



Prerequisites for being awarded a place on the Audio Design course (B.A.)

Course information (Updated: 30 October 2017)

Overview of the procedure

In accordance with Section 3 of the AR (Admission Rules), evidence of an aesthetic and technical talent is a prerequisite for being admitted to the Audio Design Bachelor's course at the SRH Hochschule der populären Künste (hdpk). This is proven by a strong expressive and creative drive, a good knowledge of working with a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation), as well as by a practical and basic theoretical knowledge of popular music and music theory. See also Section 1-4 of the AR. It is a two-stage admissions procedure: Applicants go through a pre-selection process before being allowed to take the practical entrance examination.

Pre-selection

In accordance with Section 5 AR, applicants must submit, together with the requested documents, three minute-long work samples as independent work. Please edit these, as follows:

- 1. Piece: The first work sample can be selected freely. Thereby, it can be for example, an electronically-produced music track, a sound logo or a production by a band or artist which the applicant has reworked.
- 2. Piece: The second work sample is an electronically-produced piece. The genre can be selected freely. The focus of the assessment is on the melodic and harmonic elements within the composition.

The following production techniques are not wanted:

- o Traditional remixes
 - o Medleys
 - o Use of vocal stems
 - o The use of pre-produced loops which haven't been evidently processed creatively
 - o The exclusive use of sampled material without including sound synthesis techniques/synthesizers
- 3. Piece: The third work sample is a soundscape (compare <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soundscape>). Design a soundscape that surrounds someone in a real or fictional place. Choose a meaningful title for the sound file.

Save your three music work samples together in mp3 format in the above order.

Also create an informal PDF file, one page long, which provides information about the titles you have chosen and their original copyright, as well as the sound libraries used. For each work sample, also describe the type and scope of your technical, musical work. Use the online form on our website to send them: <https://www.hdpk.de/en/apply-now/>

Alternatively, you can transfer your documents and work samples via WeTransfer or Dropbox by sending the link to studienberatung@hdpk.de.



The sound-aesthetic approach and use of technical, musical methods, as well as the impression of the sound of your work samples. are the assessment criteria.

By providing the work samples, you confirm that you completed the technical design work stated independently with no outside help. If a third party was actively or passively involved in developing the work submitted, also state their name and work fully in the PDF file.

Should it become known at a later date, that work and/or cooperation by a third party was not mentioned, this will result in subsequent expulsion from the procedure and, if necessary, from the university.

The outcome of the pre-selection which the hdpk's examination board decides is crucial for permission to take part in the entrance examination. You shall be notified by telephone if you have passed the pre-selection. Otherwise, you shall be informed of unsuccessful pre-selection by post. We ask that you refrain from enquiring about this before receiving the decision.

Entrance examination

Following the pre-selection, you will be invited to attend a practical entrance examination at hdpk. Overview:

In accordance with Section 6 AR, qualification for the BA course in Audio Design at hdpk shall be determined by a half-hour examination. The main content points are your presentation and a personal conversation about your motivation, your musical career so far and your career aspirations.

In the context of the practical entrance examination, you will present two more DAW projects, either as a session or as audio files. When choosing the pieces, you may be guided by the conditions for the pre-selection's first work sample (self-production). You may explain your production techniques with reference to the respective DAW session (by using a laptop) or in the form of screenshots from the session.

The admissions committee will also determine the extent of your technical sound background, as well as your knowledge of music theory and aural training. Attached, you will find a catalogue of questions that will help you with your preparation.

The admissions committee will inform you of the result of your practical entrance examination as soon as possible. Taking the entrance examination does not mean you are immediately accepted onto the course. Places on the course are awarded by means of a qualitative and quantitative list procedure.



Questions/requirements for preparing for the practical entrance examination

Music theory

- Which key is the piece presented just now in?
- Name different intervals (distances in pitch) within an octave!
- What is the difference, in terms of music theory, between major and minor?
- Play a major chord / minor chord on the piano!
- Which triads are there other than major and minor?

Aural training

- Determine the intervals played on the piano by listening!
- Determine the mode of the triads played on the piano by listening!

Sound technology

- Explain how effects units work with reference to the individual variable parameters, such as for example gate, compressor, reverb, equalizer, filter!

Examples: What happens if a compressor's 'threshold' is reduced?
What happens if a reverb's 'pre-delay' is increased?

- Explain how a synthesiser and its individual parameters work!

Examples: What causes an 'LFO'?
What changes if the 'attack' value of a volume envelope is increased?