VISUAL MERCHANDISING ARTS (VMA)

About the Program

Do you have a flair for creativity and a passion for design? Seneca Polytechnic's two-year Visual Merchandising Arts diploma program gives you hands-on expertise in fashion styling, digital design and retail and display methodologies, all while emphasizing sustainable practices.

Grounded in the fundamental principles of design, styling and visual merchandising, this program is uniquely tailored to equip graduates with a comprehensive skill set that exceeds industry standards. It will prepare you for a dynamic career that thrives on creativity and innovation. In addition, an 80-hour field placement provides an opportunity for you to gain real-world experience, expand your portfolio and network with seasoned industry professionals.

Credential Awarded

Ontario College Diploma

Duration

4 Semesters (2 Years)

Starts

September

Program and Course Delivery

This program is offered in Seneca's hybrid delivery format with some courses available in Seneca's flexible delivery format. Some coursework is online and some must be completed in person. Students will need to come on campus to complete in-person learning requirements. For courses offered in the flexible delivery format, professors use innovative learning spaces and technology to teach students in a classroom or lab and broadcast in real time to students attending remotely. In flexible courses, students have the choice of coming on campus or learning online.

Skills

Throughout this program you will develop the following skills:

- presenting and co-ordinating merchandise
- making financial decisions
- working with a wide variety of materials to solve design problems
- constructing promotional displays and advertising
- photographing displays and advertising
- understanding retail store operations
- preparing and executing displays for exhibitions and promotional events
- creating illustrations and layout for advertising
- using written and oral English that emphasizes good organization, clarity and correct grammar for communication in a business environment

Work Experience
Field Placement

The 80-hour field placement offers an opportunity to make connections and expand your network with our industry partners. In addition, it will provide you with hands-on experience in a range of settings. You could be working in retail visual merchandising, assisting as a fashion stylist or collaborating with visual designers on seasonal projects such as the Santa Claus Parade. In the past, students have worked with partners such as Saks Fifth Avenue, Holt Renfrew and Fashion Art Toronto. This pivotal work placement is designed to furnish you with essential job skills, enhancing your employment prospects when you successfully complete the program.

Your Career

Graduates of the program can explore the following career options:

- visual merchandiser
- exhibit design specialist
- brand expert
- fashion, interior or prop stylist
- in-store merchandiser
- retail marketer
- prop producer
- freelance designer
- home staging assistant
- special event designer

Program of Study

Course Code	Course Name	Weekly Hours
Semester 1		
COM101	Communicating Across Contexts	3
or COM111	Communicating Across Contexts (Enriched)	
DDV133	Technical and Digital Design	4
DSG133	Design Fundamentals	3
DSP131	Display Basics	3
FSH330	Style and Trends	3
NBS100	Brand Strategies	3
Semester 2		
DSP232	Product Display and Showcases	4
FPS436	Personal Branding	4
FSM232	Materials and Prop Construction	4
FSM236	Fashion Styling	3
NCP200	Creative Presentations	3
plus: General Education Course (1)		3
Semester 3		
DDV301	Digital Layout and Planogramming	4
DSP333	Concept Design and Installation	5
FSM334	Prop Design and Build	3
NSM300	Social Media and Portfolios	3
PSD335	Photostyling	3
plus: General Education Course (1)		3
Semester 4		
DDV401	Capstone Design Concept	3

DSP435	Design Activations	6
NLS410	Live Styling	3
NST400	Beyond Storefronts	3
plus: General Education Course (1)		3

Program Learning Outcomes

This Seneca program has been validated by the Credential Validation Service as an Ontario College Credential as required by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

As a graduate, you will be prepared to reliably demonstrate the ability to:

- Display coordinated merchandise with effective styling techniques to promote sales.
- Explain the creation of ideas and the process for executing them, visually, verbally and in writing.
- Apply sound practices in financial decision making to optimize visual display budgets.
- Design and build props and backgrounds using a wide variety of materials to enhance displays.
- Create promotional displays using design principles, colour theories and light to enhance retail sales.
- Document design concepts, processes and results for individual and group presentation.
- Utilize art history and contextual influences to incorporate themes and trends into contemporary displays.
- Differentiate retail markets to recommend merchandising strategies within the store environment.
- Develop a career strategy with marketing collateral in order to promote oneself within industry.
- Apply a reflective design process that incorporates research and analysis to resolve design problems.

Admission Requirements

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), or equivalent, or a mature applicant (https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html)
- English: Grade 12 C or U, or equivalent course

Canadian citizens and permanent residents may satisfy the English requirements for this program through successful Seneca pre-admission testing. (https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/mature-applicants.html)

Recommended upgrading for applicants who do not meet academic subject requirements. (https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/registrar/canadian-applicants/admission-requirements/upgrading-options.html)

Notes

Although not required for admission, completion of a grade 11 or 12 art course is recommended for your success in the program.

International Student Information

International admissions requirements vary by program and in addition to English requirements (https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/international/apply/how-to-apply/admission-requirements/english-requirements.html), programs may require credits in mathematics, biology, and chemistry at a level equivalent to Ontario's curriculum, or a postsecondary degree or diploma, equivalent to an Ontario university or college. Program-specific pre-requisite courses and credentials are listed with the admission requirements on each program page. To review the academic requirements please visit: Academic Requirements - Seneca, Toronto, Canada (senecapolytechnic.ca) (https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/international/apply/how-to-apply/admission-requirements/academic-requirements.html).

Pathways

As a leader in academic pathways, we offer a range of options that will allow you to take your credential further in another Seneca program or a program at a partner institution.

To learn more about your eligibility, visit the Academic Pathways (https://www.senecapolytechnic.ca/pathways.html) web page.