

# **MASTER IN FASHION STYLING & VISUAL MERCHANDISING**

## **OVERVIEW**

MASTER AWARDED BY NABA  
NUOVA ACCADEMIA DI BELLE ARTI MILANO

# DOMUS ACADEMY FASHION CLUSTER

FASHION is the sphere of activity where the tendency towards social imitation and equalization eternally contends with the desire for individual differentiation and evolution. It resonates with the core of human beings: culture, identity, body, imagination, production, consumption, representation, dialogue.

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6 **PROGRAM SUMMARY**

QUALIFICATION

(First Level) Academic Master

PROGRAM TITLE

Master in Fashion Styling & Visual Merchandising

PROGRAM TYPE

Full Time

HEAD OF DOMUS ACADEMY

Line Ulrika Christiansen

HEAD OF FASHION CLUSTER

Anna Lottersberger

PROGRAM LEADER

Gianfranco Olivotto

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

English

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Fashion Brands are focusing on coherent visual communication to be genuinely believable and recognizable. The booming appetite for experience and active participation is challenging fashion brands to create and maintain a consistent, yet evolving, aesthetic vision that guides an omni-channel strategy, where physical and digital are merged thanks to a detailed visual vocabulary.

There is an increasing demand for fashion brand image architects, visual communicators who can translate brand values into idiosyncratic and holistic projects that make the eye think.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Master in Fashion Styling & Visual Merchandising program blends the approach and competences of the visual merchandiser with those owned by the fashion stylist, to nurture a new professional profile: the visual fashion brand communicator, whose scope encompasses lookbooks, advertising campaigns, editorials, website, social media, but also multi-sensorial retail concepts. Students will learn how to convey unique brand values and identity through powerful storytelling and to create an appealing visual language through photo and video shootings, visual merchandising strategies for window and in-store displays.

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 program, students will have:

- Acquired advanced knowledge of Fashion Culture, Fashion System, Fashion Stylist, Visual Merchandising and Fashion Trends;
- Properly contextualized the movements, styles and theories of modern and contemporary Fashion in their respective periods;
- Developed an advanced critical awareness of the evolution of the Fashion Stylist's role as a practitioner;
- Gained critical awareness of the key role of the Visual Merchandiser in the Fashion System;
- Understood and acquired the necessary tools in order to create a visual strategic language for a Fashion brand.

- Gained critical awareness of the specific expressive languages pertaining to channels such as the web, video, photography and the new emerging media.
- Demonstrated an advanced theoretical, analytical and critical approach towards relevant issues related to a specific segment in the Fashion Stylist, Visual Merchandising and Brand Communication field;
- Developed the ability to be critical and self-critical as well as being creative.

### CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The Master in Fashion Styling and Visual Merchandising aims to form professionals able to pursue a career as a Fashion Stylist or a Visual Merchandiser, starting their own business or working for fashion companies, advertising agencies, TV, as a Celebrity Assistants, and in all areas involving visual communication.

## 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 Certificate

The program is addressed to candidates holding a bachelor degree in fashion design, design, photography, architecture and communication 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 the student 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, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

### OUR LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

In the following paragraphs you will find information on the What and the When of our learning, teaching and assessment framework.

The program of the Master in Fashion Styling and Visual Merchandising is 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.

But first a short glimpse on the Who.

We call “Program Leader” 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/professional path. The Program Leader sustains students in their workshop activities and coordinates the assessment process.

On the other hand, Project Leaders are professionals and teachers, chosen among experts of a specific field, whose role is to lead workshop activity by developing a project brief, inspiring and providing guidance to students along the design process, and taking part to the assessment of the projects.

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. Some 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.

Formal teaching is supplemented by a range of visiting lecturers and visiting professionals; students will have the chance to attend presentations by designers, artists, critics, industry professionals and academics.

Not only will the meeting and exchange of ideas with leading professionals offer students the chance to enrich their knowledge but also favour a better career perspective.

### OUR TEACHING METHODS

The teaching methods employed on the program are designed to help students achieve their individual professional goals along with the learning objective. The Master in Fashion Styling and Visual Merchandising prioritizes an original “learning by designing” approach, that has been developed by Domus Academy over the years.

The primary vehicle for learning is therefore the project work.

Emphasis is placed on:

- learning and applying a “problem setting” approach, ensuring that students refine their critical skills and apply them throughout their work process;
- fostering a personal creative style and developing an original way of expression;
- developing research skills, which will enable students to source relevant materials, assimilating and articulating relevant findings;
- conceiving concepts and visions capable to blend creative languages with the actual needs of end users by interpreting a brief, often based on a real design assignment, in order to design a project that can match, or even exceed, the company’s expectation.
- Student work is constantly supported by the Faculty and by visiting lecturers and designers.

## STRUCTURE

### PROGRAM DIAGRAM

The program is organized in four main modules lasting eight weeks each that include courses and workshops, followed by a eight- week professional experience period and a final portfolio presentation.

Courses	Workshop C	Courses	Workshop C	Courses	Workshop E/F	Additional Training Activities	Workshop E/F	Professional Experience
ECTS 4	ECTS 8	ECTS 4	ECTS 8	ECTS 4	ECTS 8	ECTS 4	ECTS 8	ECTS 12

C: Core Workshop

E: Elective Workshop

F: Free Choice Workshop

### WORKSHOPS

Workshops are project assignments designed to give students a working knowledge of different core subjects. All set projects start 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 (project leaders) and industrial partners, paying attention to fulfil both educational and professional aims.

The workshop culminates in an open presentation to the faculty and invited professionals.

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.

Feedback to students are also part of the final assessment given to students after the presentation. The Program Leader and the

Project Leader are available to further discuss assessments with students when required.

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.

Students work in mixed groups to support the building of a common mindset and to share previous experiences.

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.

#### CORE WORKSHOP

- Fashion Styling - (8 credits)
- Retail & Visual Merchandising - (8 credits)

#### ELECTIVE WORKSHOP - (8 credits)

One to be chosen among:

- Fashion Brand Management
- Fashion Buying
- Fashion Styling
- Retail & Visual Merchandising

#### FREE CHOICE WORKSHOP - (8 credits)

One to be chosen among the active didactical offer

### 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 topics specific to the chosen curriculum, such as Fashion Culture, Fashion Marketing and Management and Integrated Communication Strategy.



## 16 ADDITIONAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Cross disciplinary seminars, conferences, extra-curricular projects

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Professional Experience is the key step of a process involving each student individually. The aim is to match the students' skills and aspirations with the stakeholders' requirements, which are design and service companies, public institutions, design studios, consultants in creative fields. It's the moment when students have the opportunity to practice what they have learned during the academic year in a real working environment.

### 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.

The portfolio realized by each student allows to evaluate and valorize the projects developed during the academic year.

### 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 theoretic 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, dissertations and portfolios.

## STUDY PLAN

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## WORKSHOPS

### CORE WORKSHOPS - COMPULSORY

#### FASHION STYLING WORKSHOP

The workshop explores the cultural, social, aesthetic and practical aspects of fashion image-making. The workshop focuses on the strategic figure of the fashion stylist, as a professional who is able to build a visual narration through the development of an idiosyncratic vision.

Students are challenged to find inspiration from different sources: art, folk culture, movies, music, social issues, everyday news as well as fashion trends, to create a story for a real fashion editorial and or an advertising campaign, with a specific attention to digital publications and social media. Students are required to understand the magazine/brand values and audience to create images and videos that resonate with them. Students acquire a professional methodology to plan a real fashion photo/video shooting, which includes the selection of: photographer, location, models, make-up artist and hair stylist. Students practice the skills of art-direction, styling and production, to ensure that their story is conveyed in a consistent and powerful way.

#### RETAIL & VISUAL MERCHANDISING WORKSHOP

The objective of this workshop is to create retail experiences that balance brand values and identity with the location, space and windows of the assigned store/showroom, and execution feasibility. Students work on projects that can involve the retail make-over, original in-store layouts, window concepts and displays and or visual merchandising ideas. Students understand that the role of visual merchandisers combines the research of fashion trends with architecture and product design practice, to shape a physical space that conveys the brand DNA, while promoting the commercial success of its products.

Students are first introduced to a rigorous appraisal methodology

18 to analyze the brand retail and visual communication strategy, to identify existing gaps and new opportunities. The workshop leads students to develop concrete display projects that take into serious consideration issues related to materials, colors, styling, lighting, within a set budget.

## **ELECTIVE WORKSHOP**

One to be chosen among the following:

### FASHION BRAND MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

This workshop aims to present in detail the dynamics of brand management and the various strategies to increase and nurture the value of fashion brands. Many fashion brands are diversifying into multiple categories (apparel, accessories, fragrances, beauty, watches and jewels, eyewear etc.) and are now present across various price segments, distribution and communication channels. The luxury power pyramid is increasingly complex, ranging from “ultra-high-end” at the top, characterized by bespoke craftsmanship and exclusivity, through “super-premium” and “premium core” brands, to “accessible”, “affordable” and “every day” luxury brands, which include traditionally high-street brands that have developed more aspirational messages, products and services. The workshop evolves around real-world briefs and ability to analyze a brand’s vision, core values, verbal and non-verbal DNA. Students learn to assess what stands at the core of the brand identity and space, to explore new business opportunities and build powerful brand “touch-points”, through new brand extensions, advanced brand content, refined brand image, while ensuring the highest consistency throughout the consumer experience.

### FASHION BUYING WORKSHOP

The purpose of the Fashion Buying workshop is to give students an insider view on the key role of a Fashion Buyer; from professional competencies and essential retail strategy and operations to personal attributes. In the current omni-channel fashion retail context, buyers are accountable for ensuring that the store’s merchandise mix has the appeal to turn potential customers into shoppers, to maximize turnover and profit margins, and minimize

the inventory risk. Students learn to identify macro-trends and upcoming fashion trends, through a deep examination of fashion catwalks, shows and presentations, to generate meaningful market insights. Based on the definition of the retailer target customer, students understand how to filter the existing offers, create a brand portfolio and define balanced groups of products that will compose an accurate range plan, within the assigned budget, to achieve the maximum the sell-through. Students finally suggest tailored services and communication ideas to support their buying strategy.

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## 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. The 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

### FASHION CULTURE

The course offers the possibility to deeply analyze and understand the Fashion phenomenon, through an articulated and interdisciplinary approach that involves history, anthropology, sociology and psychology. The historical and cultural evolution of modern fashion, both in Italy and internationally, is combined with the ability to read and interpret the contaminations between social issues, art, literature, movies and fashion. Students' assumptions are challenged to broaden their knowledge and deepen their thinking, to nurture a critical point of view on an increasingly complex field, strictly connected to wider social and cultural dynamics. Students question their own ideas and develop a fresh, personal and sophisticated perspective.

### FASHION MARKETING & MANAGEMENT

The course examines advanced marketing and management principles and provides strategic frameworks and operational tools to develop a comprehensive marketing plan for a fashion company. Students explore the dynamics of the global fashion industry, with a specific focus on the Made in Italy model, existing and innovative business models, consumer insights, targeting and positioning, forward-looking marketing mix, current distribution channels and retail management tactics, brand extension and licensing strategies, from a practical perspective through case studies, in-class exercises and rigorous discussion. Students are challenged to examine the strategic marketing process from research and planning through execution and evaluation of results.

### INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The course focuses on the promotion and communication strategies that fashion & luxury brands can create, plan and execute. A brand is one but it can tell many stories depending on the objectives, customers and channels. Effective communications are the result of integrated branding projects. The course offers a substantial overview of the world of luxury and fashion communications. Students explore the evolution of the communication mix applied to the fashion and luxury industry, the analysis of existing and emerging communication channels, the value of narratives and storytelling, the creation of branded content through various techniques, with a specific focus on digital tools and media, and the inventive use of press and public relations. Students explore strategical frameworks and operational tools to build integrated communication plans, to create brand awareness, increase the brand perception and reinforce the brand positioning's message.

## 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.