

MA Data Visualisation

Programme Specification 2020/21

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	London College of Communication
School	Design
Programme	Graphic Communication (L037)
Course AOS Code	LCCMADATF01
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Full Time
Duration of Course	1 year
Valid From	September 1st 2020
Course Entry Requirements	<p>The MA Data Visualisation course team welcomes applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, from all over the world, who have achieved a Hons degree qualification that evidences their aptitude, skill and engagement in the field of graphic design/communication or a related design practice. Applicants from non-traditional backgrounds, as well as those already within employment, are also welcome on the course.</p> <p>Educational level may be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required. <p>APEL (Accreditation of Prior Learning)</p> <p>Applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered in exceptional cases. The course team will consider each application that</p>

	<p>demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Related academic or work experience• The quality of the personal statement• A strong academic or other professional reference• OR a combination of these factors <p>Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.</p> <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. 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 5.5 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. <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 a relevant subject• Also to show a willingness to work as a team player, good language skills in reading, writing and

	<p>speaking, the ability to work independently and be self-motivated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• Portfolio should be conceptual and research-based, you must show your thinking and making process and a curious nature to explore, test and experiment
Scheduled Learning and Teaching	<p>During your course you will engage with learning and teaching that includes both online and face-to-face modes. The advertised scheduled activity for the course will be delivered through a combination of live, synchronous and asynchronous on-line learning. This is often described as blended learning.</p> <p>Definitions of our learning and teaching modes can be found here.</p>

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	19
Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)	60
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)	120

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Provide an open and socially connected structure to support your practice, research and self-awareness appropriate to your future within the specialist field of Data Visualisation.
Aim	Support you in obtaining and challenging a critical and informed understanding of the historical, theoretical, ethical and professional contexts which your practice occupies and/or references.
Aim	Enable you to engage and respond to social and environmental problems at the forefront of the discipline through anticipatory approaches with a view to communicating and sharing information effectively and purposefully to diverse audiences.
Aim	Promote the value of risk taking as a valid, worthwhile and productive venture within and alongside your academic and professional development.
Aim	Provide opportunities for you to discuss your practice, skills and interests within a supportive environment.
Aim	Provide opportunities for you to acquire the knowledge, methods – creative, practical, conceptual, theoretical, analytical, technical, ethical and organisational – that enable you to initiate, research, develop and complete a self-directed project that reflects originality, critical analysis, responsibility, evaluation and academic rigor.
Aim	Prepare you for a career in data visualisation or connected discipline/industry or further study at PhD level.
Outcome	Initiate and author an informed Major Project proposal and Critical Reflection that demonstrates a mature understanding of the complex and expanding usage of data in communication design; (Enquiry, Knowledge, Communication)
Outcome	Present advanced and coherent arguments and support for particular visual research methodologies and design propositions; (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Communication)

Outcome	Critically employ historical, theoretical, ethical and professional knowledge of data usage in formulating concepts, ideas and outputs; (Enquiry, Knowledge, Realisation)
Outcome	Produce, analyse and reflect upon a diverse body of self-initiated research and experimentation that demonstrates a facility for managing and communicating complex ideas such as wicked problems to diverse audiences in an inclusive way; (Enquiry, Process, Realisation, Communication)
Outcome	Employ, and appreciate the issues/benefits of relevant digital and analogue tools and processes in producing advanced innovative and original design outputs in terms of their wastefulness, reusability and social impact; (Enquiry, Process, Realisation, Communication)
Outcome	Speculate on new and effective approaches to the subject and practice of data visualisation that acknowledges other relative areas of knowledge and challenges the status quo; (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Communication)
Outcome	Communicate and work with collaborators effectively to achieve research and design goals. (Realisation, Process)
Outcome	Present a critical, visual report and a self-directed major practical project that has been rigorously planned, is academically informed, and offers outcomes and applications that meet professional standards (Enquiry, Knowledge, Realisation, Process)

Distinctive Features	
1	<p>MA Data Visualisation: Building on LCC’s rich history in graphic and communication design and the ubiquity of data visualisation and information design-focused projects on current UG and PG courses within the School/LCC and UAL, this course addresses the need for a focussed subject specific practice based post graduate qualification. Simultaneously the Design School teaching staff’s knowledge and understanding of this field and its associated challenges and opportunities have grown. This will enable the Design School to apply a highly informed set of skills, knowledge and experience to the development of this programme of study.</p>
2	<p>Collaboration and Professional Links: This programme of study will build upon previous collaborations including the Visual Rhetoric programme with LSE, SE1 Data Stories with local and central government, Faculty of Public Health, National Trust, TFL, Cat Drew .gov data policy unit, Ucreates and Fellow in Data Visualisation, Duncan Swain. This represents an opportunity for students to work on national and international collaborations. This course recognises the diversity of practices and specialisms that relate to, and are stakeholders in the practice of data visualisation – from journalism to statistics to sociology. There is a key requirement for this course to equip students, not just with the ability to operate as data visualisation researchers and practitioners, but also as effective collaborators who can bring their understandings and insight to a range of diverse teams and contexts. As such collaborative practice will be integrated throughout the course’s units.</p>
3	<p>Social Positioning: This course recognises the social, cultural and ethical dimensions of data Visualisation practices. The curriculum will support students developing a highly informed understanding of the role and implications of an editorial voice within data Visualisation and the contemporary social and political considerations implicit in work that facilitates public access to information. This will equip students to produce work that, through a research-led body of enquiry, explores the social and cultural impacts of data Visualisation, its power and potential.</p>
4	<p>Inclusivity: This programme recognises the way data Visualisation can be used to engage with diverse audiences, tell stories, undermine assumptions and reveal unexpected connections. Students will be encouraged to produce live outcomes that engage both local and subject-specific communities with their work. This will extend the reach and strengthen the impact of both student and staff work in Data Visualisation and make LCC a leader in the field. Students will also be encouraged and supported to interrogate the concept of inclusivity and how it relates to the practise and production of data visualisation. How the visualisation, availability and accessibility of data can promote or limit participation and</p>

	<p>representation, and the ethical considerations associated with this understanding will also be a key strand of this programme.</p>
5	<p>Industry Engaged: This course will support students developing a broad base of knowledge and experience of the professional and industry-based application of data visualisation. Building on the Design School's existing relationships with professional practitioners such as Duncan Swain (LCC/Design School Visiting Fellow in Data Visualisation and Director of http://beyondwordsstudio.com) students will gain an insight into tools and working methods developed and used in professional practice, and respond to briefs that drawn on, reflect and respond to contemporary commercial concerns.</p>
6	<p>Big Data: With growing access to 'Big Data' the role and value of data visualisation in academia and, particularly, at doctorate level study is being increasingly recognised. Building on the experience and links established through the Visual Rhetoric programme, where postgraduate students from the Design School collaborated with doctoral researchers at the London School of Economics, this course would support participants exploring the academic application of data visualisation.</p>
7	<p>Programme Community: This course sits with in the Graphic Design Communication Programme with PG courses in Graphic Media Design, PGCert and PGDip Design for Visual Communication, as well as UG provision BA Graphic Media Design and the year in industry programme Diploma in Professional Studies. Students of the course will benefit from access to both the production resources in these areas and a broad range of industry speakers from these disciplines. Links with other courses such as MA User Experience Design and Journalism and Publishing courses have already been initially explored and would be expected to be particularly beneficial to the course's participants.</p>
8	<p>Graduate Community The course is part of the wider LCC Graduate community, offering access to a broad range of cross-disciplinary visiting speakers, graduate community events and technical and skills-based workshops. Participants would also benefit from initiatives such as the Graduate School, the Fellowship in Data Visualisation, Data Visualisation Research Hub, the Design School lecture series and an evolving roster of events and exhibitions. Working within this context allows students to gain insight from, and first-hand knowledge of key practitioners, significant movements, and emerging trends within the field. In addition, our students have direct access to the Careers and Employability department at UAL and a range of events and activities across the university aimed at supporting routes in to professional practice.</p>
9	<p>Data Visualisation Tools: This course is committed to providing the relevant analogue and digital skills in order to support students in producing engaging</p>

	<p>data Visualisations. Critical to the development of data Visualisation is the understanding of when and how to use such tools and techniques to create data narratives within chosen formats.</p>
10	<p>Diversity and interdisciplinarity: We expect the student cohort for this course to be highly diverse in terms of the mix of academic and professional backgrounds students bring to the programme. This offers an opportunity for the development of interdisciplinary projects, working practices, peer-to-peer learning, and collaboration. However, the need to support some students assimilating into a design-led academic setting is also recognised. Fundamental design principals, design methodology and design context will be a primary focus in the initial units of the course in order to equip students with the skills and understandings to operate effectively in a design context. This course is distinct from comparable data science programmes in part due to its emphasis on the development and application of a design methodology which will frame students' approach to their work with data and feed into and emphasis on developing a critical position and an understanding of ethical and social implications of working with data.</p>

Course Detail

MA Data Visualisation is driven by the intelligent interrogation of data and intensive practice-led research.

On this course you will develop the ability to translate data into creative narratives that a wide variety of audiences can understand using the most appropriate form of communication design for each project, including print, physical objects, environmental design or a screen based interaction.

What can you expect?

You'll be supported in developing an independent and critical view, producing visual narratives to bring about positive change, taking a collaborative and cross-disciplinary approach through the use of data.

You'll gain an in-depth understanding of information design within the context of communication design, acquiring a range of digital and analogue skills, underpinned by a historical, theoretical and critical framework.

The course recognises the social, cultural and ethical dimensions of data visualisation practices and will support you in developing a highly informed understanding of the role and implications of an editorial voice.

You'll produce work through a research-led body of enquiry that explores the power, potential, social and cultural impacts of data visualisation.

Work experience and opportunities

A focus on collaborative practice across the course will support your gaining professional skills and experience. Past partnerships have included working with The British Red Cross, Beyond Words Studio and LSE Archive.

The involvement of a range of expert practitioners in the programme delivery ensures we maintain strong links with both with industry and academically-focused partners and collaborators.

Mode of study

MA Data Visualisation 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 and pledged to 'make sustainability a required part of the student learning experience'. In response to the climate and ecological crisis the Design School set in place an ambitious Sustainability Action Plan to fully embed responsible practices within the curriculum and in everything we do. As part of this initiative we have updated our course handbooks against a set of social and environmental sustainability principles to ensure that learning outcomes reflect the urgent need to equip students with the understanding, skills and values to foster a more sustainable planet. Our aim is to change the way students think and to empower them to work towards a sustainable future.

MA Data Visualisation 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.

The course units include:

Term 1

Unit One: Data visualisation research and practices

Unit Two: Visualisation tools, datasets and data stories

In this term, through a series of workshops, you will develop your specialist information design and data visualisation practice. Pairing key areas from mapping to complex chart-making with a focus on fundamental design principles such as colour, visual language and typography, you'll develop your expertise in both explorative, and explanatory data visualisation as well as structure, narrative and story-telling.

Alongside this you'll engage with key texts, data visualisation practitioners and specialists from related disciplines through a series of lectures and seminars. This will support you engaging with the critical and theoretical context in which you are work and informing your approach to research methods and critical practice.

Term Two and Three

Unit Three: Final major project proposal and critical reflection

Unit Four: Collaborative unit

During these terms you'll define your major project focus through research-oriented workshops and group and individual seminars and tutorials.

You'll also work on the Collaborative unit – responding to a brief defined and delivered with industry-leading practitioners working at the forefront of the discipline of data visualisation.

You'll continue to participate in workshops designed to support you interrogating your own practice, defining methodologies and identifying interesting ways to integrate technical data visualisation tools and software into your research-led practice.

Through additional external briefs you'll also work with your peers on group projects responding to provocations defined by domain experts working with data.

Term Four

Unit Five: Final major project critical visual report

In your final term, you will realise your research-led final major project, supported with lectures, seminars and tutorials as well as engagement with the wider community of practice at LCC.

You'll produce a design outcome for this piece of work as well as critical and reflective report, evidencing your engagement with advanced theoretical and critical positions within the field and related disciplines.

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Practice-based Workshops
- Workshop
- Seminars
- Lectures
- Academic tutorials
- Personal tutorials
- Self-directed learning
- Speakers and visits
- Assessed assignments

Assessment Methods

- Practical Projects
- Reflective Visual/Written Reports
- Research Proposals
- Portfolios – practical
- Critical contextual written statements
- Developmental Blogs for reflective practice

Reference Points

- 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
- Consultation with leading design practitioners and educators operating within LCC, UAL and external to the institution
- UALs Creative Attributes Framework
- Responsible Design Framework (Design School)
- Consultation students and alumni

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		
Unit	Unit 1 Visual Research and Practices (20 credits)											S																									PG Summer Break	Freshers Week											
	Unit 2 Visualisation Tools, Datasets and Data Stories (60 credits)																												S																				
												Unit 4 Collaborative Unit (20 credits)										S																											
	Unit 3 FMP Project Proposal and Critical Reflection (20 credits)																							S																									
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																																			Unit 5 FMP and Critical Visual Report										S				

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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