Associate Degree in Design (Furniture)

School of Design (TAFE) 2008
Associate Degree in Design (Furniture)

RMIT code: AD007
CRICOS code: 061154K
Duration: 2 years Full Time

The Associate Degree

One of the newest qualifications offered in Australia, the Associate Degree combines theoretical content with employment-related skills to enable graduates to gain employment in the global furniture industry. The Associate Degree in Design (Furniture) brings together elements of the Bachelor of Design (Industrial Design) and the Diploma of Furniture Technology to deliver design-focused learning with underpinning production and craft knowledge. A broad range of topics are covered within the program to enable graduates to design with deep understanding of the many aspects of modern furniture making and enables students to investigate contemporary, cultural and environmental aspects of the professional practice of furniture design.

The Associate Degree is particularly suited to students who are genuinely curious, want to be challenged and are keen to explore professional opportunities either in a major production company or as independent designers. Teaching staff are drawn from professional design and production backgrounds and are extremely experienced in the development of furniture for industrial production.

Program Content

The program of study mirrors the real world practice of furniture design in both the Australian and global context.

The first year of the program is an introduction to the practice of furniture design and the principal issues of contemporary design. During this year students explore concepts and confront accepted ideas to understand how furniture design can meet the needs of contemporary society. Using the history of design as a base from which to consider how needs have been met in the past students are asked to consider emerging needs and to develop economic and sustainable designs for the future.

The second year of the program applies the understandings and knowledge gained to real life projects in collaboration with industry partners. Commercial aspects of the practice of furniture design consultancy are explored to enable graduates to move into employment on completing the Associate Degree.
The program has four course streams.

- The Design Studies (Furniture Design) courses look at both design and business practice and explore the critical role that design plays.

- The Technology Courses provide a context for the student to experiment with the materiality of objects and systems in an experimental fashion.

- In the Design Studio (Furniture Design) courses, the real world practice of furniture design is replicated in the classroom. Exemplars of practice are studied. The Studio context opens up themes – of the way people live and work in this world – and how they construct their lives.

- In the Communication (Furniture Design) courses students are encouraged to reflect on their communication in non-verbal and non-text modes. Students are exposed to best practice in a range of communication tools, which allow them to express ideas in a visual form.

**Career Prospects**

Manufacturing companies in Australia and overseas employ furniture designers as consultants or employees in their product development teams. Many manufacturers employ furniture technologists/developers to create or improve product ranges with their production departments. Graduates who have continued on through the Bachelor of Design (Industrial Design) are employed as designers in design studios and design consultancy firms or set themselves up as entrepreneurs making products or servicing other design related areas. Research institutions like environmental agencies and universities also employ designers to work on many aspects of products and services.

*Image credit: Sari Harris ‘Acrylic Table’*
Entrance Requirements

Academic
The successful completion of Year 12, Foundation studies program or equivalent

Folio
5 to 6 pieces that best represents the ability, interest and design skills of the applicant including freehand sketches, photographs and digital images.

English Language (International students only)
One of the following:
- ELTS - 6.0+ (no band less than 5.5)
- TOEFL - Paper based = 550+ (TWE 4.0+)
- TOEFL - Computer based = 213+ (TWE 4.0+)
- REW - English for Academic Purposes Advanced Level

Advanced Entry
July (mid year) intake is available only to students who are granted course exemptions or advanced entry on the basis of previous study of either one or three semesters. Existing workers may gain recognition for current skills and competencies through Recognition of Prior Learning.

Pathways
From the Associate Degree
Graduates of the Associate Degree in Design (Furniture) who have been successful in gaining a place in the Bachelor of Design (Industrial Design) will be eligible to continue their studies into the program’s third year. This enables student to gain two qualifications in four years on a 2 plus 2 model.

To the Associate Degree
Graduates of Diploma of Furnishing Technology and Diploma of Arts (Furniture Design) who have been successful in gaining a place in the program will be eligible to apply for exemptions.

Please note: course/s = subject/s
Image credit: Chris Clarke, Lisa Bysouth ‘Alpha Table’
Program Structure

Year One
Design Studies 1 (Furniture Design) 12
Design Principles and Elements 12
Workshop Methods 12
Communication 1 (Furniture Design) 12
Communication 2 (Furniture Design) 12
Design Studies 2 (Furniture Design) 12
Develop, Trial and Evaluate Prototypes 12
Design Process 12

credit points year one 96

Year Two
Design Studio 3 (Furniture Design) 24
Design Studies 3 (Furniture Design) 12
Technology 3 (Furniture Design) 12
Design Studio 4 (Furniture Design) 24
Technology 4 (Furniture Design) 12
Independent Professional Practice for Furniture Designers 12

credit points year two 96

Application Procedure

Australian Applicants - Applicants apply through VTAC.

Applicants must meet all extra requirements and selection procedures listed on the VTAC website.

Apply via: Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC)
VTAC Infonet: www.vtac.edu.au
VTAC Infoline: 1300 364133

Note: the RMIT program code listed in this brochure should not be used when applying through VTAC.

International Applications:

Applicants apply through:
RMIT International Services
www.rmit.edu.au/international
Tel. (03) 9925 5156
Email: isu@rmit.edu.au

Please note: course/s = subject/s
Fees (per year)

Commonwealth Supported Place (CSP)  *$7,260
Australian Fee Paying Place (FPP)  *$15,600
International Onshore  *$17,520

A CSP is jointly funded by the Commonwealth Government and the student. In 2007, the fees ranged between $3,998 and $8,333 per year for a standard full-time program. The exact cost varies according to each course.

www.rmit.edu.au/programs/fees

Please check the RMIT website for the most up-to-date version of RMIT programs and fees for international students and for further information about the fee structure for your program.

www.international.rmit.edu.au/info/programfees.asp

*Approximate at time of printing please check RMIT website for current fees.

Additional Costs

A full time student in the first year and beyond can expect to spend approximately AU$1000 on materials and design presentation work depending on the nature of projects undertaken and materials selected.

Further Information

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RMIT website:
www.rmit.edu.au/associatedegrees

Open Day: 2nd Sunday in August, 10am - 4pm