

**MA Design for Social Innovation &
Sustainable Futures**

Programme Specification 2019/20

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| Awarding Body | University of the Arts London |
| College | London College of Communication |
| School | University of the Arts London |
| Programme | University of the Arts (UAL) |
| FHEQ Level | Level 7 Masters |
| Course Credits | 180 |
| Mode | Full Time |
| Duration of Course | 1 year |
| Valid From | September 1st 2019 |
| QAA Subject Benchmark | Art and Design |
| UAL Subject Classification | 3D design and product design |
| JACS Code | None |
| UCAS Code | N/A |
| PSRB | N/A |
| Work placement offered | N/A |
| Course Entry Requirements | <p>The MA Design for Social Innovation and Sustainable Futures course welcomes applicants who are keen to explore design in terms of its human-centred and strategic approach, its collaborative potential, and as a leading force for driving meaningful and contextually relevant societal and ecological transformation.</p> <p>Applicants may come from a range of design disciplines or related creative industry experiences with a 2:1 or above Honours degree course, or have other equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>The course team also welcomes students with relevant technical/ practical background experience who have worked in creative industries and who show a commitment to design and experiential learning, being keen to explore their practice as a place of sustainable action and social transformation.</p> |

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| | <p>The teaching team is looking for applicants who value critical thinking and socially and environmentally focused design, and are looking to question the relationship of design industry and the global systems it inhabits.</p> <p>Educational level may be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honours degree at 2:1 or first-class • Possession of equivalent qualifications; • Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required; • Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required. <p>Language requirements</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) is required, with a minimum of 6.0 in speaking and reading, and 5.5 in writing and listening. • If your first language is not English, you can check you have achieved the correct IELTS level in English on the Language Requirements page. <p>For further details regarding international admissions and advice please visit the International Applications page.</p> |
| Selection Criteria | <p>Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 design for social innovation

- A willingness to work as a team player, excellent language skills in speaking, reading and writing, the ability to work independently/be self-motivated and work collaboratively.
- A proactive team attitude, with strong communication skills and the ability to work both collaboratively and independently.
- Critical knowledge of and enthusiasm for design as place of social transformation and capacity for research-led design, intellectual inquiry and reflective thought through: contextual awareness (professional, cultural, social, historical, environmental); evidence of investigation, analysis, development and evaluation (from previous academic study and/or employment) and a grounded understanding of the world of design cultures and be able to engage in and contribute to critical discussion.
- Via the 'Personal Statement' – a curiosity to explore responsible and ethical design practice in order to transform society and enable sustainable futures.
- Via the 'Portfolio' – creative and research-based projects, that show problem-solving, experimentation and making processes.

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

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| Percentage of Scheduled Learning | 20 |
| Awards | Credits |
| Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only) | 60 |
| Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only) | 120 |
| Master of Arts | 180 |

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

| Aim/Outcome | Description |
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| Aim | Enable you to reach a critical and informed understanding of the historical or forecasted, socio-cultural, ethical, economic, environmental and professional contexts in which your communication design is situated. (Context) |
| Aim | Provide an open, connected, and supportive structure to help you develop your practice, research and self-awareness appropriate to your future within the field of social innovation and sustainable design. (Pedagogy) |
| Aim | Enable you to engage and co-design with various stakeholders to provide 'design in action' responses with purpose. (Subject) |
| Aim | Support you in obtaining the critical awareness of systems and sustainable frameworks know-how required to interrogate the interrelated dynamics of socially and environmentally motivated design practice implemented world-wide. (Method) |
| Aim | Provide opportunities for you to acquire the knowledge and methods (strategic, practical, conceptual and organisational), that enable you to initiate, research, develop, and complete self-directed projects with critical analysis, reflection and academic rigour. (Skills) |
| Aim | Promote a lean-start up attitude (to exploring, managing, and enterprising) within your design for social innovation and sustainability. (Attitude) |
| Aim | Foster leadership, employability and entrepreneurial skills that support your design practice, career development or further study at PhD level. (Employment) |
| Outcome | Critically and adaptively employ historical, theoretical, socio-cultural, ethical, economic, environmental and professional knowledge to inform outputs that are relevant. (Enquiry) |
| Outcome | Implement communication design methods, insights and advanced skills in response to diverse real-world challenges. (Knowledge) |
| Outcome | Speculate on systemic and sustainable approaches to the subject and practice of design for social innovation and sustainable futures, that |

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| | acknowledges, explores and analyses complexity and interrelated subjects. (Enquiry, Process) |
| Outcome | Communicate, co-create and proactively work with collaborators and stakeholders effectively to achieve research and design goals. (Communication) |
| Outcome | Present high-level critical arguments and original practice informed by specialised research, strategy, management, enterprise and evaluation methodologies. (Knowledge, Enquiry) |
| Outcome | Act with initiative and autonomous decision-making to employ tools and processes (digital and analogue) that enable experimentation, innovation and transformative action. (Process) |
| Outcome | Operate as independent learners through critical engagement with 'design in action' that is rigorously planned, theoretically informed, co-designed and delivered to professional standards. (Realisation) |

| Distinctive Features | |
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| 1 | <p>Systemic: Teaching and learning will place a critical awareness of systems at the core of design practice and innovation. The course will generate awareness of the connected and interdependent parts of the global systems we inhabit, so that students recognise how they (and their designs) affect and in turn are affected by, this interrelatedness. Students will develop design and research tools and methods to deconstruct complexity and data, connect, frame and plan, whilst utilising their design skills to improve the system at different levels e.g. government, corporates, enterprises, charities, communities and individuals.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Transdisciplinary: A course approach that fosters integrative and collaborative design thinking and practice. Students work in diverse teams, consider issues from multiple perspectives and learn to integrate knowledge from various disciplines to address wicked ecological and societal problems. Utilising design to invite people and organisations from across the system to confront challenges collaboratively students will be able to propose and evolve ideas that leverage the insight of diverse sociocultural and business experiences.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Communication-centric: Communication design processes will be utilised to explore ways to, engage, understand, imagine, manage and enterprise. The course focus is not on 'making things', but on 'making things happen' – on enabling design in action. It draws on the design disciplines of graphics, interaction, service and management to communicate, learn from, represent and empower diverse societal voices.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Co-creative: The course is committed to going beyond human-centred design to humanity-centred design. Areas of learning, research and exploration respond to real-world, environmental, cultural, political and economic needs and discoveries. Realised via social relationships and inclusivity; knowledge transfer and co-creation; partnerships with experts, organisations and communities; co-design and co-production methods that are participatory, stakeholder-centred and prioritise equality.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Empowering: Teaching and learning are geared towards developing advocacy, creativity and leadership. Building on productive critical perspectives of current discourses and practices of design for social innovation and sustainability, students will develop the ability to challenge the status quo, reframe issues with integrity and lead by design.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Resilient: The course will combine a rigorous research approach with 'lean start-up' methods for exploration, engagement, testing, management and measuring impact. Students are equipped with adaptive approaches, developing sensemaking and synthesis skills to deal with uncertainty, multiplicity, emergence and the shifting</p> |

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| | challenges of the Anthropocene. They will embrace curiosity, futures-thinking and design fictions to unpick forecasted and imagined problems. |
| 7 | Transformational: A commitment to 'design in action' from a personal as well as disciplinary perspective. Students are supported by tutors in the process of personal transformation underpinned by critical and self-reflective practice. By developing self-awareness of personal values and strengths, alongside capacity for lifelong independent learning, they will be empowered to use their own potential and creativity to be agents of positive change. |

Course Detail

This section is available to provide any introductory information on the course. It might include explanation of the position of courses which form a named pathway within an 'umbrella' programme.

The **MA Design for Social Innovation and Sustainable Futures** course explores the role of design in innovating to meet the social and environmental challenges of our time. It positions contemporary design theory and practice 'as site of action and agency to radically transform our world.' (LCC Design School Manifesto).

The course mission is 'To utilise the transformative power of design: to support diversity and enable equity; to shape economy, ecology and society in harmony; to innovate solutions and activate change for a sustainable future'.

The 'design in action' values upheld by students are: integrity, inclusivity and co-creativity.

Design is considered in terms of its strategic capabilities, its collaborative potential to bring together diverse stakeholders, and as a leading force for empowering meaningful and contextually relevant societal and ecological transformation. Design is realised via the disciplines of communication, strategy, interaction and management, in complement to the programmes within the Design School at LCC.

The course aims to go beyond human-centred design, to adopting a humanity-centred and environmentally focused design approach. It will enable a critical awareness of systems, to help students position themselves and their designs at the centre of opportunity; they will interrogate cultural, economic, political, technological, social and ecological norms and developments, (at different levels of the global system) allowing them to speculatively imagine, test and evaluate models and radical ideas geared towards paradigm shift.

The course supports students to consider ideas of value and sustainability, building on productive critiques of current approaches and practices. Eco-social innovation is explored and questioned within the context of relevant and seminal theories as well as contemporary discourses and trends.

The course facilitates participatory approaches and opportunities to ethically engage with collectives, cultures, organisations, individuals and their peers to understand, address and co-design for complex social and environmental problems. Course methodologies combine rigorous research and analysis with a 'lean start-up' approach to exploring, mapping, engaging, managing, testing, evaluating and enterprising.

The collaborative nature of the course is transdisciplinary, transnational and intercultural, exploring global-local socioeconomic development dilemmas, community-university

research alliances, emerging practices of design activism, inclusivity and engagement.

This postgraduate course is aimed at enthusiastic and agile designers who want to concentrate their practice on working strategically and creatively as agents of positive change.

Course Units

Unit 01: Researching and Framing for Innovation (20 Credits)

This unit aims to support you in acquiring the learning and research skillsets to interrogate complex problems and map strategies towards solutions for social and environmental innovation. This will be realised by connecting with real-world issues. It will commence with the exchange of learning experiences – where the consideration of different cultural perspectives and a discourse around ‘how we learn’ will initiate a suitable learning and teaching culture, that is transdisciplinary. A key part of this unit will be delivered using a research methods framework. Through this you will utilise different approaches and tools for researching, framing, measuring and evaluating. You will explore research in action as a creative and reflective process and as a strategic tool and by utilising a range of methods to inform and incubate innovative ideas with real-world societal and environmental impact.

Unit 02: Social Impact and Enterprise (40 Credits)

This unit aims to support you in developing and applying a critical understanding of theoretical frameworks, global systems and enterprise models. This will be realised by investigating contemporary case studies. It will offer a broad survey of eco-social design history, theory and action and will present a framework for thinking and debating present day corporate and public sector activities. You will gain an understanding of the leading challenges and ideologies via real-world enterprise case-studies (including not for profit and start-up ventures as well as large organisations) and by exploring design impact and entrepreneurial principles for innovation: from integrating social sustainability into every project, to CSR, to establishing it as the driving purpose behind organisational activities.

Unit 03: Collaborative Unit (20 Credits)

This 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.)

Unit 04: Co-Design for Sustainable Futures (40 Credits)

This unit aims to support you in developing and applying a practical understanding of co-designing sustainable solutions. This will be realised by prototyping for future scenarios. Through immersive, experiential and group learning, this unit will enable you to grasp and test the role of design in envisioning and co-creating to solve. You will engage with present and future forecasted problems, working with your peers to learn processes and tools for building participation and enabling the co-creation and development of ideas to prototype. Outputs may be communications, services, activities, artefacts, systems or policies, but must seek to improve or challenge the status quo.

Unit 05: Design in Action Major Project (60 Credits)

This unit aims to support you in undertaking your own Design in Action Major Project. It is the culmination of your learning on the course and offers you the opportunity to target the positive impact of design by challenging the status quo, supporting society and innovating to fix. You will engage with a real-world problem and will synthesise learnt methodologies to realise your project via an individual approach. Utilising research and framing tools, lean start-up methodology and co-design approaches you will develop, implement and test your 'design in action' output. The focus of this unit is on 'process' and not 'outcome' – it is about trying, testing and learning. You will measure the impact (socio-cultural, economical, environmental, political) of your outcome or intervention and critically consider the implications of its position within the world.

Learning and Teaching Methods

The learning and teaching strategy is informed by the QAA principles summarised above and the Responsible Design Framework. The course invites you to undertake process of scoping and framing problems within broader social areas of concern and develop through design practices responses that trigger action and provoke responsible engagement.

Design practice is positioned at the centre of its learning and teaching experience to serve as the lens for problem framing, response, activism, and reframing of possible sustainable futures. However, it is also interpreted through the lean start-up methodology, where you are enabled to test and prototype your ideas early in order to learn faster from the process and any 'mistakes'. A critical awareness of systems is a key focus and you are challenged to actively interrogate and explore design practices in relation to the global systems you inhabit, looking at the environment, materiality, empathy, ethics, diversity and responsibility – within broad and dynamic socio-cultural, economic and political contexts.

At the core of the learning and teaching methods is a shared critical studio practice where you are curious and active participants in determining areas of investigation and deeper research enquiry. Studio working will be transdisciplinary and you will be supported dissolve the boundaries between conventional disciplines to structure your learning around real-world problems or themes. You and your peer groups will tackle briefs using a range of techniques and production methods, inspired by case studies and tailored perspectives that probe beyond the normative design practices. Contextual discourse and theory are seen as central to sustaining debate around the themes of design informed social innovation and are used to provoke critical engagement, questioning and action in relation to sustainable futures.

Furthermore, the course approach draws on UAL's Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy 2015-2022, in particular, the development and delivery of a 'creative, curious, critical curricula' in which you journey across the following stages:

1. **Acquiring** the research, framing and evaluative skillsets to interrogate complex problems – by **connecting** with real-world issues. (Researching and Framing for Innovation).
2. **Locating** yourself within a critical understanding of theoretical frameworks, global systems and enterprise models – by **investigating** contemporary case studies. (Social Impact and Enterprise).
3. **Identifying, forming and developing** collaborative working relationships with a range of potential partners. (Collaborative Unit).
4. **Challenging** your methods via a practical understanding of co-designing sustainable solutions – by **prototyping** for future scenarios. (Co-design for Sustainable Futures).
5. **Undertaking** design in action and **measuring** impact via your learnt methodologies (Design in Action Major Project).
6. **Defining** yourself as an agent of eco-social change, **prepared** for industry. (Culmination of learning).

The learning across these stages will be iterative and will reflect the 'agile in education compass', which considers a flow between: culture and context, feedback and reflection, trust and discovery and collaborative and shared learning.

Culture and context – The curriculum has a strong emphasis on quality content and relevant context, and you will use research, strategic thinking and speculative design methods (along with relevant tool and technologies), to explore and question the impact these methods have in relation to environment, materiality, empathy, ethics and responsibility, and broader socio-cultural context.

Reflection – Reflective practice is prevalent in the critical awareness of systems, but more explicitly via your self-exploration of value, self-assessing, self-discovery and challenging of ‘otherness’.

Discovery – You are given an opportunity to participate in a diverse range of experiences including presentations, workshops, exhibitions, small-scale symposia and knowledge and skills sharing. These activities will encourage you to explore, challenge and stretch your skill-sets. Sessions are led by course teams (who draw on expertise in the discipline of social innovation, sustainability and design theory and practice) and can involve industry experts.

Collaboration – The course will deliver ‘inclusive teaching and learning’ that places an emphasis on collaboration where you have the opportunity to work with peers from other courses at LCC as well as external colleges/universities in the UK and abroad as well as with selected organisations/business/experts.

The course will enhance your employability through the use of reflective, engaging and practical pedagogies that support their educational, personal and professional development, including the use of: presentation and symposia skills, participatory design and stakeholder engagement, digital technology and tools, publishing mediums/platforms, and by using personal learning networks as means of connecting with relevant professional practitioners.

Teaching and studio activity will embrace the course values of integrity, inclusivity and co-creativity. The pedagogical approach will support and facilitate this via innovative and ‘active’ learning strategies e.g. ‘just in time’ learning, collaborative learning and regular peer-to-peer exchange. The course will be taught through facilitation and active learning and teaching methods, hands on workshops, reading groups, peer-led seminar learning, individual and group tutorials, self-directed learning, visiting practitioners, study trips, formative and summative assessment.

Assessment Methods

- Documentary and reflective process blogs
- Presentations (group and individual) of insights in response to real-world problems
- Portfolios (group and individual)
- Critical, evaluative and self-reflective reports

- Sustainably designed outputs of the written work
- Outcomes: proof of concepts, interventions, prototypes

Note: Presentation and portfolio outcomes may be multimedia, visual or experiential.

Reference Points

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The College Learning and Teaching Strategy
- The College Assessment Strategy
- The UAL and College approach to Personal and Professional Development
- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- University of the Arts London Level Descriptors
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- Art and Design subject benchmark statement
- The LCC Responsible Design Framework
- Design School Manifesto
- Consultation with leading design practitioners and educators operating within LCC, UAL and external to the institution
- Consultation students and alumni

Course Diagram

Course Diagram | MA Design for Social Innovation and Sustainable Futures

| | | Autumn Term (Term 1 11 Weeks) | | | | | | | | | | | Spring Term (Term 2 10 weeks) | | | | | | | | | | Summer Term (Term 3 15 weeks) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Undergraduate Summer Period (14 weeks) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Autumn Term (Term 4 10 weeks) | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | Week 0 | week 1 | week 2 | week 3 | week 4 | week 5 | week 6 | week 7 | week 8 | week 9 | Week 10 | week 11 | week 12 | week 13 | week 14 | week 15 | week 16 | week 17 | week 18 | week 19 | week 20 | week 21 | week 22 | week 23 | week 24 | week 25 | week 26 | week 27 | week 28 | week 29 | week 30 | week 31 | week 32 | week 33 | week 34 | week 35 | week 36 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Week 37 | Week 38 | Week 39 | Week 40 | Week 41 | Week 42 | Week 43 | Week 44 | Week 45 | Week 46 | Week 47 |
| Freshers Week | Start of Undergraduate Year | Researching and Framing for Innovation (20 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Social Impact and Enterprise (40 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | Christmas Break | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Easter Break | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Freshers week | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | Collaborative Unit (20 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Start of Undergraduate year | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Co-design for Sustainable Futures (40 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | PG Summer Break Independent Study / Writing Up Period | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Design in Action Major Project (60 credits) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | PG Summer Break Independent Study / Writing Up Period | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Design in Action Major Project Cont'd | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Show prep | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | PG Shows | | | | | | | | | | | |

S = Summative Assessment Point (Your Assignment Brief will give you details on the deadline date, time and how to hand in your assignment)

Formative assessment points will be indicated by your tutor in your unit handbooks or assignment brief

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

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