine Arts degree entails a selection process:

- You must **apply online** before the end of June.
- Download and complete the **questionnaire** (available on the Visual Arts website) and submit with your **portfolio** to the Department of Visual Arts before the end of June.
- Interview and selection test: you must book an appointment for an interview and selection tests before end of June.

Please visit our website www.up.ac.za/visual-arts for all relevant application & selection procedures, submission dates & contact details.

Course structure

First year

Fundamental modules

Academic Information Management
Academic Literacy
Visual Culture Studies

Core modules

Fine Arts
Professional Art Practice
Visual Culture Studies

Elective modules (choice subject)

Afrikaans
or Anthropology
or English
or Philosophy
or Psychology
or Religion studies

Second year

Fine Arts
Professional Art Practice
Visual Culture Studies

Third year

Fine Arts Practice
Professional Art Practice
Visual Culture Studies

Fourth year

Fine Arts
Fine Arts research & methodologies

For further information

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