

2026 Special Admission Conditions and Procedures for Master's Programmes

Summary

I. REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Monday 9 March 2026 at 5:00 PM Swiss time.

II. CONDITIONS FOR SPECIAL ADMISSIONS

The HEAD – Genève may, as an exception, waive the requirement for a Bachelor's degree from a university or HES or an equivalent foreign qualification¹ if both of the following conditions are met:

- The candidate is at least 25 years old
- The candidate has at least 7 years of professional experience in the relevant field

III. REQUIREMENTS

Language(s)

Fine Arts – Work.Master	French and English
Fine Arts – CCC	French and English
Fine Arts – TRANSforme	French
Design – Visual Knowledge	French
Design – Design Installation	English
Design – Media Design	English
Design – Fashion and Accessories Design	English
Interior Architecture	English

Language certification is required for candidates whose degree was not obtained in a Francophone or Anglophone institution.

IV. APPLICATION FEE

150 CHF per programme, payable online at the time of application.

1 programme = 150 CHF / 2 programmes = 300 CHF

¹ For admission applications with a Bachelor's degree, please refer to the admission conditions document for Master's programmes available on [admissions website](#).

V. 3 REGISTRATION STEPS

1. Request access to the application form

Submit a request for access to the online application form via the link on the [2026 Admissions](#) page

→ Access codes will be sent to you by email within 24 hours.

2. Complete the application form

Fill in the form with copies of your diplomas and professional experiences, whether completed or in progress (documents to be included in the appendices of the application form : see point VI. below), then proceed with the payment of the application fee.

→ You will immediately receive an email with a link to the Switch platform.

3. Upload your personal file

→ Clicking on the link received gives direct access, without any prior login or registration, to the Switch platform to upload your personal portfolio.

VI. DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT

Each candidate must complete and submit the electronic form, including the following documents as uploaded attachments:

- A text (5,000 to 7,000 characters, including spaces) explaining their approach
- [Summary Table](#) listing all their professional and artistic achievements covering at least 7 full years of professional practice in the relevant field
- Copies of all supporting documents verifying their 7 years of professional and personal accomplishments

VII. PERSONAL FILE TO SUBMIT

1. Curriculum vitae in French or English
2. Letter of motivation (maximum 6,000 characters, including spaces) outlining the applicant's interests in the programme, the intended course of study, and their positioning within the relevant field (see section IV. below for details specific to each programme)
3. Portfolio of personal work

VIII. ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Admission to Master's programmes is a three-round process specific to each programme.

Eligibility check: review of applications from candidates requesting special conditions.

1st round: review and evaluation of the personal portfolio of each applicant deemed eligible for special admission.

2nd round: individual admission interview for candidates selected after the 1st round.

IX. RESULTS

The results of the eligibility check, as well as the first and second rounds of the admissions process, will be published on the application portal created for each applicant at the time of registration ².

The publication dates are listed below.

X. CALENDAR

Monday 17 November 2025	Opening of online registration
Monday 9 March 2026	Deadline for registration (special admission)
Friday 20 March 2026	Announcement of eligibility verification results on the portal
Monday 20 April 2026	Results of the admissions' 1 st round published on the portal
4-8 May 2026	Admissions' 2 nd round interviews
Monday 18 May 2026	Final results of the admissions' 2 nd round published on the portal
Sunday 31 May 2026	Deadline to confirm the offer to join the HEAD – Genève
Tuesday 30 June 2026	Deadline to submit language proficiency certification (if required)

² There will be no communication by post, unless requested in writing.

Detailed Procedure

I. REGISTRATION

All candidates must register online by **Monday 9 March 2026**, at 5:00 PM CEST on the [admissions website](#). Only applications that are fully completed and submitted within the deadline will be considered. **Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.**

→ Each candidate may apply for a maximum of two programmes. Candidates applying to two programmes must participate in the specific competition for each programme. Admission to one programme does not grant access to another.

Three steps for registration

1. Registration is completed online via the [admissions website](#). An access code will be sent by email within 24 hours.

→ Please keep these login credentials, as they will be required to access your application portal.

→ We strongly recommend starting the process several days in advance to ensure your application can be submitted on time. Please keep in mind the time delay between requesting access to the application form and receiving your login codes.

2. The online registration form must be completed by providing your personal information and uploading the required documents giving access to Master's level studies at HEAD – Genève:

→ Documents to be uploaded with the administrative registration form:

- A curriculum vitae and your identification card / passport
- A text (5,000 to 7,000 characters, including spaces) explaining your approach
- The [Summary Table](#) listing all your professional and artistic achievements covering at least 7 full years of professional practice in the relevant field
- The copies of all supporting documents verifying these 7 years of professional and personal accomplishments (studies are not considered as professional experiences)

→ The form concludes with payment of the application fee.

→ Once this step has been validated, you will immediately receive by email, an access code for the Switch platform where you will upload your personal file.

3. The personal file must be uploaded to the Switch platform.

→ The link to the Switch platform will be sent to you by email immediately after the registration form has been validated. Please check your spam/junk folder if you do not receive the email.

→ See **section VI** below for details on the personal file's content.

II. CONDITIONS FOR SPECIAL ADMISSION

The HEAD – Genève may, as an exception, waive the requirement for a Bachelor's degree from a university or HES or an equivalent foreign qualification if both of the following conditions are met :

- The candidate is at least 25 years old at the time of submitting the electronic form
- The candidate has at least 7 years of professional experience in the relevant field. The candidate must provide evidence of their activities through work certificates and/or a portfolio documenting all their artistic or design activities and achievements.

III. REQUIREMENTS

Language (s)

Fine Arts – Work.Master	French and English
Fine Arts – CCC	French and English
Fine Arts – TRANSforme	French
Design – Visual Knowledge	French
Design – Design Installation	English
Design – Media Design	English
Design – Fashion and Accessories Design	English
Interior Architecture	English

French language requirements	English language requirements
Candidates whose high school diploma or Bachelor's degree was not issued by a French-speaking institution must, after admission, submit by 30 June:	Candidates whose high school diploma or Bachelor's degree was not issued by an English-speaking institution must, after admission, submit by 30 June:
a B2-level French language certificate according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) . This certificate must be produced by a language school or other recognized institution.	a B2-level English language certificate according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) . This certificate must be produced by a language school or other recognized institution.
	or a TOEFL test taken no earlier than 1 July 2024, with a minimum score of 72.
	or a IELTS test taken no earlier than 1 July 2024, with a minimum score of 6.
Candidates holding an upper-secondary school diploma of Secondary II level (Maturité) from a German-speaking Swiss canton or from Ticino that includes French as a subject, as well as candidates holding a tertiary-level A qualification (Bachelor's degree or equivalent worth at least 180 ECTS credits) with French as the official language of instruction, are exempt from the requirement to provide this language certificate.	

If the required certification is not submitted by **30 June 2026**, the admission offer will be automatically voided.

IV. APPLICATION FEE

A fee of CHF 150 per programme is required. If applying for two programmes, the fee totals CHF 300.

Applicants may pay the fee online or attach a proof of payment to their online registration form. **This fee remains non-refundable** even if the application is deemed ineligible during the requirements verification stage (see sections II. and III. above).

V. DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT

Each candidate must complete and submit the electronic form, including the following documents as uploaded attachments :

- A text (5,000 to 7,000 characters, including spaces) explaining their approach

In this text, the candidate engages in a reflective and critical examination of their professional journey. They describe their main professional and personal achievements and explain how these can be considered equivalent, in terms of competencies, to a Bachelor's degree that qualifies for admission to the chosen Master's programme. All competencies typically acquired through a Bachelor's degree must be addressed.

In their application, the candidate must differentiate and articulate their achievements and competencies in the following areas:

Creative, Specific, and Practical Competencies

Precisely describe various accomplishments in terms of creative and/or artistic production, explicitly detailing the competencies applied. For each competency, specify how it was exercised using concrete examples. Situate and contextualise these practices within the historical framework of contemporary art or design.

Methodological Competencies

Within the context of professional achievements, describe the work methodologies, investigative approaches, and project development processes employed, and explain the competencies developed as a result. Use concrete examples to illustrate these points.

Social, Personal, and Cultural/Professional Environment Competencies

Provide concrete descriptions of involvement in artistic, cultural, and professional environments, and explain how this engagement is understood. Detail the personal and social competencies utilised in these contexts. Document professional and personal engagements within national and international artistic and cultural communities, including conferences, exhibitions, lectures, references, and cultural events.

If the candidate has undertaken any formal training, they should describe its context and content as relevant to their application for equivalency validation.

- [Summary Table](#) listing all their professional and artistic achievements. Please download the document and complete it.
- Copies of all supporting documents verifying their professional and personal accomplishments (Work certificates, exhibition flyers, attestations, and other reference documents). Studies are not considered as professional experience.

VI. PERSONAL FILE

Each applicant's personal portfolio must be uploaded to the Switch platform by **Monday 9 March 2026**. The link to the Switch platform is sent by email immediately after the registration form is validated. Please make sure to check your spam/junk folder in case the confirmation email is filtered.

The personal file must include the following components:

1. A curriculum vitae in French or English
2. A statement of purpose (maximum 6,000 characters, including spaces) outlining the applicant's interests and motivation for the programme, as well as:

Fine Arts – Work.Master [text in French or English]	the applicant's intellectual and professional positioning within the field of contemporary art
Fine Arts – CCC [text in French or English]	the initial concept of a research project, accompanied by relevant bibliographic and artistic references.
Fine Arts – TRANSforme [text in French]	the description of a collective practice project and fields of action.
Design – Visual Knowledge [text in French]	the proposed study project.
Design – Fashion and Accessories Design Design – Design Installation Design – Media Design [text in English]	the proposed study project.
Interior Architecture [text in English]	the applicant's intellectual and professional positioning within the field of interior architecture, particularly in relation to the contemporary challenges of the discipline.

3. A portfolio of personal works:

The entire personal file must be submitted as a single PDF file, clearly organised and no larger than 50 MB using the template provided [here](#).

[Link](#) to combine PDF files online | [Link](#) to compress a PDF file online

This single PDF file includes textual and visual elements (text, photos, drawings, diagrams, plans, etc.).

Websites, blogs, Tumblr and Instagram must be mentioned in the form of links.

Videos (or extracts), no longer than 10 minutes, must also be provided in the form of YouTube or Vimeo links (with login and password if necessary).

No audio-visual files may be uploaded to the Switch platform.

Candidates who fail to comply with these formal instructions may be disqualified.

Applicants' files are deleted from the platform at the end of the admissions process.

Fine Arts – Work.Master – CCC – TRANSforme	Interior Architecture & Design – Design Installation – Media Design – Fashion and Accessories Design – Visual Knowledge
The portfolio should demonstrate advanced artistic skills. It includes a rich and considered selection of recent work or ongoing projects. As the MA courses are specialised and expert courses, the choice of work included in the portfolio should allow for an understanding of: - the candidate's artistic or professional positioning. - the potential development of the candidate's practice. - the alignment of the candidate's project with the chosen programme. The portfolio may include any type of work deemed relevant to the application: works, research, sketches, drawings, photos, reproductions, digital productions, videos, publications, documentation of artistic experience, references, research experience, or curatorial activities.	The portfolio should demonstrate advanced design skills. It includes a rich and thoughtful selection of recent work or ongoing projects. The selection of work included in the portfolio should provide an understanding of the candidate's professional positioning or research and potential for development. The portfolio may include any type of work deemed relevant to the application: research, sketches, drawings, photographs, reproductions, plans, publications, digital productions, videos, documentation of design activities, or research experiences.

VII. ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Admission to Master's programmes is a three-round process: following the verification of candidate eligibility, a two-stage selection process is conducted. The competition is specific to each programme.

Eligibility check

An eligibility committee reviews the applications of candidates requesting special conditions. The HEAD – Genève Directorate will issue its decision by **20 March 2026**.

1st round

The 1st round involves the review and evaluation of the candidate's personal file by a panel of academic staff.

Evaluation criteria – 1st round

In the 1st round, applicants' personal files are assessed based on the following criteria:

1. Relevance of know-how to the field of the intended course – judged on the basis of the portfolio
2. Motivation – assessed on the basis of the text setting out the applicant's motivations and training project
3. Ability to articulate clear and coherent thought in the field concerned – judged based on the text setting out intellectual and professional positioning
4. Alignment of the artistic/design development with the level of the intended course – assessed on the basis of the dossier as a whole

Criterion 4 is of a general nature and is designed to identify applicants who are insufficiently prepared or overqualified for the intended course.

Publication of results (selection)

Candidates will be notified by email **during the second half of April 2026** that a 1st round decision has been published on their application portal.

→ Successful candidates will receive an email invitation to the interview in the following days.

2nd round

The 2nd round consists of an individual admission interview for candidates selected from the 1st round, with invitations sent via email.

Admissions interviews take place **from Monday 4 to Friday 8 May 2026**.

Fine Arts – Work.Master	Interview in French or English, at the applicant's choice
Fine Arts – CCC	Interview in French or English, at the applicant's choice
Fine Arts – TRANSforme	Interview in French
Design – Visual Knowledge	Interview in French
Design – Design Installation	Interview in English
Design – Media Design	Interview in English
Design – Fashion and Accessories Design	Interview in English
Interior Architecture	Interview in English

→ These interviews must take place at HEAD – Genève for all candidates whose address is in Switzerland or in the Rhône-Alpes region (unless force majeure applies). Other candidates may choose between an in-person interview at HEAD – Genève and an interview by videoconference. This choice must be specified during registration and cannot be changed, except in cases of force majeure.

Candidates are expected to begin the interview with a presentation of approximately 8 minutes, in which they give an overview of their work and present their training project. In particular, applicants must explain:

Fine Arts – Work.Master Fine Arts – TRANSforme	a clearly articulated artistic and/or research project
Fine Arts – CCC	a clearly articulated research project
Interior Architecture Design – Visual Knowledge Design – Fashion and Accessories Design Design – Design Installation Design – Media Design	a clearly articulated design and/or research project

Evaluation criteria – 2nd round

During the interview, which is the 2nd round of the process, applications are assessed on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Creative skills: aesthetic uniqueness, mastery of the skills and techniques of the field of the intended course, ability to conduct an experimental and multidisciplinary approach, dialogue between the practice and its social, economic, political, and cultural context
2. Reflective and conceptual skills: knowledge of the history and issues of the field of the intended course, ability to articulate a coherent thought process, reflective and critical stance on the artistic / design work
3. Profile and motivation: degree of development of the training project, determination to commit to the chosen field, ability to listen and engage in dialogue

Publication of results (admissions)

On **18 May 2026**, the final results of the 2nd round of the admissions process will be published on the application portal. Applicants will be notified by email that the results have been posted to the application portal.

VIII. RESULTS

The results of the various stages of the admissions process are published on the application portal.

→ Access to the portal is available via this link: <https://age.hes-so.ch/> > **Login Local** using the same credentials provided during registration. **It is advised to keep the initial email with these details.**

Admission decisions for both the 1st and 2nd rounds of the selection process will be communicated exclusively via the application portal. No decisions will be sent by email or telephone.

→ Only an email notifying you that a decision has been published on the application portal will be sent to the email address provided during your registration³.

→ Candidates wishing to receive admission decisions by post must send an email to admission.head@hesge.ch with the subject line "Admission Response", including the postal address where results should be sent.

Successful candidates must confirm their enrolment at HEAD – Genève by **31 May 2026**.

→ Admissions are valid only for the 2026-2027 academic year and cannot be postponed.

→ Final admission to HEAD – Genève is contingent upon obtaining the required proof of proficiency in English or French, if applicable (see section III. above).

IX. CALENDAR

Monday 17 November 2025	Opening of online registration
Monday 9 March 2026	Deadline for registration (special admission)
Friday 20 March 2026	Announcement of eligibility verification results on the portal
Monday 20 April 2026	Results of the admissions' 1 st round published on the portal > If unsuccessful: the process ends for the current year. > If successful: candidates will receive by email a date and time for their 2 nd round interview
4-8 May 2026	Admissions' 2 nd round interviews
Monday 18 May 2026	Final results of the admissions' 2 nd round published on the portal > If unsuccessful: the process ends for the current year. > If "on the waiting list": candidates will be contacted between 1 June and 31 August 2026 if a spot becomes available > If successful: admission is confirmed for the 2026-2027 academic year
Sunday 31 May 2026	Deadline to confirm the offer to join the HEAD – Genève
Tuesday 30 June 2026	Deadline to submit language proficiency certification (if required)

³ There will be no communication by post, unless requested in writing.