

GUIDELINES FOR DIPLOMA PROJECT AT BAS

Revised every year after the SKU diploma evaluation meeting

Last revision November 2023

A diploma project at BAS is entirely self-formulated, both in terms of theme and ways of working. As a student you are asked to situate yourself and your project by articulating a problem or concern as well as exploring its architectural answer. Both research and architectural propositions serve to clarify the problem in question, and to develop expressions that have descriptive, investigative and communicative qualities.

The working process is guided by individual tutoring, common lectures, workshops, and reviews, some of which are mandatory while others are optional to attend. However, we encourage you to participate in as many as possible since they will inform and support your work in a significant way.

The diploma project is presented and assessed through a final exhibition collecting all relevant material, clearly communicating the project's aim, working process and outcome.

WORKING PERIOD

6 months – in the period 1. January – 30. June

The exhibition shall be completed 24. June, followed by exam / evaluation 27-30. June.

Candidate will be told if they have passed the exam on 30. June, but will have to come back to BAS in the middle of August for the public exhibition and diploma ceremony.

TUTORING CONDITIONS

All candidates have their personal APP tutor with 10 hours tutoring

Tutoring DAV, 5 hours

Tutoring TTA (construction): 2 hours

Tutoring Sustainability: 2 hours

Other consultants to be subjugated by the main tutor and in agreement with adm.

If two candidates are working together with one project, they will have the same hours of tutoring as a single candidate, since it is counted per project.

DIPLOMA PROJECT DELIVERABLES

All diploma candidates shall deliver a program (one preliminary and one final), an essay, and present their research, artistic explorations and architectural propositions in a final exhibition at BAS.

CREATIVE WRITING: PROGRAM & ESSAY

Parallel to the architectural explorations that constitutes the main part of your diploma project, you will also engage in written investigations and methodologies from disciplines connected to architecture. The aim of the writings is to help articulate the scope, intentions and relevance of your project, as well as to situate it in relation to other meaningful references; textual, architectural, artistic, etc. References will encourage a critical and reflective approach towards developing your position within the expanded field of architecture.

Program

The program situates the overall objectives of your project together with its modes of engagement. Simply put, it should give an understanding of what the project is dealing with, where it is situated, why this is meaningful and how you are going to approach the project. The program is a live document, a continuous re-articulation of scope, intentions and relevance. Thus, it will expand during the semester and gain an increased precision, both in descriptions and reflections around your work.

Throughout the semester a series of workshops will help develop writing as both a design tool and as a means of an ongoing articulation and reflection upon the themes explored in the essay and your evolving studio research.

There are two formal deliveries for the program: the clearance meeting and the final presentation.

For the *clearance meeting* the program represents an attempt at describing something you aim to do and why you aim to do it, where the discussion at the clearance meeting will help to narrow down, broaden, or suggest shifts in scope and ways of working. Despite being a draft, we already at this point ask of you to articulate a position within the field of architecture by listing important references; projects and practices that you relate to and find supportive of your own way of dealing with architecture.

For the *final presentation* the program forms an important introduction to your project for the assessors. It creates an optic through which your work will be understood and discussed as part of the assessment. The final program should therefore not only articulate the scope, intentions, content and relevance of your project. It needs also to position the work, and yourself as an architect in relation to relevant references, as well as reflect upon the outcomes of your project.

Essay

The word 'essay' comes from the French *essais*, meaning 'attempt' or 'try'. As a piece of writing, the essay refers to a text exploring a single subject from various positions in a personal yet analytical approach. This implies a freedom of form or format of writing which we encourage you to explore. However, an academic context also demands critical rigour grounded in other theoretical and scholarly work.

The role of the essay is to further situate and position your project by focusing on a relevant aspect or a possible implication of your scope and intentions. It could involve an exploration of a concept, a way of working, as well as an architectural or artistic work.

In terms of disciplinary approach the essay is written from the realm of architecture but should be supported by writings and modes of working belonging other academic disciplines. They will give perspectives on, and tools to deal with architecture that will expand and broaden your understanding of not only your own particular project, but also what architecture is and can be in a wider humanistic context. In the diploma essay an emphasis will be put on social science approaches, and in particular from anthropology as it shares the situatedness of architecture but brings another optic on how to understand and makes sense of everyday life and its material, spatial, and cultural expressions.

Lectures and tutorials in anthropology and social science begin from November, giving a basic introduction to the field and its methodological approaches. This, and an ongoing reading list relevant to the concerns of your diplomas, will form the basis of your written work. Following the clearance meeting, input from social sciences will continue, further informing the essay towards its presentation in late January. A brief individual supervision will be provided in connection with the choice of topic. However, we strongly recommend making the choice in concurrence with the weeks of reading, before the spring semester starts.

Formal requirements:

You must use a minimum of 3 of the texts in the reading list or other social science texts approved by the diploma coordinators, to show that you have a wider understanding in your essay. Length: around 2500 words

You may choose to write the essay in English or Norwegian. Preferably English since we have an international student mass as well as tutors. This is especially recommended if your tutors do not speak Norwegian.

The essay must include:

Front-page which contains Title, Author and Year.

List of illustrations (where appropriate)

List of references (title of book, surname, first name, reference to pages, publisher and year)

As for the structure, it is important that there is a distinct question being dealt with in a reasoned way, where the argumentation is anchored in the references you have chosen. Ensure that the text enables the reader to follow your line of thought. This can be supported by structuring the text through additional subtitles that guide the reader through the discussion.

Presentation and reading of essays

The essays will be discussed at seminar where you present the topic and findings of your essay together with ideas on how to act on this as part of your diploma project.

You will also be assigned another student's essay to read and prepare to reflect upon as part of the discussion at the presentation seminar.

The distribution of essays for students to read will be decided upon close to the final delivery of the essay.

Please note: All essays will be checked for plagiarism through a dedicated software program.

Any case of plagiarism will be sent to the committee for students matters at BAS, which decides on consequences due to cheating – as in plagiarism. Consequences for plagiarism is annulment of the exam and up to a year suspension from BAS and all higher educational institutions.

For more information on legal actions regarding plagiarism see *Regulations for Master Studies at BAS*: <https://lovdata.no/dokument/SF/forskrift/2019-03-04-179>. For a more thorough review on what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it, go to 'Søk & Skriv' <https://www.sokogskriv.no/kjeldebruk/>. That site is both in Norwegian and English.

It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the rules that apply to the use of sources and references, and what support material or aids you are allowed to use.

ARTISTIC EXPLORATIONS AND ARCHITECTURAL PROPOSITIONS

Architectural and artistic explorations will form the main part of the diploma project. While the program, essay and creative writing support an increased precision in articulating the scope and relevance of your project, it is equally important that you carry this through into architectural propositions where intentions can be acted upon, tested and questioned. We encourage you to work in ways where the analyses and registration phase is interlinked with spatial explorations where multiple options are explored, rejected and developed in a continuous process throughout the entire diploma semester. It is important to develop a dynamic and overlapping relationship between all your investigations in order for them to inform each other.

DAV exploration

DAV or "The Other World" is intentionally ambiguous and can be variously employed; in formulating and expressing a concept, developing parallel perspectives, experimenting, imagining, reflecting, and maintaining an interpretive, meaningful exploration of the topic.

1:1

Studies in full scale (1:1) can encompass social participation as well as spatial and material realisations. It is a way of coping with a situation and to communicate important elements of a spatial expression. In many projects there may also be direct in-situ interaction, in order to reach out to the people involved.

Final exhibition

The final exhibition should be a curated collection of the material produced during the process and framed to clearly communicate the scope, intentions, and outcomes of the project. Models, drawings and images, both formal and sketches, should demonstrate a variety of thinking, approaches and media. Sketches are significant in a BAS diploma project and will be given special attention in our exam, as will the social and cultural aspects of the architectural propositions.

EXAMINATION

Each project will be evaluated by an assessor team consisting of one architect residing in Norway, one architect residing outside of Norway, and one artist. One of the diploma coordinators will be present throughout the entire assessment processes of each project. Candidates can ask to have one of their tutors present at the presentation, and as far as possible BAS will try to organize it. The presentation is open for others to attend, unless the candidate asks BAS to have a closed one.

Assessment process:

- Presentation, discussion and evaluation of each project in the exhibition.
- Final evaluation in a closed meeting with assessors, tutors and rector. The final decision is made by the external assessors.
- Right after the final evaluation meeting the candidates will be told if they have passed their exam.
- Public review where a representative from each assessor team will give an account of each project. They will also announce possible distinctions and their motivation. The public review takes place in August on the day of the diploma ceremony. All candidates are present, together with tutors, teachers, other students and rector.
- Public exhibition. All projects are to be part of the one-week public exhibition that opens with the public review.

The diploma exam has the following evaluations: **PASS or FAIL**

Fail means that the candidate must retake the entire diploma semester of 6 months.

The project /topic must be approved by the school before you start your new diploma work. In close dialogue with BAS only, it can be possible to continue on the same topic. The candidate should be aware that this is not always recommended, and BAS does not guarantee for a successful outcome the following year. Diploma is only carried through in the spring term, from 1. January till 30. June.

You will receive feedback from your tutors and coordinators throughout the diploma term. Even if you do not receive a clear recommendation to withdraw or the school does not express a concern, you can still fail the exam which will be conducted by external assessors.

It is important to note that in case of a fail on the exam, the candidate has - according to the Act for Universities and Colleges - the right to appeal the result. The student has 3 weeks to file an appeal, and will then be evaluated again by a new censor group. The same material must be exhibited. There is also a paragraph about formal errors at the exam. <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2005-04-01-15>

Guidelines for appeals can be found in our webpage. www.bas.org

Candidates for the diploma exam at BAS are allowed two attempts to take the exam. A new assessment after an appeal will not count as an attempt. A third attempt may be possible after an application.

After having completed the diploma work with the result PASS, the candidate will have the academic title MASTER IN ARCHITECTURE.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND GRADES

The school demands an engagement in society, and a reflected and critical conception of the architect's tasks and responsibilities. In addition, each project should be evaluated by the following criteria:

- **Knowledge and understanding:** awareness of relevant historical and contextual references, establishment of critical framework and appropriate tools
- **Competence and skills:** the candidate's working methods through independent, systematic and critical reasoning
- **Judgement and approach:** the candidate's attitude and approach towards architecture and the practice of the architect in society

Grades and distinction

At BAS there are only two grades, PASS or FAIL. In addition to passing, assessors can award a project with a distinction for outstanding quality. A Diploma distinction at BAS is not a grade. It is a recognition agreed upon by the external assessors to acknowledge an extraordinary body of work in a chosen assignment. The distinction is beyond pass and fail and should not merely point to a superior project. It should rather applaud the critical/reflective mind-set, the explorative/innovative, in proposals with a high level of commitment and precision in content, method and/or execution.

ILLNESS AND SPECIAL NEEDS

Sick-leave

The diploma is a self-programmed term. BAS provides an offer for tutorials, workshops, seminars etc. The 3 presentations (essay review, review with all tutors and review with externals) are the only things that are mandatory to attend to, but other than that we expect the candidates to be very independent and take responsibility for their own process and end result.

The semester is flexible, and if a candidate gets sick in the period January-May, normally it will be possible to adjust the work and effort to catch up. If a candidate is sick for very long periods of time, the candidate must closely consider to withdraw from the exam before 1. June and to continue next year. This is not counted as an attempt for the exam, and you will not have to pay tuition fee again the next year.

You will have your remaining hours of tutorials transferred to next year.

Facilitation

If you are a student with special needs and will need facilitation during the diploma term or at the exam, you must contact us before 1. December and inform us about this. It is required to have documentation for your diagnosis in order to have facilitation. If you have had a process with this earlier in your study, you nevertheless have to contact adm. to inform and agree upon the needs for facilitation for the upcoming diploma semester.

Postponed examination

If a candidate is unable to work due to serious illness for a longer period after 1. June when the examination period formally begins, the candidate should contact the administration immediately. This is the only reason that could be the reason for a postponed examination, but it will be judged in every case based upon our regulations. [https://lovdata.no/dokument/LTI/forskrift/2013-02-06-362 S](https://lovdata.no/dokument/LTI/forskrift/2013-02-06-362_S)

A proper sick-note from the doctor is required. You must be unable to work for minimum 5 days in this period in order to be considered for a postponed delivery of your project and exam. A postponed examination will take place in August. The new date for delivery of your project will be according to the dates in your sick-note and in close dialogue with the school.