



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 and where staff can become leaders in their respective fields. Each of the Department's divisions seeks to attain these outcomes by means of focused research strategies, encouraging both individuality and communal responsibility.

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 skilfully combined, then the Fine Arts course is for you.



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 of art practice: Fine Arts (subject code BKK) and Professional Art Practice (subject code VIT).

The studio subject Fine Arts (BKK) is a four-year subject that incorporates traditional areas of art practice such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing and photography. Once fundamental aspects of these disciplines are mastered, increasingly more challenging goals are set requiring different skills and knowledge, and inter- and multi-disciplinary forms of representation are explored such as installation art, land art and performance art. The role played by multi-media in the form of projections, video and digital art has also become a major form of expression in the fine arts course.

The first two years of BKK are project-based; the third year focuses on personal development of medium, context and content; in the fourth year students work towards their first professional solo exhibition with all the theoretical, professional and practical skills that are associated with an exhibition of academic standing.

The studio subject, Professional Art Practice (VIT), is a three-year subject that is offered together with FA in the first three years of the BA FA programme. This subject focuses on the inter-dependence and inter-relationship of the visual arts and integrates art and life. Students are given projects that draw their attention to the spaces and situations of their environment on a number of levels - moral, social, economic, political and/or spiritual - by grappling with art and ideas. Community based projects, such as public or new genre public art projects, resort under the subject VIT.

In general, the BA FA course is geared towards an in-depth consolidation of the practical, technical and theoretical skills of Fine Arts practice and is intended to give young artists the theoretical and practical tools they need to navigate an ever-changing practice in art.

The programme has dedicated core staff members and a large number of professional artists who are enthusiastic contributors on a part-time basis. Through the body of lecturers, students are introduced to a wide variety of teaching strategies and specialisations that make them more independent and less reliant on any particular lecturer's opinions; this is a crucial factor in their transition from student to professional, independent artist.





The FA programme has delivered a large number of successful professional artists, art managers and entrepreneurs in the creative arts. The quality of the output, which is a result of the structure and content of the Fine Arts programme, is benchmarked by the success achieved by students and alumni and on national and international platforms.

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 the BA Fine Arts package, 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.

Application and selection procedure:

The BA Fine Arts degree entails a selection process:

1. Apply at UP: applications close at the end of June.
2. Merit selection process: You will be required to submit a completed questionnaire and a portfolio by the end of July.
3. Interview & selection test: Based on your portfolio and questionnaire, you will be notified whether you have qualified to continue with the selection process. The final selection interviews and test take place in the September/October recess.

Please visit our website www.up.ac.za/visualarts for all relevant application procedures and submission dates.

Course structure

First year

Fundamental modules

Academic Information Management	AIM	101
Academic Literacy	ALL	110 125
Visual Culture Studies	VKK	111

Core modules

Fine Arts	BKK	100
Professional Art Practice	VIT	100
Visual Culture Studies	VKK	121 123

Elective modules (choice subject)

Afrikaans	AFR	110 120
or Anthropology	APL	110 120
or English	ENG	110 120
or Philosophy	FIL	110 120
or Psychology	SLK	110 120
or Religion studies	REL	110 120

Second year

Fine Arts	BKK	200
Professional Art Practice	VIT	200
Visual Culture Studies	VKK	211 221 222

Third year

Fine Arts Practice	BKK	300
Professional Art Practice	VIT	300
Visual Culture Studies	VKK	311 321 322

Fourth year

Fine Arts	BKK	400
Visual Communication	VKK	401



For further information

Contact: Mrs Nicola Grobler | Mr Pieter Swanepoel
 Email: nicola.grobler@up.ac.za | pieter.swanepoel@up.ac.za
 Telephone: +27 12 420 6524 / 2353 | +27 12 420 3931
 Fax: +27 12 420 3686

Website: www.up.ac.za/visualarts