

# Academic Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Academic Regulations were approved by the Board of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts on 16 December 2010 and became effective as of 1 October 2011 for all students undertaking a BFA course program at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts.

### 1.1 Course objectives

The Bachelor degree program consists of a course in the theory and practice of the visual arts – based upon artistic practice, artistic development and research. The course is a self-contained program leading to a BFA degree.

The degree is a qualification for admission to the Master's degree program in Visual Arts and the Master's degree program in Visual Arts, Theory and Communication (MFA and MA) at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts. Moreover, the degree qualifies its holder for other higher education courses in the field of visual arts within Denmark and abroad, or to work as a visual artist.

## 2. COURSE PRINCIPLES AND ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Course principles

Central to the Bachelor program is the development of the student's artistic practice, method and professionalism, providing in the process a broad range of experience and a knowledge base for this development. The focus of this process is individually- or collectively-based artistic work developed in the studio. The course program takes as its starting-point the recognition that the student's own ideas and practice are afforded their optimal means of expression in an academic environment that supports experimentation, investigation and a flexible approach to working processes. Trial and error can be just as conducive to professional insight as the production of completed works.

The course is directed towards a learning program that is based on studio practice, and caters for the individual student as far as possible whilst also developing common plat-

forms for production, discussion, critique and the sharing of experience. The development of artistic discipline cannot be accommodated within a predetermined curriculum or defined according to definite practical and technical skills. Throughout the course, therefore, the student is encouraged to take personal responsibility, not only for their own studio practice, but also for planning the course and identifying their individual and collective learning requirements.

## **2.2 Academic objectives**

The academic objectives of the Bachelor course program are based upon the Ministry of Culture's qualification framework of January 2010.

Upon completion of the degree program, the student will:

- have acquired an artistically-based understanding and experience of the practices and methods of the discipline;
- have gained an understanding of relevant theories regarding the function, history and meaning of art;
- be capable of understanding, communicating and reflecting upon his/her own artistic practice and of placing this in relevant theoretical, historical and cultural contexts;
- be able to reflect upon and make use of artistic methods and forms of practice;
- have acquired analytical skills in the field of visual arts;
- be able to evaluate artistic challenges and to address practical and theoretical issues in order to reach independent and professionally informed judgements in the artistic process;
- have the ability to deal with complex and unpredictable artistic processes;
- be capable of independent participation in professional and interdisciplinary collaborations;
- be able to identify his/her own educational requirements and to take responsibility for – and to structure – his/her own education in a variety of learning environments.

## **3. ADMISSION AND ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Admission to the Bachelor program takes place once a year.

15-25 students are accepted to the Bachelor program every year.

### **3.1 Entrance requirements**

Each applicant will be assessed on the basis of a specific evaluation of the applicant's own work. The assessment places considerable weight upon the originality of the work submitted, as well as the applicant's potential for artistic and professional development.

Applicants must be able to read, speak and understand Danish in order to follow the teaching program. Applicants must also have a basic knowledge of English.

A detailed description of the entrance requirements and admission procedure is published every year on the website of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts.

## **4. THE SCHOOLS OF VISUAL ARTS: ORGANISATION AND PRACTICE**

#### **4.1 The Schools of Visual Arts: general organisation**

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts constitute an institute of Higher Education under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture.

The Schools of Visual Arts consist of:

- Departments:
  - Basic Studies
  - Professor Schools
  - Department of Theory and Communication
- Laboratories

As well as premises for the departments, laboratories, workshops, lecture theatres, studios, etc, The Schools of Visual Arts also have exhibition rooms at their disposal, which students are encouraged to use for the exhibition of their own work, to curate their own exhibitions and for other public arrangements.

All active students (including guest students) are allocated studio space at the start of the academic year.

##### **4.1.1 Departments and laboratories**

The Basic Studies program is a practical and theoretical course of study which constitutes the first two years of the BFA program. Taking the development of the student's own artistic practice as its starting-point, the course introduces him/her to the core technical disciplines and furnishes him/her with insights into key theoretical and art-historical subjects. At the beginning of each semester during the Basic Studies program, a detailed study plan is worked out, forming the basis for the student's plans for the two-year course program.

The profile of each department is determined by the Head of Department, who has artistic, academic and professional responsibility for his/her department. At the Professor Schools, the Professor is the Head of Department. Teaching at the Professor Schools is largely planned in collaboration with the students, and department meetings are central to this planning process. At the start of every semester a study plan is prepared, outlining the Department's main collective academic activities in that semester.

The laboratories represent a method-based approach to the subject and offer workshop facilities with associated academic expertise and individual guidance within a range of subject areas. At the laboratories, work is supported by giving form to artistic intentions, and by bringing about an understanding of the significance of materials in the practice of visual art. Teaching takes as its starting-point the student's own artistic process and results in technical solutions, investigations, work production and professional development/creation. The laboratories are open to all students enrolled at The Schools of Visual Arts.

Collaboration takes place on an ongoing basis between the departments and laboratories, as well as with other art academies, cultural institutions and other organisations both at home and abroad.

#### **4.2 Teaching methods**

Teaching at The Schools of Visual Arts consists of a number of different elements, and provision can be made for individual tuition as the need arises. Of primary importance is individual or collective supervision which is intended to support, challenge and guide the student through the artistic process. Additionally, tuition consists of a variety of forms, including lectures, critique sessions, workshops, field trips and various kinds of workshop courses. Guest lecturers are regularly invited by individual departments to provide lectures, and to conduct seminars, workshops, group reviews and studio interviews with the students.

At the end of each academic year, the Head of Department, often in collaboration with colleagues or external experts, carries out an in-depth assessment of the students' work and their academic activity. This typically takes place in connection with *Rundgang*.

*Rundgang* is the annual exhibition; participation is obligatory for all students.

### **4.3 Participation in classes, compulsory attendance etc.**

Because tuition at The Schools of Visual Arts is predominantly based upon the students' own artistic practice, it is expected that the students put considerable effort into precisely this practice. At the start of the academic year, all of the Schools' active students, including guest students, are assigned studio space, which they are expected to make active use of throughout the course of their studies.

In addition, it is compulsory to attend all department meetings. Department heads also regularly review the activities subject to compulsory attendance.

During the Basic Studies program, it is mandatory to participate in Art History, Art Theory and Criticism classes and a number of technical or art courses or workshops.

An absence rate of over 20% can lead to the Head of Department declaring the student to be 'inactive' for the semester in question. The Head of Department may provide a dispensation in the event of absence on the grounds of course-related activities or, in special cases, because of illness. In the event of a student being declared 'inactive', he/she cannot obtain the ECTS for that semester (see Section 5.1).

### **4.4 Leave of Absence**

Leave of Absence on grounds other than childbirth, adoption, documented illness, contractual obligations to the armed forces (see Executive Order no. 691, § 25) can be granted only with the individual approval of the Board of Studies. Any application for Leave of Absence **on other grounds** must be accompanied by a statement from the head of Department.

Leave of Absence on other grounds can only be granted in a maximum of 2 of the course program's 6 semesters. In accordance with the regulations, it is not possible to apply for Leave of Absence during the first year of the course.

Any student wishing to apply for leave of absence should, if possible, do so in writing to the Board of Studies so that the Board can consider the application before the start of the requested period of leave. Relevant documentation and/or a statement from the

student's Head of Department must accompany the application in order for it to be considered.

#### **4.5 Credits for exchange placements and internships**

Upon written application to the Board of Studies, it is possible to receive credits in respect of one or two full semesters' worth of study, equivalent to 30 or 60 ECTS. Applications for credits must be accompanied by a written statement from the Head of Department to the Board of Studies.

Credits are awarded when, for example, a student undertakes an exchange placement at a credit-awarding Danish or foreign educational institution. Credits for a foreign exchange placement during the 5th semester of a BFA program can be awarded administratively, providing the placement takes place at a credit-awarding foreign institution.

Parts of the course program may also be replaced by the completion of an internship. However, in accordance with regulations, an internship can replace a maximum of 60 ECTS during the combined BFA and MFA course programs. Credits for internships can only be awarded during the BFA's 5th semester.

No credits can be awarded during the 6th and final semester.

### **5. BFA PROGRAM: STRUCTURE**

#### **5.1 ECTS**

The Bachelor Degree program is a complete program of study consisting of 3 years of full-time study, equivalent to 180 ECTS.

An academic year consists of two semesters – the Autumn semester, from 1 October to 31 January, and the Spring semester from 1 February to 30 June. Students are expected to make use of studios and laboratories outside term times.

The satisfactory completion of a semester results in the award of 30 ECTS. The satisfactory completion of a semester requires the recognition of the active participation of the student (see Section 4.3) and the completion of any assessments for that semester. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to approve the student's performance for each semester.

In the event that a student fails to receive approval for a semester, he/she is not awarded the 30 ECTS. In such a circumstance, the Head of Department will set the student a compulsory assignment to be submitted, assessed and approved prior to the end of the following semester. The Head of Department will determine the nature and scope of the assignment and the Head of Department, or a suitably qualified nominated person, will set and assess the assignment with the assistance of an examiner. If the assessment consists of course work, an examiner will not be involved.

If a student does not receive approval for a semester, he/she will have the possibility of handing in a revised submission or of submitting a new assignment for assessment. The student will not be permitted to continue the course in the event that the assignment is not approved following the second assessment. Upon successful completion of the assignment, the student will be awarded 30 ECTS.

The length of the 3-year course program cannot be extended.

## **5.2 Structure**

The first two years of the course consist of the Basic Studies program, while the third and final year takes place at one of the Professor Schools.

During the first year of the Bachelor program – with the Basic Studies course as the starting-point – students focus primarily on defining and developing their own studio practice.

During the second year, this studio practice is consolidated and connected to a broader knowledge base, thus creating contexts for individual artistic practice.

The third year is structured around the preparation of a final piece of research or project that is defined at the end of the second year and is completed and assessed after the third year.

It is possible to apply to participate in an exchange program with a Danish or foreign credit-awarding educational institution, or to undertake an internship during the Bachelor program's 5th semester (see Section 4.5).

## **6. BFA ASSESSMENT**

Assessment during the student's BFA program is divided into two separate assessments, taking place at the end of the second and third academic years.

### **6.1 BFA assessment, 2nd year**

At the end of the second year, students are assessed on the basis of their work and development within the subject. This assessment is based upon an oral presentation of the student's practice, followed by a discussion between the student, a tutor from the Basic Studies program and a professor from The Schools of Visual Arts.

The discussion concludes with the student presenting his/her considerations regarding the 3rd academic year's work, which is the final artistic project. At this point, particular attention should be given to the formulation of intentions and premises for the forthcoming BFA project; these considerations will form the basis for the student's priorities when choosing a Professor School for the third year of the course.

The assessment is completed with a 'pass/fail' assessment, together with a written evaluation of the individual student's overall performance. The evaluation is written by the tutors from the Basic Studies program and is forwarded to the student's 3rd-year professor at the start of the third academic year.

The student's performance, the formulation of his/her intentions for the forthcoming third year of the BFA course and the subsequent discussion should, taken as a whole, document the student's ability to:

- sustain and develop their practice through one or more projects;

- discuss an artistic project and communicate this visually and orally;
- make professional use of artistic methods, tools and presentational means;
- place their own artistic work within a relevant art-historical, art-theoretical and cultural context.

In the event that the student does not pass the assessment, he/she may, with the agreement of the Director of Studies, submit a new final project by 30 September of the same year. The student must pass the 2nd-year assessment in order to proceed to the 3rd year of the BFA program.

### **6.2 BFA assessment, 3rd year**

Before the end of the 5th semester, the student submits a written synopsis (1-2 pages) to the responsible professor, following a discussion of its content and planned work schedule. The synopsis must include a presentation of and/or an outline of a project or research study to be undertaken during the 6th semester of the course, on the basis of which the professor will approve the student's progress to the BFA 3rd-year assessment.

The 3rd-year BFA assessment takes place at the end of the 6th semester. The assessment of the student's work and method is carried out on the basis of an oral dialogue between the student, the nominated professor and an external examiner. The discussion will commence with the student giving a presentation of the work undertaken during the semester, which is compared with the approved synopsis. In order to document the working process, one or more works may be presented, or a detailed outline for a proposed work, a thoroughly documented account of the work process, or a written essay. One of the keys factors taken into account is that the intention is supported by the presentation in one or more of the chosen media.

The presentation, alongside the discussion of the work undertaken during the course of the third academic year, should document the student's ability to:

- deal with a complex artistic process;
- identify his/her own learning needs;
- evaluate problems within the discipline of art and make use of appropriate analytical tools.

The result of the 3rd-year BFA assessment takes the form of a pass/fail, alongside a written evaluation of the student's overall performance. The evaluation is written by the student's 3rd-year professor and accompanies the Bachelor Degree certificate.

In the event of the student failing to achieve a pass, he/she may, in agreement with the professor, submit a new final project by 30 September of the same year.

Having achieved a pass in the final assessment, the student will be awarded the title of Billedkunstner BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Arts).