

Programme specification

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	Masters: Masters in Fine Art (MFA), Incorporating Masters of Arts (MA) Fine Art, Painting, Drawing, Printmaking and Illustration
Teaching Institution	Plymouth College of Art
Awarding Institution	Plymouth College of Art
Date of latest validation	April 2016
Next revalidation	
Credit points for the award	180 MA; 300 MFA
UCAS Code	n/a
Programme start date	September 2016
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	Masters Business & Management
Professional/statutory recognition	Not applicable
Duration of the programme for each mode of study (P/T, FT,DL)	Full MFA: 21 months full time; 42 months part time MA: 1 year full-time; 2 years part-time MFA: 9 months full time; 18 months part time
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	Not applicable
Date of production/revision of this specification	March 2016
External Examiner	Judith Stewart Lecturer MA Arts & Cultural Management Sheffield Hallam University

2. Programme aims and objectives

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

For all Masters programmes:

1. To equip students with a value set that encourages continuous professional development, self-direction and originality, that enables positive contribution to business and society at large.
2. To place practice within the dynamically changing context of the contemporary art, design and media world.
3. To promote critical thinking and communication of critical thought at an advanced level.
4. To enable the development of students' critical self-awareness and ability to identify and address strengths and weaknesses.
5. To facilitate a forum for trans, inter, multi-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary discourse, enquiry and collaboration at an advanced level (see Appendix 3).
6. To support students with an ethical and philosophical framework that enables them to deal with, and contribute to, changing complex contemporary social, cultural, environmental, economic and local/global issues.
7. To encourage students to look beyond the locus of their current practice, in order to imagine and extend their 'ways of knowing' and potential to frame, recognise and exploit opportunities.
8. To enable students to utilise and build upon appropriate new and prior experience.
9. To provide a context for the development of independent, theoretically informed and innovative practice, through student-led research.
10. To enable development of high standards in technique and creativity.
11. To demand intellectual rigour in terms of pace and depth of research, planning and practices.

Additionally for MFA:

12. To produce and disseminate a substantial body of work in an appropriate professional context.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

This award forms a progression opportunity from the College's group of undergraduate awards for students.

BA (Hons) programmes including Extended Degree (successful completion allows guaranteed progression to linked BA (Hons) programmes). It is anticipated that students will come from a wide range of undergraduate programmes at PCA however the most obvious progression routes are from:

BA (Hons) Painting Drawing and Printmaking

BA (Hons) Fine Art

BA (Hons) Illustration

In order to attract students of all ages within the widening participation agenda, applicants are assessed for Accredited Prior Learning (APL) and Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) in order to ascertain whether their overall academic and professional learning experiences equip them for studying at postgraduate level, Level 7.

It is hoped that most students will be enrolled directly on to either an MA programme or on to the MFA, however it will also be possible for individuals who have achieved an MA elsewhere and who have a compelling and relevant MFA project to be able to apply for a place and enrol on the MFA, completing 120 credits.

3. Programme outcomes

3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/assessment methods – across all levels
<p>Award specific attributes for all Masters programme including Certificate, Diploma, MA and MFA</p> <p>Students will be able to demonstrate:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An extensive knowledge of current critical theory including an understanding of the underlying structures (e.g. philosophical, ethical, ontological, epistemological and methodological), with particular reference to their discipline. 2. A comprehensive understanding of the current debates, issues and ideologies of their chosen discipline. 3. An ability to apply appropriate advanced research and knowledge to the chosen creative industry practice or discipline. 4. An in-depth knowledge of the ethical, professional, social, institutional, environmental and economic factors which constrain and/or inform enterprise and practice decisions. 5. The further specialisation of art, design and media creative curatorial and enterprise practices as relevant to their personal creative practice. 6. A knowledge and understanding about the contemporary Intellectual Property landscape and specific issues in relation to their creative practice or enterprise. <p>Additionally for MFA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. An ability to corroborate appropriate methodologies and critical engagement with the ethical, economical, cultural, social and other constraints operating in the particular professional context for the discipline. 	<p>Learning & Teaching strategy</p> <p>The academic and industry skills agenda Module Delivery Module Assignments Peer Interaction, Independent Learning and Private Study-time Statements of Expectation</p> <p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Formative Tutor Assessment Formative Peer Assessment Summative Assessment Module Assignments Group Work (supporting peer interaction) Statements of Expectation and Professional Development Plans</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/assessment methods – across all levels
<p>Award specific attributes for all Masters programme including Certificate, Diploma, MA and MFA</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse and critically evaluate current research, practice and debate. 2. Identify and select management tools and theories appropriate to their chosen field. 3. Analyse, critically evaluate and articulate their work in the wider contexts of historical and contemporary practice and discourse. Using this knowledge in the development of their practice. 4. Interpret and analyse encounters between ideas, concepts and material processes and outcomes. <p>Additionally for MFA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Plan and negotiate additional relevant learning outcomes. 	<p>Learning & Teaching strategy</p> <p>The academic and industry skills agenda</p> <p>Module Delivery</p> <p>Module Assignments</p> <p>Peer Interaction, Independent Learning and Private Study-time</p> <p>Statements of Expectation</p> <p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Formative Tutor Assessment</p> <p>Formative Peer Assessment</p> <p>Summative Assessment</p> <p>Module Assignments</p> <p>Group Work (supporting peer interaction)</p> <p>Statements of Expectation and Professional Development Plans</p>

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/assessment methods – across all levels
<p>Award specific attributes for all Masters programme including Certificate, Diploma, MA and MFA</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clearly present complex ideas and concepts as appropriate for their discipline and/or their business/practice. 2. Apply advanced research skills appropriately to chosen ideas, concepts and areas of business, art, design and media practice. 3. Demonstrate an advanced and appropriate technical competence in the choice and use of media, material and processes. 4. Analyse and clearly articulate the links between creative intentions, materials process and forms of presentation. 5. Manage information and write informative and insightful reports. 6. Work independently and organise own work efficiently and effectively. 7. Recognise and respond to the diversity of contemporary Creative and Cultural Industries practice and synthesise this with new skills to work effectively in the sector as an independent practitioner or within a project management capacity. 8. Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the ethical, professional, social, institutional, environmental and economic factors, which constrain and/or inform their practice. 9. Identify and select appropriate planning and project management tools and theories appropriate to their chosen field. 10. Demonstrate a competence around Intellectual Property issues in relation to their creative practice or enterprise. 11. Manage their own creative curatorial practices and be able to apply appropriate creative research, problem-solving, project management and entrepreneurial skills to successfully achieve this practice. <p>Additionally for MFA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Research and select relevant and critical creative communities, galleries or businesses relevant to the professional realisation of individual practice. 13. Realise and professionally present a significant body of work worthy of publication and dissemination. 	<p>Learning & Teaching strategy</p> <p>The academic and industry skills agenda Module Delivery Module Assignments Peer Interaction, Independent Learning and Private Study-time Statements of Expectation</p> <p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Formative Tutor Assessment Formative Peer Assessment Formative Employer/External Partner Assessment Summative Assessment Module Assignments Group Work (supporting peer interaction) Statements of Expectation and Professional Development Plans</p>

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods – across all levels
<p>Award specific attributes for all Masters programme including Certificate, Diploma, MA and MFA</p> <p>Students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a range of generally transferable intellectual study skills including research methodologies, report writing and the use of relevant ICT. 2. Work effectively as part of a team or collective by applying appropriate participatory approaches, methods and techniques and by including effective project planning, delegation and leadership roles. 3. Demonstrate highly developed visual and oral presentation and communication skills in the presentation of complex ideas and concepts. 4. Demonstrate thorough understanding of good practice in relation to health and safety. 5. Demonstrate a flexible approach to problem solving skills, to exercise initiative, personal responsibility and accountability. 6. Independently use information and knowledge effectively, scanning and organising data, analysing and synthesising in order to abstract meaning from information and communicating this knowledge. 7. Demonstrate professionalism including flexibility and self direction in responding to changing situations and needs. 8. Demonstrate collaborative and professional practice in the realisation of business, art, design and media outcomes. 9. Demonstrate their ethical position in terms of their personal, creative and professional practices. 10. Demonstrate their ability to enable transformative change, in themselves, others and wider societal agendas. 11. Be critically and contextually self-aware, undertaking project needs assessments in relation to the practical, conceptual, theoretical, ethical and project management skills required to achieve their plans and projects. <p>Additionally for MFA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Confirm independent practice with originality and critical self awareness, informed by effective negotiation and affiliation with external partners. 	<p>Learning & Teaching strategy</p> <p>The academic and industry skills agenda Module Delivery Module Assignments Peer Interaction, Independent Learning and Private Study-time Statements of Expectation</p> <p>Assessment strategy</p> <p>Formative Tutor Assessment Formative Peer Assessment Formative Employer/External Partner Assessment Summative Assessment Module Assignments Group Work (supporting peer interaction) Statements of Expectation and Professional Development Plans</p>

4. Programme Structure

Year 1/level 7			
Full-Time	Teaching block 1	Teaching block 2	Teaching block 3
	101 - 60 Credits	201 - 60 Credits	301 - 60 Credits
Year 1/level 7			
Part-time year 1	Teaching block 1	Teaching block 2	Teaching block 3
	101 - 60 Credits		201 - 60 Credits
Year 2/level 7			
Part-time year 2	Teaching block 1	Teaching block 2	Teaching block 3
	201 - 60 Credits	301 - 60 Credits	

Year 1/level 7			
Part-time year 1	Teaching block 1	Teaching block 2	Teaching block 3
	401 - 120 Credits (October -July)		
Year 2/level 7 (2019-20)			
Part-time year 2	Teaching block 1	Teaching block 2	Teaching block 3
	401 - 120 Credits (October -July)		

5. Distinctive features of the programme structure

The distinctive features of the MFA programme and the MA programmes sitting under it orientate around the discursive, inter-disciplinary and pro-active combination of generic delivery integrated with the programme specific. This structure has been informed by experiences on the existing MAs in Entrepreneurship for Creative Practice, Contemporary Crafts, Photography, Critical Curatorial Practices and Creative Practices for Sustainability, where a broad demographic in terms of academic and professional expertise and subject disciplines is found in the diverse creative practitioner communities of the Creative and Cultural Industries. This has specifically been driven by the need to:

Covered in Module 101

- Refresh, enliven and embed key research skills and capability.
- Give licence to experiment and go beyond normal/comfortable modes of practice.
- Give an inter-disciplinary introduction to the programme specific subject areas.

Covered in Module 201

- Encourage students to explore within and/or beyond their subject areas.
- Encourage students to contextualise, frame and implement their work in relation to a 'live' project within or beyond the Creative and Cultural Industries, thereby providing an environment within which to rigorously test and apply their academic, practice and management skills.
- Deepen students' knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, practical and professional skills in their specific subject area(s) in order to maximise their key/transferable skills and to develop an outline proposal for a Final MA Project.

Covered in Module 301

- Ensure that students' personal and professional journeys equip and offer an opportunity to transform themselves and their practice in order to strengthen their opportunities for employment within or beyond the Creative and Cultural Industries.

Covered in Module 401

- Encourage students to produce a substantial body of M level work which is completed to a professional standard, is exhibited in an appropriate external context and is mirroring the students chosen professional field, including marketing, reviews, catalogue etc.

The programme structure allows high transference of inter-disciplinary practice and perspectives in the modules (101, 201, 301 MA) and (401 MFA) that will generate a healthy environment of knowledge transfer between disciplines, encourage fruitful hybridisation of disciplines and stimulate solo and collaborative practice, the latter being a key feature of today's Creative and Cultural Industries.

All students have a choice of two pathways in Module 301 Final Major Project:

1. Practice-based work supported by a critical written report.
2. Research culminating in a written dissertation, 15000-20000 words.

The overarching ambition, ethos and philosophy of these Masters programmes is to transform and activate postgraduate students so they themselves become transformative change agents in their chosen field(s).

Annex 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering and assessing particular programme learning outcomes.

Knowledge and Understanding

Module	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7
PGxx101			√			√	
PGxx201				√	√		
PGxx301	√	√					
PGxx401	√						√

Cognitive Skills

Module	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
PGxx101	√			√	
PGxx201		√		√	
PGxx301			√		
PGxx401			√		√

Practical and professional skills

Module	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	C13
PGxx101	√	√						√		√			
PGxx201					√	√							
PGxx301			√	√			√		√				
PGxx401			√	√							√	√	√

Key/transferable skills

Module	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12
PGxx101	√			√								
PGxx201		√			√	√		√	√			
PGxx301			√				√			√	√	
PGxx401			√				√				√	√

Annex 2

Masters Programmes – Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

The Learning and Teaching strategy developed for the MFA, MA, Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma has been designed to address the needs for a project-led programme that incorporates significant elements of critical cultural study, and/or sustainability study, and/or practical business management and entrepreneurial, industry focused knowledge. Creative practice development is seen as synergistic to these key needs by engaging the student in the acquisition of a range of creative, intellectual and professional practice related practical skills.

As the programme progresses, we increasingly expect students to be testing themselves and what they've learned by operating as practitioners. As part of this *modus-operandi* the students themselves are encouraged to play an active role in ensuring that their newly developed knowledge, including that derived from taught sessions, research, project-based initiatives, internship and work-related experiences, is relevant to their practice needs and future career aspirations. The programme assists them in this requirement to continually reflect on the inter-relationship between aspiration, course content and practice, through a variety of methods and requirements; for example, Statements of Expectations, PDP's, written proposals and assignments, collaborative work, presentations, tutorials and critiques, etc.(see list below)

It is intended that professional practitioners and potential employers will take part in the design, delivery and Formative Assessments (see below) alongside College academic staff.

Module Delivery:

The modules will be delivered in two distinct ways. Generic elements of modules involving core research skills and other shared elements will be delivered through a combination of whole group taught lectures, group workshops, small projects, presentations and seminars, resulting in students applying this knowledge to their field of practice. The core curricula areas will be supplemented by programme specific modules which will, again, employ a similar range of methods, including lectures, seminars, workshops, projects and presentations.

Both theoretical and practice-based elements will initially be taught through lectures and workshops to underpin the essential masters level research, contextualisation, reflection, analysis and synthesis skills, but will increasingly become more student-led with the cohort expected to facilitate seminars, presentations, conferences, exhibitions and discussions around topics and themes relevant to their evolving practice.

Of particular value at postgraduate level within multi-disciplinary practitioners is the peer-to-peer discussion, knowledge exchange and critique, which we refer to as 'mutual learning'. This type of learning is encouraged throughout the life of the programme. See below – 'peer interaction'.

Across the whole Programme, delivery will be in the form of lectures; seminars; group/individual tutorials; set and individually tailored reading; group critiques and discussions; workshop demonstrations; the production of research essays; the giving of presentations, the concise communication of concepts and practice outputs, exhibitions and other appropriate teaching and learning approaches.

The whole Programme will be underpinned by the core sessions that further embed advanced research skills and appropriate postgraduate study skills. These sessions will be delivered in workshops, seminars, tutorials and online through the College's VLE. Other online resources are used as appropriate to reinforce skill building, meeting Learning Outcomes and building networking skills, such as wikis, nings, web sites and blogs.

Module Assignments:

Assignments, of varying length, are the main platforms for structured learning in both practice and theory within all modules. Either individual or group-based, they are designed to develop appropriate skills and knowledge as specified in the module descriptors. Assignment supporting documentation will include, as appropriate: guidance notes (including notes on literature searching/web searching); research and information resources (print and web-based, and handouts); and Health & Safety information. Reflecting the level and student-orientated focus, many assignments will invite varying responses and levels of interpretation, as they require students to react in relation to their practice needs.

Peer Interaction, Independent Learning and Private Study-time:

Students need independent time to develop, deploy, reflect upon and consolidate knowledge structures. Similarly, inter-student interaction to discuss and negotiate ideas and methods is a compelling way of learning – referred to above as 'mutual learning'. For these reasons peer interaction, independent learning and private study-time are all considered key components in the learning strategy and are reflected throughout the Programme - from the overall structuring of the Programme Levels, through individual modules, to specific assignments which direct and establish outcomes that lend structure to these activities on a daily basis. Students will also be expected to continue these discussions through setting up and running seminars, utilising group online forums and by inviting specific speakers and visiting artists to make presentations on topics relevant to common themes.

Statements of Expectations and PDPs:

Critical reflection and self-evaluation are essential elements of these Masters level programmes, thus encouraging and enabling the selection of, and discrimination between, appropriate actions and outcomes. For this reason critical reflection and self-evaluation are embedded across the programme.

PDPs and Statements of Expectations are used throughout the postgraduate programme as they enable the student and supervisor/tutor to negotiate modes of working and outcomes that both satisfy the learning outcomes whilst challenging and supporting the students developing practice. At the end of each assignment students will be asked to reflect on their learning, examine what has been achieved to date and to look to the next module and the future to identify ongoing issues and development needs.

Assessment strategy

Assessment is entirely by coursework and relates directly to the intended learning outcomes as stated in the definitive module records and assignments. It is the College's intention that assessment should not merely be the submission of finished work for grading but an active learning opportunity. Additionally in this Programme it is vital that the work required supports the individual's practice and development needs.

Formative Tutor Assessment:

Extensive use is made of formative assessment and feedback to support student progress and evaluate knowledge and understanding throughout the Programme. All the activities identified under 'Module Delivery' in the Teaching and Learning Strategy (see above) constitute formats for providing formative feedback, as do the PDP's and Statements of Expectations. Formative Assessments at the half-way point in assignments prove invaluable to students' understanding of their progress and things to address for the Summative Assessment – this is achieved by tutors and peers providing verbal and written feedback to oral presentations by students of their work.

Formative Peer Assessment

Peer assessment requires the student to place themselves in the role of the assessor and make judgments, based on the assessment criteria, about the strength and validity of their own and others' work. It not only helps the student to develop more than just a surface understanding of others' work and develops critical and evaluative skills it also helps to foster a supportively critical studio/workshop environment.

Peer assessment usually takes place in group critiques. The assessment is structured around discussion followed by anonymously completed peer assessment feedback sheets. These written sheets are collected by the tutor and are either copied directly to the students or useful comments are collated by the tutor for feedback to the student in tutorials.

Formative Employer Assessment

During and at the conclusion of external collaborative projects, internships and work-related learning, formative feedback will be sought and submitted alongside the other work required to inform the summative assessment. Where possible with external collaborative projects, internships and network development, these external contacts, partners and employers may be asked to be part of the summative assessment process. However final summative assessment decisions and grades will be made entirely by the supervisor/tutors and assessors.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment generally takes place upon completion of a module assignment and includes the assessing and grading of the outcomes. These outcomes will include: research and preparatory work, production artefacts, group work (where this forms an important and necessary part of the Assignment),

structured verbal discourses, presentations, seminars, conferences, essays and reports. For practical assignments the usual model will be presentation to at least two tutors and in a group critique situation. Summative assessment decisions and grades are made entirely by the supervisor/tutor assessors.

The Academic & Industry Skills Agenda:

Clear notes on assessment protocol, supported by pre-assessment verbal briefings, will be provided for external practitioners, collaborators and potential employers, where they are involved in the formative assessment of assignments.

Module Assignments:

Information relating to the requirements for presentation of completed assignment work and its assessment will be specified within each assignment. It will include a description of the assessment protocol for group work where such work forms an important and necessary part of the assignment.

Group Work (supporting peer interaction):

Where group work forms an important and necessary part of an assignment the performance of the group will be an element within the summative assessment of that assignment. However, students will be expected to keep thorough records and critical reflections on their own and their peers activities and performance, which will be used to define individual's grades.

PDPs, Statements of Expectations and Reflective Learning Logs:

As the Programme progresses, the outcomes of the assignments developed to meet modules aims will increasingly be negotiated between the supervisors and the student using a PDP and Statements of Expectations. This will ensure that students are actively pursuing research in areas that directly support their practice whilst meeting the stated learning outcomes in each assignment.