

# ual:

**Programme Specification**

**MA Curating and Collections**

**camberwell  
college of arts**

**chelsea  
college of arts**

**wimbledon  
college of arts**

**APPROVED**

<b>Course AOS Code</b>	05268
------------------------	-------

<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 7 Masters
-------------------	-----------------

<b>Course Credits</b>	180
-----------------------	-----

<b>No. of Terms</b>	3
---------------------	---

<b>QAA Subject Benchmark</b>	Art and Design
------------------------------	----------------

<b>Term Duration</b>	10 Week(s)
<b>Valid From</b>	September 1st 2018 ( June 2018 )
<b>Programme</b>	Chelsea Fine Art Programme (L050)
<b>JACS Code</b>	W190 - Fine art not elsewhere classified
<b>Work placement offered</b>	No
<b>Collaboration</b>	
No collaboration	
<b>Course Entry Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) degree in a related subject or equivalent academic qualifications.</li> <li>• Study Plan (800).</li> <li>• Personal Statement (500 Words).</li> <li>• IELTS level 6.5 or above if English is not your first language, with at least 5.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking.</li> </ul>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>	The ambition and commitment to challenge, intensify and develop their work in curation and collections to Master level. The potential to devise and develop a self-directed programme of curatorial practice and related research. An awareness of current debates and practices in curation and collections. The ability to analyse and evaluate in both visual and oral terms and to develop and contextualise their work in written form. An eagerness to engage in the critical debate surrounding contemporary and historical practices as well as to develop a critical framework for their practice. The potential to develop a range of skills and competencies within their practice to a professional level.

## Distinctive Features

	<b>Distinctive Features</b>
1	This MA is less concerned in immersing students in broader questions of culture and criticism. Rather its focus will be the specialities attending the formation of collections and the specificities of their organisation along with the exploration of collections and archival display.
2	Learning takes place through close engagement with Chelsea Space where a distinctive and renowned practice is based on a deep knowledge of Chelsea College of Arts Library Special Collections. This daily contact with the local collection is complemented by organised visits and structured engagement with archives and collections across the University as a whole.
3	The course provides access to knowledge of collections formulated in-situ with an emphasis on problem-solving and practical handling, for mounting displays and exhibitions: attention to objects; spatial awareness; working with artists and designing displays. In situ sessions also address matters as selection and hanging of artworks, as well as the various aspects of project management necessary for the successful production of displays.
4	Attention to the latest critical thinking on issues such as: participation; artist curators; the formation of publics; and spectatorship and will be driven by the particular museological expertise of the Course Leader.
5	<p>An important aspect of the course will be the access it provides to archives and collections from across the University. This will enable students to address a variety of collections and the specificities that inform their organisation. This will take place both through onsite introductions and negotiated access to Collections and Archives across the University. There are possibilities for:</p> <p>An annual visit and introduction to the renowned Camberwell Handling Collection followed by the option of negotiated access for individual research projects.</p> <p>An Archives and Special Collections Centre session, followed by the option of negotiated access for individual research projects.</p>
6	The close proximity to Chelsea Special Collections will provide the possibility of sustained contact enabling an ongoing investigation into the various scenarios by which Collections evolve.
7	Access to the CCW Graduate School (whose program is developed in close consultation with course and college gallery teams) will provide lectures and events and research days offering opportunities for cross-disciplinary (and college) collaboration to emerge.

**Years**

**Year 1**

**Credits** 180

**Percentage of Scheduled Learning** 26

**Exit Awards** MA Curating and Collections  
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)  
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)

## Aims and Outcomes

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Engage with and interpret knowledge at the forefront of the discipline through the development of your critical, conceptual and practical abilities, achieved through: (a) the investigation of collections and archives; (b) the analysis of methodologies applied to their exhibition and display.
Aim	Generate a self-directed programme of curatorial practice and related collections research, supporting the development of your professional practice.
Aim	Contextualise and theorise your own practice through a critical evaluation of: (a) the work of contemporary practitioners and leading researchers within the discipline; (b) historic collections practices, evidenced in public and/or private collections and archives. This will support the consolidation of transferable and professional skills relevant to employment and further study.
Aim	Develop a comprehensive understanding of methodologies applicable to your own research while demonstrating high-level skills and competencies as a preparation for professional curatorial practice using collections and archives.
Outcome	Articulate a systematic knowledge and a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary and historical context for your curatorial practice as well as related collections research.
Outcome	Analyse complex issues relating to collections and archival display while being able to communicate your understanding of them to a range of audiences.
Outcome	Evaluate research methodologies, develop techniques, and apply methods and propose new hypotheses applicable to your research intentions.
Outcome	Demonstrate an independent and creative approach to problem solving and research, including planning and implementation of tasks relating to exhibition practice at a professional level.
Outcome	Demonstrate self-direction and inventiveness in the development of your curatorial knowledge while acting independently in the planning and implementation of your practice to a professional standard.
Outcome	Exercise the initiative, responsibility and decision-making necessary to support continued professional development and independent learning.
Outcome	Engage critically with theoretical and historical debate in curatorial practice, particularly in relation to collections and archive scholarship.

## Introduction to Course

The MA Curating and Collections course sets out curating and collections practices as a way of bringing meaning to art and design materials. Objects are seen as the bearers of cultural significance and aesthetic value. Focus on the arrangement of objects for display is given special emphasis in the context of collections. In such terms, collections are studied on the course alongside more specialist archives. A working distinction between collections and archives is maintained, although you will work with objects drawn from both. Conventionally, archives can be understood as collections of material where the parameters are already set – the order in which material has been placed, as well as the links made between materials is maintained. Collections, more generally, allow the order of objects to be created – collections can be reorganised as well as extended. The significance of curating in allowing the issue of parameters in archives and collections to be reconsidered remain key aspects of the course.

Emerging areas within curatorial, collections and archives study will be addressed within the course. For instance, the impact of the digital will form part of study area. A number of relevant questions help shape this area, such as: the means by which the digital is changing our experience of the 'live'; the extent to which digital and online collections ask us to re-evaluate the value of non-digital collections; the way in which digital materials alter our perception of the 'archive'; which critical discourses help us make sense of the role of the digital in contemporary society?

The renowned College Collections, as well as the Chelsea College of Arts Library Special Collections, (<http://www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/library-services/collections-and-archives/chelsea>), lie at the heart of an approach promoting critical reflection alongside practical experience in the professional environment of Chelsea Space. Learning takes place through hands-on engagement in the generation of a series of 'interventions' into displays in the Chelsea Space gallery. Curatorial knowledge is thereby formulated in-situ with an emphasis on problem-solving and practical handling, as well as conceptual development. Exhibition skills sessions centre on such matters as selection and hanging of artworks as well as the various aspects of project management necessary for the successful production of displays. These will include: artist liaison; budgeting; education/mediation; audiences and marketing; collector liaison; health and safety; art handling; transportation and insurance; interpretation; archiving, conservation and documentation. The Exhibitions skills sessions are supplemented by seminars keeping students up-to-date with critical thinking on issues such as: the formation of publics; the status of artists in collections; objects, meaning and subjectivity.

The course promotes an embedded teaching model in which learning takes place through close engagement with the curatorial activity within Chelsea Space. The course will also aim to provide opportunities to engage with other exhibition spaces within UAL colleges, such as Wimbledon Space and Camberwell Space. Library showcases within the colleges will also be explored as possibilities for display. Within the course, individual approaches are promoted so that you develop skills-sets appropriate to the substantiation of your emerging practice. Critical engagement takes place through debate on theories of collection and their impact on curatorial knowledge as well as addressing issues such as digitisation and ephemera. The course aims to support those of you who wish to have a thorough grounding in the handling of collections, as well as those who are interested in developing collections interventions as part of independent practice.

## Outline of Curriculum

The course is comprised of three assessed units: Unit 1: **Analysis of Curatorial Practices** (60 credits); Unit 2: **Methods of Curatorial Display** (60 credits); Unit 3: **Enacting Curatorial Strategies** (60 credits).

The course is delivered through two series running in parallel through all three units: (i) Exhibition-Studio-Workshop; (ii) Curating and Collections Seminars.

The Workshop is based in Chelsea Space with seminars in College seminar rooms.

### *Exhibition Studio Workshop*

These sessions will be based in Chelsea Space and will be led by the Chelsea Space members of the course team. They will focus on the development of curatorial knowledge around: (a) Assembling objects and materials; (b) Selection and Display; (c) Engaging with collections and institutions. The work in the exhibition studio workshop will emphasise learning in a professional context, with high-level and respected expertise in the curatorial field being drawn upon to support the development of wide-ranging approaches to curating. A series of alternative models will be considered alongside established conventions of exhibition organising and collections display.

### *Curating and Collections Seminars*

These sessions will be based in College seminar rooms and will be led by the history and theory members of the course team. They will focus on the development of curatorial knowledge around: (a) Modalities of Collection; (b) Theory and Practice in collections development; (c) Engaging with collections and institutions. The seminars will focus on material from collections visits and from work produced in the Exhibition Studio Workshop.

### *Cross-course Programme: Lectures (General Theory Forum)*

MA Curating and Collections students follow a series of lectures shared by all MA taught programmes based at Chelsea College of Arts. This programme enhances understanding of the place of theory within research methodology and in relation to practice; it provides knowledge of the work of thinkers of relevance to Curating in the context of collections and archives, as well as understanding of other art and design practices, such as spatial design and digitisation. The programme emphasises a transdisciplinary approach to practice.

### *Self-Directed Research*

Outside of timetabled taught sessions, you are expected to manage your own weekly programme of independent research. In addition to this, seven independent research weeks are scheduled, allowing you to focus on the preparation and presentation of work for assessment.

## Course Units

### Year 1

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Unit 1 Analysis of Curatorial Practices 60 Credits Value Starts: Week 1	Unit 2 Methods of Curatorial Display 60 Credits Value Starts: Week 1	Unit 3: Enacting Curatorial Strategies 60 Credits Value Starts: Week 1