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Master programme curriculum

Architecture

at the University of Art and Design Linz (Kunstuniversität Linz)

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1 QUALIFICATION PROFILE

The master programme Architecture qualifies graduates to design, create, plan and realise and construct spaces, buildings and cities. It draws its problems, methods and objectives from the disciplines of spatial and constructional design, but its essentiality and universality reach further.

Next to architecture-specific qualifications regarding functions, space and body, construction, atmosphere, material, and colour and form, courses address the recognition of work requirements and conditions. In the course of the programme, students train problem analysis, definition of goals and the design of work processes.

Regarding analysis, planning, organisation and realisation of concrete constructional interventions, a special focus is put on the examination of concrete contexts and the reaction to social, political, spatial, legal and economic prerequisites.

These demanding tasks cannot be carried out by architects on their own. They require intense collaboration between public bodies, representatives of local communities, experts in the fields of regional development, building construction, structural engineering and infrastructure.

The common goal is the improvement of people's quality of life through design and enhancement of spaces, buildings, settlements and agglomerations as well as their technical infrastructure. Furthermore, citizens need to be involved in decision-making processes and predefined work steps from the very beginning. Each step must be analysed regarding social, economic and ecological sustainability. In this sense, the programme sensitises students to the various parameters of such processes, from decision-making and the effects of design results to constructional prerequisites. It teaches advanced technical skills in the context of economic-ecological, sociopolitical and legal-administrative problems and trains methods of implementation.

The programme's educational contents facilitate graduates' assessment and evaluation of their work's long-term consequences. Thus, the programme qualifies students for work in architecture, urban development and regional planning.

2 EDUCATIONAL PROFILE

2.1 Educational objectives

On the one hand, the programme imparts artistic-creative, theoretical-discursive and technical-operational knowledge and makes this knowledge comprehensible with all its causes and interdependencies. On the other hand, it teaches the skills required for collaborating with all stakeholders regarding complex problems, work methods and concrete constructional realisation.

Communication and integration of the forms and methods of organisational design and self-management incorporate the ability to define goals, manage schedules and structure interdisciplinary team work into the programme. A special focus is put on teaching and specifying work objectives and methods as well as the presentation of concepts and work results in teams. In response to increasingly complex societal processes, the development of social skills finds special consideration within the programme.

Interconnected thinking, the combination of artistic-intuitive and scientific approaches as well as the assessment of the effects of students' individual actions and designs are essential learning objectives. The programme teaches integrated responsibility for cultural, artistic, social and societal goals, especially those of special humanitarian topicality (globalisation, ecology, digital technologies, consumerism etc.).

The discipline's pragmatic nature implies a position that does not only seek to develop but also to realise visions. Students discover their own concrete capacity for sustainable cultural intervention instead of learning externally imposed principles. Their work as architects should contribute to the improvement of living conditions instead of disappearing into niches of temporary events. Thus, success is not determined by comparison but by the road which leads from starting point to work results.

Students should give their undivided attention to development processes and to all people involved. For the sake of integrated cultural demands, the designer's and the client's personalities, the assignment, the place and the time of action are taken into equal consideration.

2.2 Educational methods

The master programme's learning ground is based on constant interaction between theoretical fundamentals (lectures) and active research, observation and experimentation (basic evaluation, project work, workshops, seminars, excursions, construction practice).

Through project work, seminars and workshops, the programme promotes students' individual interests and strengths. Artistic as well as practical Project Studies link knowledge fields, interdisciplinary collaboration and specialisation and integrate individual subjects.

If thematically and didactically appropriate, individual lecturers are encouraged to collaborate and connect teaching contents and class periods.

3 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

3.1 Basic concept

The master programme 'Architecture' comprises four semesters of 30 ECTS each, resulting in a total of 120 ECTS. Of these, 15 ECTS (12,5%) can be gained by completing free electives at a recognised domestic or foreign university.

The basic idea of the programme shows in continuous and lasting interlacing of artistic, technical, practical and theoretical fields of knowledge and concrete design projects. The project modules 'Designing' and 'Specialisation' form a continuous parallel structure (15 ECTS per semester) at the core of the programme.

In addition to the Free Electives, the Compulsory Electives of the Competence Modules allow for individual specialisation. Through reference to specific projects, examples and contemporary connections, the relationships to subject areas like traditional architecture, construction history and research, restoration, sociology, ecology, sustainability, economy, globalisation, political theory, technology, infrastructure, technical practice, cultural studies and art receive in-depth discussion and elucidation.

3.2 Module types

The master programme 'Architecture' comprehends two different module types: Project Modules and Competence Modules.

Project Modules

Design10 ECTS imparts the design and presentation of drafts

Specialisation 5 ECTS imparts the integration of specialist and application knowledge* into designing and basic evaluation

Competence Modules

Implementation..... 5 ECTS imparts technical-constructional and operational knowledge

Urban development...5 ECTS imparts encyclopaedic, methodological and historical knowledge

Analysis..... 5 ECTS imparts practical-descriptive knowledge and basic evaluation

Compulsory Elective...5 ECTS imparts specific knowledge from selected subject areas

*) Note:

'Application knowledge' or 'applied construction-practical knowledge' refers to knowledge and skills gained by practical application, especially by working on construction sites and in workshops. University projects with distinctly practical contents facilitate the acquisition of such skills.

3.3 Options

The master programme 'Architecture' at the University of Art and Design Linz offers five different options regarding contents and students' individual approaches to their studies:

Each semester, the Project Module 'Design' offers at least two thematic options from various disciplines of architecture. During the first three semesters, students must choose a subject related to urban or regional development once.

Each semester, the Project Module 'Specialisation' offers options relating to technology and planning (see point 3.5).

Concerning the forms of architectural presentation, the Project Module 'Specialisation' allows students to choose between various courses.

Depending on availability, three out of twelve Compulsory Electives (5 ECTS each) must be chosen. Course contents change constantly and reflect current developments and innovations, which is why one compulsory elective module can be chosen twice (provided that contents focus on different subjects).

The Free Electives (with a total of 15 ECTS) must be chosen from the range of courses offered by the University of Art and Design Linz or other by another recognised domestic or foreign university.

3.4 Schedule and overview

The following table visualises the complete curriculum. Course or module contents may build on previous course, which is taken into account in the suggested schedule. The Competence Modules (compulsory courses and compulsory electives) are not assigned to a specific semester.

SEM.	PROJEKTMODULE		KOMPETENZMODULE											-	ECTS				
	Pflicht	Pflicht	Pflicht	Wahlpflicht 3 aus 12												Frei			
1.	Entwerfen 10 ECTS	Vertiefen 5 ECTS	5 ECTS Planumsetzung	5 ECTS Urbanistik	5 ECTS Analyse	5 ECTS Analyse	5 ECTS BASEhabitat	5 ECTS Theorie	5 ECTS Nachhaltigkeit	5 ECTS Konstruktion	5 ECTS Holzbau	5 ECTS Urbanistik	5 ECTS Architektur	5 ECTS Innenraum	5 ECTS Prozesskultur	5 ECTS Baukultur	5 ECTS Baumanagement	15 ECTS Freie Wahlfächer	30
2.	Entwerfen 10 ECTS	Vertiefen 5 ECTS																	30
3.	Entwerfen 10 ECTS	Vertiefen 5 ECTS																	30
4.	Masterarbeit 30 ECTS																30		

3 Project Modules Design	x 10 =	30 ECTS	25,0%
3 Project Module Specialisation	x 5 =	15 ECTS	12,5%
1 Competence Module Implementation	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module Urban Development	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module Analysis	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
3 of 12 Competence Modules – Compulsory Electives	x 5 =	15 ECTS	12,5%
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Analysis			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Interior Space			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective BASEhabitat			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Sustainability			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Construction			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Timber Construction			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Urban Development			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Architecture			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Theory			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Process Culture			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Construction Culture			
Competence Module - Compulsory Elective Construction Management			
Total modules		75 ECTS	62,5%
Free Electives.....		15 ECTS	12,5%
Total excluding master project		90 ECTS	75,0%
Master project		30 ECTS	25,0%
Total		120 ECTS	100,0%

3.5 Module descriptions

The three Project Modules 'Design' (10 ECTS each) select an integrated approach to impart the skills needed for spatial and architectural design. This may include practical testing of design results on-site (spatial practice), which allows for significant evaluative conclusions regarding the design process. Students address spatial, structural, formal, functional, atmospheric contextual questions and problems of urban development and spatial planning. Questions of presentation are discussed and refined. Aside from architectural requirements, the modules impart project-specific and interdisciplinary contents.

The three Project Modules 'Specialisation' (5 ECTS each) impart the connection of architectural intent and the demands and conditions regarding constructional, technical, theoretical, socio-political and economic aspects as well as urban development, interior spaces and applied construction practice (see note chapter 3.2). An important prerequisite for the success of a project is the ability to research the relevant basic conditions on-site and to gather needed information. Students learn to develop architecture within an interdisciplinary context. Each semester, they must choose at least two different subject areas to deepen their knowledge in. During the course of the entire programme, at least four different subject areas must be chosen. Furthermore, students train the two- and three-dimensional presentation of a project.

The Competence Module 'Implementation' (5 ECTS, compulsory) imparts technical construction knowledge with regard to architecture, housing technology and sustainability or knowledge concerning technical infrastructure and the basics of building implementation (legal, economic and operational aspects).

The Competence Module 'Urban Development' (5 ECTS, compulsory) imparts historical, typological, methodological, legal, economic and political knowledge concerning urban planning, open space planning and landscape planning.

The two Competence Modules 'Analysis' (5 ECTS each, 1 compulsory, 1 compulsory elective) enhance the skills to research and analyse architectural as well as practical construction problems* (see note chapter 3.2) in a short period of time. The objective is to present information and findings in a clear and understandable fashion and to respond to these with an architectural plan. In order to meet potentially necessary requirements, specific technical and material-related skills can be imparted in the course of on-site workshops.

The Competence Module 'Interior Space' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts basic historical, technical and artistic knowledge and its potential applications, e.g. design, furniture manufacturing, interior construction, light and acoustics.

The Competence Module 'BASEhabitat' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) provides students with an overview of current issues of humanitarian architecture and imparts basic knowledge concerning applied practical construction* (see note chapter 3.2), art and technology as well as history, socio-economics, geopolitics and culture and its potential applications.

The Competence Module also includes technical practice with a focus on loam and bamboo.

The Competence Module 'Sustainability' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts practical, technical and cultural basic knowledge and its potential applications. Subjects are the questions of energy and economising relevant to architecture.

The Competence Module 'Construction' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts specific technical construction knowledge concerning architecture, structural engineering and building material technology and related current issues.

The Competence Module 'Timber Construction' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts historical, technical, economic and artistic knowledge and creates a reference to current developments.

The Competence Module 'Urban Development' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts specific theoretical, conceptual and practice-oriented knowledge on contemporary urban development.

The Competence Module 'Architecture' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts specific theoretical, conceptual and practice-oriented knowledge on contemporary architecture.

The Competence Module 'Theory' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) includes, among other things, seminars with preparatory and discursive-reflective contents. Students gain historical, typological and methodological knowledge in the fields of architectural, cultural, art, media and gender theory as well as post-colonial studies (sociology and philosophy).

The Competence Module 'Process Culture' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts knowledge on strategy, communication, team work, project management, supervision, evaluation and mediation. Furthermore, students question and train their individual skills.

The Competence Module 'Construction Culture' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts knowledge on the relationship between architecture or architects and the public, politics and culture. Moreover, students learn to establish their own role as architects in the contexts of time, space and power.

The Competence Module 'Construction Management' (5 ECTS, compulsory elective) imparts knowledge on the strategies of implementation of planned projects. Students approach problems of office and construction organisation as well as legal and economic questions.

3.6 Course types

VO = Lecture (Vorlesung)

Lectures aim at a systematic and/or specialised transfer of knowledge. They provide insight into the current state of research as well as the subjects and methods of each field. The active role is mainly reserved to lecturers.

PA = Project work (Projektarbeit)

The central teaching method. It links and integrates all specialised fields and applies theoretical and practical knowledge. Furthermore, all work steps (basic evaluation, analysis and critical reflection, team work and coordination, formulation of goals, project design, project development – involving all stakeholders, presentation) are trained and refined. The evaluation of previous projects and a prospective feasibility check can be important elements. Project work allows for individual positioning and orientation. Students receive counselling, supervision and private or group tuition as needed. Supervising staff take an important role in providing guidance and feedback. Students' performance during the entire project period affects course grades. Work methods and objectives are continuously discussed and reflected on keeping in mind work objectives.

WS = Workshop

Workshops are not subject to specific teaching methods. They impart specific contents using various approaches (impulse lectures, exercises, feedback sessions, small seminar papers and drafts). Intensive analysis of a subject within a short period allows for very personal dialogue between teachers and students.

SE = Seminar

Seminars connect knowledge transfer and independent knowledge acquisition. Artistic and/or scientific dialogue clarifies positions and improves the skills of expression. The active role alternates between teachers and students for the sake of interaction. Moreover, seminars assist students in determining their own actions and lines of thinking, and also facilitate international networking and promote the dissemination of ideas beyond the confines of academic teaching.

EX = Excursion

Excursions are block courses facilitating the acquisition of knowledge through practical experience and observation ('on-site learning'). The analysis of architecture on-site with the aid of previously discussed literature deepens and complements classroom knowledge at a theoretic level as well.

4 EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

4.1 Admission requirements

Admission to the master programme 'Architecture' requires the successful completion of a bachelor programme of architecture. Students who have not completed the bachelor programme at the University of Art and Design Linz must prove artistic aptitude according to § 64-1-5 UG2002 in a board examination. The examination consists of an oral and a written part.

For the first part, applicants present and discuss their artistic works in the course of an interview. The conceptual and expressive quality of the works and their presentation are assessed. After the interview, the board decides on admission to the second part of the examination.

A test forms the second part of the examination. It assesses artistic and conceptual capabilities, the understanding of architectural problems and the skills required for spatial and joined-up thinking with a specific assignment (text, drawing etc.). Applicants must develop an architectural draft integrating and linking various disciplines. For this assignment, the head of the Department of Architecture – or the head of the 'BASEhabitat' programme, respectively – chooses relevant topics.

The attestation of artistic aptitude gained by passing the admission examination is valid from the start of the admission period for the following winter term until the end of the admission period of the following year's winter term.

4.2 Examination types and scope

Modules and courses are completed by corresponding performance assessment (oral or written; single or multiple assessment).

Depending on teaching and project contents, the written part of an examination may include an artistic form of expression such as drawing, model, photograph and/or video, including its verbal presentation.

Module examination (MO): written or oral. The module examination is held by the module supervisor. The written part may include the results of individual courses and must be presented before the examination.

Lecture examination (VO): written or oral.

Project work examination (PA): written or oral. Continuous assessment during the entire semester.

Workshop examination (WS): written or oral. Continuous assessment during the entire semester.

Seminar examination (SE): written exam in the form of a scientific and/or artistic project paper including its verbal presentation. Continuous assessment during the entire semester.

Excursion examination (EX): may or may not include a written exam in the form of research and analysis.

4.3 Master thesis and master examination

The master examination consists of a written master thesis and an oral examination in front of a board. The final grade is determined by the assessment of the master thesis and the assessment of the oral examination in equal parts.

For the master thesis, students in the final semester choose a project in consultation with their supervisor. It includes theoretical-scientific, artistic and possibly practical exploration and experimentation as well as the necessary written documentation and two- and three-dimensional presentation. In case of concrete realisation, students must present detailed designs and photographic documentation.

Furthermore, students are required to develop a portfolio over the course of the entire master programme.

The board examination relates to the subject area and the concrete subject of the master thesis. Admission to the examination requires successful completion of all courses and module examinations of the programme as well as completion of the written master thesis.

Overall assessment of the final examination: In addition to the assessment of individual subjects, students receive an overall grade: 'passed' if every subject was completed successfully, or 'failed' if this is not the case. If no subject was assessed with a grade worse than 'gut' (good) and at least half of all subjects were graded 'sehr gut' (very good), overall assessment is 'mit Auszeichnung bestanden' (passed with distinction).

5 ACADEMIC DEGREE

Graduates of the master programme 'Architecture' at the University of Art and Design Linz receive the degree 'Master of Architecture' (abbreviated 'MArch').

6 SPECIAL PROGRAMME BASEhabitat / Human Design

Addition to the points of the standard programme

6.1.0 PREAMBLE

The nature and the goals of BASEhabitat projects lie in the connection of socio-political (social, ecological and economic) objectives and architectural-artistic quality within the (social, cultural and economic) context of the Global South. The projects address respect for cultural and social specificities and deal with construction in developing regions, war zones and disaster areas, informal construction, use of locally available materials and sustainable construction.

The programme's starting point was the great international demand for the knowledge and the practical skills that had been accumulated at the University of Art and Design Linz since the 2004 BASEhabitat workshop. The BASEhabitat programme is integrated into the university's standard Architecture programme and respect its curriculum and EU provisions. Contents, subjects and assignments as well as free electives incorporate BASEhabitat's goals. The following four thematic pairs form the pillars of BASEhabitat and describe the programme's orientation: Integration and Respect, Climate and Technology, Material and Craft, Beauty and Dignity.

6.1.1. Integration and Respect

This pillar refers to an active approach to specific, varying historical, cultural, social and economic contexts. This includes respect for specific conditions, empathy with affected people and their involvement in all decision-making and implementation processes, and sensitivity towards the adequacy of planning decisions and construction measures. Actions and decisions are based on on-site research. The aim is to build structures together and give local forces the chance to improve their skills and their living conditions independently.

6.1.2. Climate and Technology

This concept refers to construction as a cultural technology for climate control, a fundamental design function with precisely defined objectives beyond creative arbitrariness. Students start by studying traditional measures and solutions. During the design process, they consult experts and create different versions of designs in order to improve results. Decisions on materials, orientation and construction methods are all connected to the concepts of air-conditioning technology and consider specific local conditions. The goal is comfortable, easily manageable room temperatures with low annual fluctuation as well as low energy expenditure for heating and cooling.

6.1.3. Material and Craft

When it comes to choosing the right materials, BASEhabitat focuses on the ecological footprint. Decisions are made in favour of building materials which are renewable, cheap, easily manipulated and available on-site. Both the social aspect (affordability and availability) and the ecological aspect (side effects and disposal problems) are taken into account, resulting in the preferred use of loam, ceramic materials, bamboo and timber, and natural textiles and colours. If living conditions can be improved or durability increased, or if technical specifications demand it, BASEhabitat also applies industrially manufactured building materials and components.

6.1.4. Beauty and Dignity

In the field of development cooperation, BASEhabitat stands out due to its commitment to beauty, which addresses the psychological and cognitive dimension of architecture without offering any final definitions. It is more of an attitude than a goal: a careful, loving approach that integrates all aspects and transforms social, economic and political goals into an artistic dimension. In this sense, beauty becomes a form of respect and acknowledgement of the dignity of residents and places. BASEhabitat sees beauty as a basic human need, not a luxury good.

6.2.0 QUALIFICATION PROFILE (cf. chapter 1)

The 'BASEhabitat / Humanitarian Design' branch is embedded in the activities of BASEhabitat and relates to concrete architectural practice in the context of international development cooperation. The programme focuses on the housing needs of socially, politically and/or economically disadvantaged people and those in emergency situations (e.g. natural disasters). The problems involved require in-depth knowledge and skills regarding project initiation and organisation as well as technical realisation. The programme imparts practical and technical skills more than standard architecture programmes, focussing on locally available materials, knowledge of traditional processing techniques and up-to-date knowledge of material technology. Realised construction projects are based on collaboration and team work with local actors and partners (organisations and/or people in the development sector, NGOs etc.).

6.3.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS

6.3.2 Basic concept (cf. chapter 3.1)

The programme 'BASEhabitat / Humanitarian Design' takes place in different places depending on current projects and their progress and characteristics. The goal is to act locally, on-site, in order to gain a deeper understanding of architecture as an applied art, negotiated politics and researched technology.

Subject areas expand to practical experience with renewable, regional resources, theory and practice of international development cooperation and exemplary and project-specific insight into the fields of infrastructure, spatial planning, water resources management and seismology.

The two project modules 'Spatial Practice' (5 ECTS each) complement the programme's focus.

6.3.3 Module types (cf. chapter 3.2)

In addition to the two project modules 'Design' and 'Specialisation', 'BASEhabitat / Humanitarian Design' offers a third module, 'Spatial Practice', which imparts practical realisation of designs (two modules, 5 ECTS each).

6.3.4 Options (cf. chapter 3.3)

In the course of the 'BASEhabitat / Humanitarian Design' programme, the compulsory electives 'Analysis', 'BASEhabitat' and 'Theory' focus basic evaluation, theory and reflection of humanitarian architecture projects.

6.3.5 Schedule and overview (cf. chapter 3.4)

The following table visualises the complete programme curriculum. Due to the subject focus, the schedule for the first year is binding.

SEM.	PROJEKTMODULE		KOMPETENZMODULE					Frei	ECTS	
	Pflicht	Pflicht	Pflicht	Zweig						
1.	2 Entwerfen "Design" "Spatial Practise" zu je 10 ECTS	Vertiefen 5 ECTS	5 ECTS Planumsetzung	5 ECTS Urbanistik	5 ECTS Analyse	5 ECTS Analyse	5 ECTS BASEhabitat	5 ECTS Theorie	15 ECTS Freie Wahlfächer davon optional angeboten: 2 x 5 ECTS Spatial Practise	30
2.		Vertiefen 5 ECTS								30
3.	Entwerfen 10 ECTS	Vertiefen 5 ECTS								30
4.	Masterarbeit 30 ECTS									30

2 Project Modules Design ('Design' / 'Spatial Practice').....	x 10 =	20 ECTS	16,7%
1 Project Module Design	x 10 =	10 ECTS	8,3%
3 Project Modules Specialisation	x 5 =	15 ECTS	12,5%
1 Competence Module Implementation	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module Urban Development	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module Analysis	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module Analysis (on-site workshops)	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module BASEhabitat (workshops).....	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
1 Competence Module Theory (studio sessions)	x 5 =	5 ECTS	4,2%
Total modules		75 ECTS	62,5%
Free Electives (incl. 'Spatial Practice', 2 x 5 ECTS).....		15 ECTS	12,5%
Total without master thesis		90 ECTS	75,0%
Master thesis		30 ECTS	25,0%
Total		120 ECTS	100,0%

6.4.1 EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

6.4.2 Admission requirements (cf. chapter 4.1)

In addition to the general requirements of the master programme 'Architecture', six months of craft practice are a prerequisite for admission to the 'BASEhabitat' programme: *Handwerkliche Praxis (HP)* deals with construction work, timber construction, loam construction or steel construction. This internship must be completed at an authorised company. Subsequently, applicants must provide a written reference and a tax statement. *Handwerkliche Praxis (HP)* can also be completed in two of the above-mentioned disciplines (each at a duration of two months minimum). In exceptional cases, *HP* can be completed on a BASEhabitat construction site. In such cases, the head of the BASEhabitat programme must confirm and recognise that training requirements are met in advance. This form of *HP* can only take place after the start of and in parallel with the programme, which also requires approval.

6.5.0 ACADEMIC DEGREE (cf. chapter 5)

Graduates of the master programme 'Architecture' (special programme BASEhabitat / Humanitarian Design) at the University of Art and Design Linz receive the degree 'Master of Architecture' (abbreviated 'MArch'). The degree certificate specifies 'BASEhabitat / Humanitarian Design'.