Domus Academy

MASTER IN
PRODUCT DESIGN

OVERVIEW

MASTER AWARDED BY NABA
NUOVA ACCADEMIA DI BELLE ARTI MILANO

DOMUS ACADEMY
DESIGN CLUSTER

DESIGN creates new meanings on multiple dimensions and scales. It is an intimate but extensive form of looking at what Architecture, Interior and Product Design mean today and it has the power to pioneer new futures.
Leading to integrated projects, private and public spaces, design is a way of thinking that crosses the boundaries among disciplines and cultures.

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

QUALIFICATION
(First Level) Academic Master

PROGRAM TITLE
Master in Product Design

PROGRAM TYPE
Full Time

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT
English

A product is a human-based combination of diverse cultures, technologies, needs and physical conditions. An original interpretation of these interactions generates an integrated design artefact, which stimulates users to further adaptat, discover and think. Today, Product Design is breaking boundaries for novel explorations and experimentation evolving into career opportunities yet to be discovered.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Master in Product Design program combines a unique cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural approach with a hands-on experience in collaboration with companies that are at the front line of design, engineering and business. This challenging method advances the knowledge on what is currently happening in the industry, and consequently enhances the ability to anticipate the future.

The Master in Product Design explores new territories for embedding design, technology and novel methods for fabrication and construction.

Moreover, Domus Academy ensures that students attending the academy become aware of the great opportunities surrounding them, such as the fact that Milan is an international and design-oriented city with a lot of famous design studios and agencies, research labs, trade fairs and companies. Students at Domus Academy come from about 50 different countries and this fact makes it an international school where different cultures can be met; Domus Academy is part of an international network of universities and the faculty of the academy are internationally renowned professionals in their field.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will have:

● Demonstrated an individually driven conceptual research project using research methods and techniques appropriate to professional standards in design practices;

● Demonstrated an understanding of the professional field and its restraints, developed the ability to deal with requests and been able to interpret his/her own work in this context;

● Demonstrated a critical and personal development in envisioning advanced process related to the project;

● Effectively demonstrated a reflective and evaluative approach to their own work allowing them to act independently in identifying, implementing and sustaining individual research and practices at a professional level;

● Demonstrated innovative approaches to design built on knowledge and awareness of the field;

● Demonstrated self and professional management skills in terms of interaction in a multi-cultural domain, teamwork and time constraints at a professional level;

● Demonstrated the ability to effectively communicate concepts, methods and design proposals in spoken, visual and written form.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The Master in Product Design trains professionals capable of creating and designing projects for different sectors of the industrial system on a local and worldwide scale. Participants develop skills likely to match the profiles required by design firms, architecture and design studios, and research environments, or to start entrepreneurial career.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Criteria for Admission to the Program (including required English language score)

Eligibility conditions for entering the Master Course are:
- Bachelor Degree or Equivalent
- English Language Knowledge: IELTS 5.0 or equivalent

Applicants are required to submit the Application Package, including:
- Application Form (full and satisfactory completion)
- Copy of Bachelor Degree* or equivalent
- Transcripts of previous study paths
- IELTS 5.0 Certificate or Equivalent
- Detailed Resumé
- Statement of purpose
- Portfolio of projects

* Degree Cerificate

The program is addressed to candidates holding a bachelor degree in design, engineering, architecture, visual arts or disciplines related to the program's field of study. Admission of students with different degrees or diplomas will be taken into consideration if the applicant is motivated by a research interest towards the program's topics. Upon successfully completing the program, students will receive a Domus Academy Master Diploma. Participants who are eligible according to NABA rules will receive an Academic Master from NABA.

Students holding a non-Italian Bachelor Degree shall contact the Italian Embassy or Consulate in the country where the degree was issued in order to ask for the so called "completion documents", consisting in:

a. Translation into Italian – made by a certified translator – of the student's Bachelor Degree.

b. Translation into Italian – made by a certified translator – of the student's Academic Transcripts.

c. "Dichiarazione di valore in loco" (Declaration of Value) of the student's Bachelor Degree. The "Dichiarazione di valore in loco" is the document attesting that the study qualification obtained in the student's country of residence is valid for accessing Italian Universities or Academies.

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Domus Academy prioritizes an original "learning by designing" approach, that is in continuous development to reflect the fast changing world of today.

The teaching methods employed at Domus Academy are designed to help students achieve their individual professional goals along with the learning objective, while also considering their roles as designers in our contemporary world.

The primary vehicle for the "learning by designing" approach is project work. Emphasis is placed on, learning and applying a "problem setting" approach;

- to ensure that students refine their critical skills and apply them throughout their work process;

- to foster a personal creative style and developing an original way of expression;

- to develop research skills, which will enable students to source relevant materials, assimilating and articulating relevant findings;

- to conceive concepts and visions capable to blend creative languages with the actual needs of end users by interpreting a brief, primarily based on a real design assignment, in order to design a project that can match, or even exceed, the company's expectation.

Students are exposed to different points of view in the design field, working with designers and companies. One of the purposes of this exposure is to give students the broadest view possible of the design field in order to support them in the selection of the area in which to concentrate their future careers.

All Master programs are workshop-based, supported by seminars, tutorials, lectures, work-in-progress sessions, critiques and a series of tutor led projects. Through a pro-active relationship with the academic staff, students will lead their project work and be supported through consultative and advisory tutorial guidance by the faculty and by visiting lecturers and designers who each have dedicated roles.

The "Program Leader" is the teacher who has overall

responsibility on a specific Master Program, and whose role is to coach students and to support them in the definition of their learning and professional path. The Program Leader sustains students in their workshop activities and coordinates the assessment process.

The "Project Leader" is professionals and teachers, chosen among experts of a specific field, whose role is to lead workshop activity, by developing a project brief in collaboration with the Program Leader, inspire and provide guidance to students along the design process, and to take part in the assessment of the projects.

Formal teaching is supplemented by a range of visiting lecturers and visiting professionals where students will have the chance to attend presentations by designers, artists, critics, industry professionals and academics. Lectures are usually used for the presentation and discussion of theoretical issues. They will often be supported by group discussions, which provide an opportunity for interaction between faculty and students, and allow students to extend and examine the issues raised.

Students work in multi-cultural and international teams to enhance their capacity for teamwork, as well as to expose them to a comparison with different backgrounds and cultures. Most workshop activities require students to work in groups. Teams are carefully selected and suitably managed to ensure that all students are aware of effective group processes and contribute to final project outcomes.

STRUCTURE AND ASSESSMENT

The program is organized in four main modules including courses and workshops, followed by a fifth module providing a professional experience period and a final portfolio presentation.

module 1		module 2		module 3		module 4		module 5
Course	Core Workshop	Course	Core Workshop	Course	Free/Elective Workshop	Course	Free/Elective Workshop	Professional Experience
4 ECTS	8 ECTS	4 ECTS	8 ECTS	4 ECTS	8 ECTS	4 ECTS	8 ECTS	12 ECTS

FINAL PRESENTATION

COURSES

Courses aim at providing students, through a combination of lectures, exercises and tutorials, with the appropriate tools and experiences useful for the developing of their professional career. They encompass specific topics in preparation for the workshop, and personal branding experiences for the development of the student's professional career.

WORKSHOPS

The workshops are the main activity of the curriculum. Workshops are project assignments designed to give students a working knowledge of different core subjects. All workshops launch with the presentation of a brief, which outlines the subject, scope, and purpose of the workshop. The brief of the workshops is based on research issues defined by the faculty, in collaboration with external professionals and industrial partners, paying attention to fulfill both educational and professional aims.

In the development of the projects students will be supported by lectures aimed at broadening their knowledge on the specific investigation theme, inviting designers, researchers, stakeholders and representatives of companies to present their work and ideas

as a link between the specific disciplinary perspective and the broader cultural/economic context.

The workshop culminates in an open presentation to the faculty and invited professionals. Feedback to students is an integral part of the final assessment provided to students after the presentation. The Program Leader and the Project Leader are available to further discuss assessments with students if needed.

CORE WORKSHOP

Envisioning - (8 credits)

Advanced Design & Processes - (8 credits)

ELECTIVE WORKSHOP - (8 credits)
One to be chosen among:

· Product Strategy

· Experience Design

· Advanced Design & Processes

FREE CHOICE WORKSHOP - (8 credits)
One to be chosen amongst the active didactical offer

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The professional experience is the final step of a process in which students receive a deep and balanced evaluation of their skills and aspirations, in order to build a career, which fits their aims.

There are three kinds of professional experiences; an internship in a company where the students will be hosted in a work environment developing assigned real projects; a field learning experience as a specific work project carried out on campus in collaboration with a company; and an entrepreneurial journey in order to develop business and managerial skills.

PORTFOLIO

The Master Program will end with a final exam where the student

will present his/her own portfolio in front of an Exam Board composed of internal faculty and external professionals. The portfolio realized by each student, and its presentation, allows the Board to evaluate the projects developed during the academic year as well as the growth of the student.

ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The main goal of the assessment system is to monitor how students develop the design and technical competencies required to be awarded an Academic Master.

Assessment is done by evaluating each student with a 1 to 30 mark (pass 18 or above) given at the end of every workshop, and through a qualifying examination given at the end of each theoretical course. The admission mark to the final exam is calculated by arithmetic average, which takes in consideration all the marks taken after each workshop.

Students will receive 0-110 (pass 70 or above) as overall evaluation. The Diploma Examination Board may award up to 10 points for the Portfolio. Honors may be awarded on the basis of the Board assessment of study programs, portfolio and presentation.

STUDY PLAN

Students will receive individual study counselling by the Program Leader to establish a Study Plan that reflects their skillset and professional objectives with the academic offer available.

WORKSHOPS

CORE WORKSHOPS - COMPULSORY

ENVISIONING WORKSHOP

Through field research, physical or digital analysis, the workshop investigates cultural and social conditions that will have an impact on our society in a medium or long-term perspective. The design process starts with questioning the existing conditions with a problem-setting approach where divergence and convergence processes indistinctively alternate. Students are requested to create projects with a strong evocative and narrative focus, designing a synthesis of values that are independent of the specific typology of the examined conditions. Through the use of a wide range of communication tools, including storytelling, storyboards and video scenarios, students are invited to envision the possibilities of the future for design and designers. The workshop emphasizes design activities stemming from existing to possible scenarios and revolves around envisioning future scenarios based on the crossing of innovative emerging technologies with socio-cultural, geo-political, and strategic values.

ADVANCED DESIGN & PROCESSES WOKSHOP

The Advanced Design & Processes workshop explores a design integration approach, which is based on bringing together research, materials, advanced technologies for design manufacturing and digital fabrication to create innovative products for the industry. The main objective is to develop multiple abilities for managing the innovation process through the exploration of product identity, material qualities, product

positioning, design and production processes, distribution and communication. This workshop clearly distinguishes for its cross-disciplinary commitment as a strategy to achieve innovative design solutions. The design integration approach has the potential to generate new opportunities for existing companies, but also for launching innovative start-ups and new business ventures to face both current and future markets.

ELECTIVE WORKSHOP

One to be chosen among the following:

PRODUCT STRATEGY WORKSHOP

Over the last decades, the design of products has reached a high level of sophistication and complexity. Different design approaches and perspectives have conceptualized visions in manifestos, and this has influenced the design culture at large. The Product Strategy workshop aims to develop project proposals able to combine different approaches in a new, innovative and surprising way. The workshop explores corporate cases involving the leading design companies, whose ability to innovate does not merely concern products, but all the elements that contribute to shape a truly global offer encompassing: positioning, image, distribution and communication. The application domain can range from established brands (brand extension), to companies wanting to exploit their potentials, to existing companies that want to re-position their business, to new ventures (startups, crowdsourcing). A substantial part of the workshop activity is dedicated to the definition of a business model consistent with the objectives and scale of the project, while exploring the scalability of the solution, feasibility and innovation potential.

EXPERIENCE DESIGN WORKSHOP

The Experience Design workshop explores, by way of studio-based activities, the designing process from the point of view of the people (not users, neither consumers) in their day to day life context. Everyday experiences are built upon the interaction and relationship with information, communication tools, relational spaces, as well as interactive objects and services. The

starting point resides in the ability to decipher people's needs, expectations and desires. The workshop addresses aspects and contemporary methodologies related to people's activity and context analysis. It also considers, experience scenario development, solution, validation, and assessment. The workshop investigates the main domain of User Experience analysis, exposing students to methodologies and best practices allowing them to extract knowledge from primary research activities. The workshop activity will also cover domains pertaining to visual representation and the formalization of knowledge garnered. Students are expected to familiarize with techniques for representing activity flows and complex systems.

ADVANCED DESIGN & PROCESSES WORKSHOP

FREE CHOICE WORKSHOP

Students are given the chance to select among the active didactic offer in order to end their personal educational path with a strongly autonomous, professionalizing and profiling choice. Each student may choose to repeat one of the workshops already developed, enroll in a new workshop coherent with his/her educational path or select a project among the ones offered by the institution as long as it is coherent with the amount of credits required.

COURSES

DESIGN CULTURE

Based on the Made in Italy brand, the course Design Culture aims at exploring and discussing a wide range of case studies and sources for understanding the nature, languages and values of the contemporary design scene while developing critical and analytical abilities. The course develops the vision that design is an integrated activity, capable of perceiving the changes in society, the impact of markets and then transforming it into new products, spaces and services, thereby impacting upon strategies of business innovation. Lectures and group discussions are organized into two strategies: innovation for design and innovation in design.

The course embraces different scales of design, from product to interior, from graphic to fashion with the aim to highlight and identify the key factors that determine the quality of a design solution, in a path that connects past, recent and future experiences.

DESIGN FORMATION

The course explores different design strategies through the analysis of iconic projects in order to form a design critical thought and a visual communication strategy. Students investigate key case studies at different scales that showcase how architecture, interior design and product design are related and integrated. Through seminars and debates students learn different design methodologies to cultivate their own personal visual representation identity and an independent critical attitude based on two core principles: information and formation. Information implies the collection and organization of data in order to visually communicate the design process strategy. Formation focuses on the creation and presentation of effective visual outputs that help students frame their own design strategy through the definition of their personal methodology, by combining and integrating research, analysis and design development.

BUSINESS FOR DESIGN

Brand managers, entrepreneurs and designers alike need to become familiar with the tools of business analysis in order to have a good understanding of how businesses create value and generate profits.

The Business for Design course offers students the possibility to understand and put into practice real-life business scenarios and to appraise the core aspects that determine the economic performance and viability of a company, studio or consultancy. Students will explore basic accounting topics, short and long term profitability aspects, options to fund innovative projects or enterprises within a long-term horizon, and a general framework around intellectual propriety, copyright aspects and regulations. The course is structured around lectures, real case-studies and focused exercises to get an insight, explore and experiment

firsthand the fundamental aspects of business applied to the design field and brand management.

PERSONAL BRANDING

The course examines the job market in the architecture and interior design fields. It provides an in-depth overview of job descriptions, defining hard and soft skills. It will describe the recruitment process, from the preparation of resume and portfolio, to job search, job/competition application, and interview preparation and presentation, from a practical perspective, combining lectures, case-studies and in-class exercises and simulations.

An essential component of the course is represented by a 'reality check'. Students will meet with a professional designer who will provide an individual feedback on their cv and portfolio. Students will be asked to review their presentation material and approach and define an individual action plan to build their personal brand.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Professional Experience is the final step of a process in which students, thanks to a one-to-one tutorship, receive a deep and balanced evaluation of their skills and aspirations, in order to build a career, which fits their aims.

There are three kinds of Professional Experiences:

● Internship in a Company/Firm: the students will be hosted in a work environment developing assigned real projects.

● Field Learning Experience: a work project carried out on campus in collaboration with a company and supervised by a project leader. The students will approach contemporary themes and explore a wide range of design subjects in a multidisciplinary environment.

● Entrepreneurship Module: an entrepreneurial journey in order to develop business and managerial skills. The students will be given a specific toolbox of frameworks and approaches both in theory and practice.

In all cases during this crucial phase students are mentored on a step-by-step basis, and acquire the fundamental experience of dealing with the real world, with real business and with the people working in the field.