ual: london college
of communication

MA User Experience Design

Programme Specification 2022/23

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	London College of Communication
School	University of the Arts London
Programme	LCC Interaction Design and Visual Communications (L063)
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Full Time
Duration of Course	1 year
Valid From	September 1st 2022
Course Entry Requirements	The course team welcomes applications from open and inquiring minds of all kinds. Applicants interested in deepening their practice to include user research and in pursuing further study as a way of developing a valuable professional qualification. Students open to learning in a new collaborative and critical way, eager to ground their work in real-world research and be willing to take creative risks and make mistakes along the way. Applicants will have a portfolio of digital design work that demonstrates awareness of the creative and critical aspects of UX design and may also be returning from adjacent careers in the design industry such as graphic design, information design or interaction design. The course attracts applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, from all over the world, from an Honours degree course in a subject such as: • Graphic Design • Interaction Design • Interactive Media Design • Web Design • Communication Design • Computer Science • Digital Design • Product Design • Anthropology

- Sociology
- Or those with other, equivalent qualifications.

The course team also welcomes students with relevant experience or those who may have previously worked in the industry, or non-traditional backgrounds, as well as those already within employment. The course has been designed to accommodate flexibility in educational engagement. Your experience is assessed as a learning process and tutors will evaluate that experience for currency, validity, quality and sufficiency.

The educational level may be demonstrated by:

- Honours degree (named above);
- Possession of equivalent qualifications;
- Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required.

APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning)

Applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered in exceptional cases. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:

- Related academic or work experience
- The quality of the personal statement
- A strong academic or other professional reference
- OR a combination of these factors

Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.

Language Requirements (International/EU)

All classes are conducted in English. If English is not your first language, we strongly recommend you let us know your English language test score in your application. If you have booked a test or are awaiting your results, please indicate

	this in your application. When asked to upload a CV as part of your application, please include any information about your English test score. • IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent), with 6.0 in each of the four skills. • If your first language is not English, you can check you have achieved the correct IELTS level in English on the Language Requirements page. • For further details regarding international admissions and advice please visit the International Applications page.
Selection Criteria	Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate: • Sufficient prior knowledge and experience of and/or potential in a specialist subject area to be able to successfully complete the programme of study and have an academic or professional background in a relevant subject. • Critical knowledge of and enthusiasm for the subject area and capacity for research-led design, intellectual inquiry and reflective thought through: contextual awareness (professional, cultural, social, historical); evidence of research, analysis, development and evaluation (from previous academic study and employment) and a grounded understanding of the world of sonic, visual and networked culture and be able to engage in and contribute to critical discussion. • In the project proposal a description of the area of interest, field of study and the particular focus of their intended project. This should include an overview of how you intend to go about producing the project and the methodology. • The portfolio should be conceptual and research-based, you must show your thinking and making process and a curious nature to explore, test and experiment. • A willingness to work in the physical realm with networked digital systems and in areas of design research and practice that challenges preconceptions.

	- A willingness to work with networked digital systems and an awareness of how they shape the varied contexts of human behaviour. - Also to show a willingness to work as a team player, good language skills in reading, writing and speaking, the ability to work independently and be self-motivated.
Scheduled Learning and Teaching	Following two years of disruption due to Covid 19 we are glad to be returning to normal delivery in 2022/23. This means on campus face-to-face activities such as course projects, lectures, seminars, and studio work, except for courses designed to be delivered online. Scheduled learning and teaching activity may include lectures, seminars, studio and workshop briefings, tutorials, external visits and project briefings.

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)	60
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)	120
Master of Arts	180

Scheduled Learning Split by Level	
Level 7	17%
Total Scheduled Learning Split	**17%**

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Frame user experience design as an integrative discipline incorporating graphic, interaction and spatial design.
Aim	Develop your critical voice with reference to foundational ideas and theories of user experience design and contribute to the development of the field.
Aim	Position ethical and responsible user experience design as a basis for advanced practice as the discipline develops.
Aim	Enable advanced experimental design explorations that prioritise awareness of human contexts and situations in a rapidly changing technological, material and social environment
Aim	Foster collegiate and collaborative working at all stages of the user experience design journey with a view to lasting interdisciplinary understanding
Aim	Prepare you for an interdisciplinary creative career in the user experience design industry and/or further study at PhD level.
Outcome	Produce innovative user experience design projects within the integrative discipline of user experience design (Enquiry, Knowledge, Realisation, Communication, Process)
Outcome	Develop research-oriented design projects that synthesise research methods and creative processes into advanced design projects (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Realisation, Communication)
Outcome	Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical responsibilities of user experience designers in the context of digital technologies, their waste impact, and the wider social and political and material consequences of design. (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process and Realisation)
Outcome	Make use of relevant tools, techniques, media and processes to communicate complex user experience design ideas. (Enquiry, Process, Realisation)
Outcome	Work collaboratively towards common aims along the user experience design journey (Process and Realisation)

	Distinctive Features
1	Industry Engaged: This MA is highly engaged with UX industry practice and the future of the UX industries. The unit structure develops both a professional understanding of the research and prototyping workflows that deliver UX design in a professional context and develops a critical framework required to understand and craft digital experiences for users. You will benefit from UX briefs, studio visits and partnerships with leading London UX industry professionals and studios. you will be encouraged to produce outcomes that step outside the walls of the college, situating UX design work in the 'real world' and accounting for the complexity and integration of interactive systems used by a wide range of people. This facilitates the construction of networks and creative partnerships beyond LCC and develops student abilities to build their creative practices, projects and design studios after graduation. A key aspect of this is the emphasis on collaborative working throughout the course which enables the development of a core professional skill.
2	Design Led UX: Building on LCC's history in graphic and communication design, MA UX Design offers a digitally oriented pedagogy that respects the foundational principles of information design and typography alongside the specialist digital skills of UX design. MA UX is a distinctive offer in prioritising design as process, cultural form, professional discipline, and critical tool.
3	Digital Prototyping and Critical Context: Key to building the competency of a UX designer is a working understanding of a range of UX and emergent prototyping tools. You will be participating in practical sessions such as animation, projection mapping, physical computing and familiarising yourself with the latest software.
4	UX Design Studio In the second term of MA UX Design is where you start to apply your thinking across a choice of broad conceptual areas. These include; UX for data visualisation, UX for social transformation, and UX for human-robot relationships. UX Design Studio also offers the chance to position UX design as a cultural force and a creatively dynamic discipline. Collaborative practices are fundamental to UX Design and you are encouraged to use UX Studio to explore how they wish to work with other both inside and outside the student cohort.
5	Research: You will be encouraged to contribute to the growing body of research in UX. This includes practice-based design research in the sub-fields of; tangible and embodied interactions, HCI, the ethics and politics of interaction design, ubiquitous computing and designing for agency.
6	Critical positioning: UX Design is uniquely placed to develop and deploy ideas that address the interplay between automated digital systems and human behaviour. This involves imagining the near and far futures of how, where and when people interact with complex digital technologies, and interfaces. Positioning UX Design as

	a critical tool opens up opportunities to bring UX Design to bear on the pressing issues of artificial intelligence, machine learning, augmented bodies, post national statehood, and ethical interfaces. Critical UX, framing the discipline as a culturally dynamic expressive form.
7	Data as Medium: The course considers data to be a pivotal design medium with which you are expected to build working digital prototypes, and about which you are encouraged to cultivate critical awareness. The course thus approaches data from two perspectives; the material and the political. This attitude ensures you will be well placed to produce influential and persuasive designs, but also to account for the ethical and political dimensions of their work. You will thus be design innovators at the forefront of advanced design studies and practices in the field.
8	Programme Community: The course sits within the Interaction & Visual Communication programme alongside relevant yet distinct courses like the MA Interaction Design and the MA Service Design. This means that as well as access to the production resources in these areas, you will have access to a broad range of industry speakers from these disciplines and can develop peer group relationships that will enable collaboration across courses and disciplines.
9	Interdisciplinarity: In the professional design world UX designers perform many different tasks and are expected to have skills in research, interaction design, product prototyping, concept development and evaluation. This constellation of skills means the course delivers technical and critical training at an advanced level, in a highly interdisciplinary context. Designing for existing technological settings means that anthropology and psychology are as useful as graphic design or photography and you are encouraged to think of yourselves as operating in a post-disciplinary environment. The interdisciplinary nature of user experience design means collaboration is central to its practice, the course emphasises this aspect by encouraging collaboration between students across all units.
10	Professional Links: Building on LCC's enviable connections to the design industries and the course team's networks. The course has previously worked with: Ben Terret, Tim Malbon, Iain Tait, Hem Patel, Max Gadney, RgA, Sennep, Ustwo, Applied Works, IBM, Fjord and Made by Many. This represents a compelling opportunity to work in partnership with some of London's best UX Design Agencies and establish industry connections for postgraduation progression. The course also invites professional contacts to set project briefs and mentor you during your final major project. This mentorship will be in the form of portfolio reviews and visiting critics. These will be arranged by the course team. It is also expected that your external partnerships will generate mentorship possibilities through the LCC mentoring scheme. Collaboration with external partners is thus a key aspect of the course.

Course Detail

On this industry focused and design-led course, you'll learn how compelling user experiences are designed, tested, and evaluated.

The course covers the advanced studio skills of user experience design, including the methods and practices of user research through the critical-theoretical background.

What can you expect?

You'll gain knowledge of the relevant tools, materials and practices that make up user experience design in the context of the community of practice represented by London College of Communication.

With a focus on design for complex systems, emerging technologies and integrated experiences, you'll develop an informed approach which builds on a foundation of graphic, communication and interface design values through open inquiry and creative risk-taking.

Work experience and opportunities

The methods and tools of user research are emphasised throughout and you will be challenged to collaborate on live industry briefs covering varied topics such as UX for wearable technologies, smart cities, data visualisation and social transformation.

The course is intended for people who have completed an undergraduate degree in design, social sciences, digital technologies, media and communications, and associated degrees.

We also anticipate that applicants will be working designers wishing to deepen their practice and develop new opportunities.

Mode of Study

MA User Experience Design is in Full Time mode which runs for 45 weeks over 15 months. You will be expected to commit 40 hours per week to study.

Course Units

In 2019, UAL declared a [Climate Emergency](#). In response, LCC's [Design School](#) set an ambitious Sustainability Action Plan in place to fully embed responsible practices within the curriculum and in everything we do.

As part of this initiative, we've shaped our courses around social and environmental sustainability principles that ensure learning outcomes reflect the urgent need to equip you with the understanding, skills, and values to foster a more sustainable planet. Our aim is to change the way our students think, and to empower you to work towards a sustainable future.

Autumn, Term 1

UX Studio Practices (40 credits)

This unit aims to provide you with a critical understanding of user experience design in the context of contemporary studio practice.

It will help you position your approach to the subject relative to the current theoretical ideas and working practices of user experience design.

You will also develop a critical awareness of how physical, personal and social contexts shape design processes.

Spring, Term 2

Macro UX (20 credits)
Collaborative Unit (20 credits)

The Macro UX unit involves working with an external partner on live briefs. You can choose to work with industry or third sector organisations around a set of broad themes including; UX for smart city technologies, UX for cultural placemaking, UX for the future of publishing and UX for archives and collections.

The Collaborative Unit is designed to enable you to identify, form and develop collaborative working relationships with a range of potential partners. These could be: postgraduate student colleagues at the college or university level; postgraduate students at other Higher Education Institutions; external parties (e.g. companies, cultural organisations, community-based groups, NGOs, charities etc.)

Summer, Term 3

Micro UX (40 credits)

This unit is intended to allow you to work with a different external organisation, exposing your evolving practice to different views and alternative methods.

Collaborations are organised around broad themes including; UX for health and wellbeing, UX for data visualisation, UX for human-robot relations, and UX for performance and public participation.

You will be expected to initiate and implement a UX design project around two of these themes, drawing on the research journey you devised and the design process you established in Macro UX.

Autumn, Term 4

Final Major Project and Portfolio of Writing (60 credits)

The aims of the Final Major Project and Critical Context Report are to offer you the opportunity to engage in a major research-led project in which the emphasis will be on defining, analysing and developing an individual and focused approach to user experience design.

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Guest speakers
- Group and individual tutorials

Assessment Methods

- Practical Projects
- Critical Reports
- Presentations through a range of media
- Developmental Blogs for reflective practice
- Research Proposals Portfolio of Evidence

Reference Points
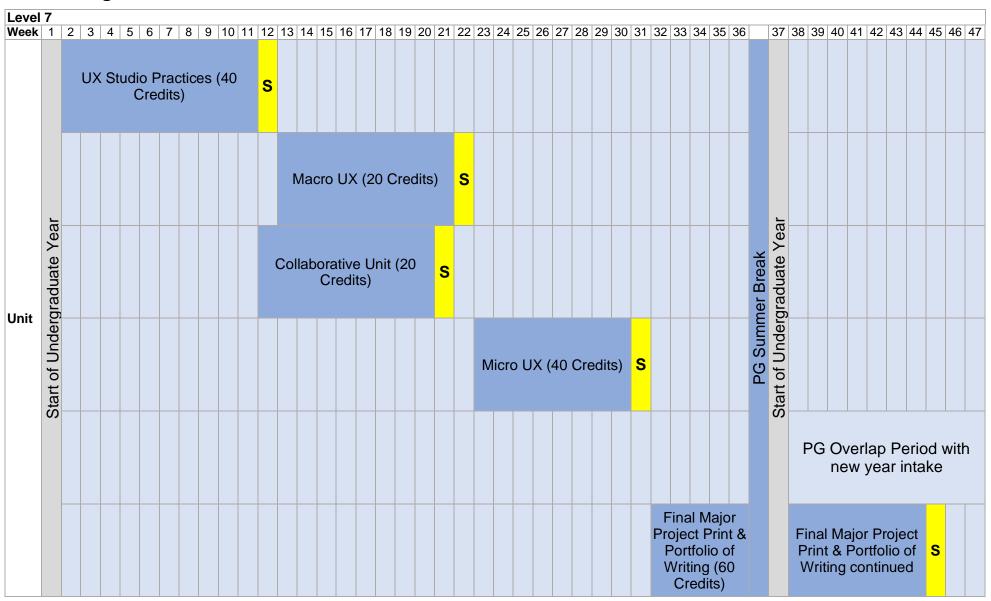
The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- QAA Benchmark Statements

- Learning and Teaching and Enhancement strategy (UAL)
- University of the Arts Level Descriptors
- Responsible Design Framework (Design School)
- Creative Attributes Framework
- Design School Attainment Workshop
- Consultation with leading practitioners and theorists
- Consultation with students

Course Diagram

Level 7

| Week | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 |

Unit

- Start of Undergraduate Year
- UX Studio Practices (40 Credits) — **S** (Week 12)
- Macro UX (20 Credits) — **S** (Week 22)
- Collaborative Unit (20 Credits) — **S** (Week 21)
- Micro UX (40 Credits) — **S** (Week 31)
- PG Summer Break
- Start of Undergraduate Year
- PG Overlap Period with new year intake
- Final Major Project Print & Portfolio of Writing (60 Credits)
- Final Major Project Print & Portfolio of Writing continued — **S**

S = Summative Assessment

The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the Course and the services described in this Output. There may be occasions whereby the University needs to add, remove or alter content in relation to your Course as may be appropriate for example the latest requirements of a commissioning or accrediting body, or in response to student feedback, or to comply with applicable law or due to circumstances beyond its control. The University aim to inform you of any changes as soon as is reasonably practicable