MA Graphic Media Design

Programme Specification 2020/21

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	London College of Communication
School	Design
Programme	Graphic Communication (L037)
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Full Time
Duration of Course	1 year
Valid From	September 1st 2020
Course Entry Requirements	The MA Graphic Media Design course team welcomes thoughtful, critical and productive applicants concerned with the effective articulation of design. The course attracts applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, from all over the world, from an Honours degree course in a field relevant to graphics and media design 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. **Your 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; - Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be

	demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required.
	APEL (Accreditation of Prior 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
	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) is required, with a minimum 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 • 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 • 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 • Your 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	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. Definitions of our learning and teaching modes can be found [here]().

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	19
Awards	**Credits**
Postgraduate Diploma	60
Postgraduate Certificate	120
Master of Arts	180

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Provide an open and culturally engaged framework that is equipped to support practical growth, academic discussion and personal/professional development pertinent to your future in the expanded field of graphic design and/or further study
Aim	Support you in acquiring an analytical, critical and informed understanding of the historical, theoretical, ethical and professional contexts in which your practice resides and/or refers to
Aim	Enable you to engage and respond to challenges at the forefront of the discipline, and associated domains of knowledge, with a view to communicating innovative and soundly-conceived propositions to a variety of specialist and non-specialist audiences
Aim	Promote the value of risk taking and adventure as valid, worthwhile and productive endeavours within and alongside your academic and professional pursuits
Aim	Support you in identifying blind-spots within established cultural systems, codes and processes through practice-led research methodologies and processes
Aim	Offer opportunities for you to socialise your perspectives, skills and interests within a dynamic environment, where you are considered a proactive, original and purposeful contributor
Aim	Engage you in a review of specialised and contemporary industrial contexts that refer to your future practice-based ambitions.
Aim	Provide a forum for you to acquire the knowledge, abilities and methods – creative, practical, conceptual, theoretical, analytical, technical and organisational – that enable you to propose, research, develop and complete a self-directed project that reflects originality, critical analysis, evaluation and academic rigour.
Outcome	Initiate and author an informed research proposal that demonstrates a mature understanding of the complex and unpredictable nature of the expanded field of graphic design (Enquiry)

Outcome	Present coherent arguments and advocate for particular visual research methodologies and ecologically sound design propositions (Enquiry)
Outcome	Critically employ historical, theoretical, ethical, ecological and professional knowledge of graphic design in formulating concepts, ideas and outputs (Knowledge)
Outcome	Produce, analyse and reflect upon a diverse body of self-initiated research and experimentation that demonstrates an aptitude for managing and communicating complexity to diverse audiences (Process)
Outcome	Employ and appreciate the issues/benefits of relevant tools and processes in producing advanced, innovative and original design outputs across physical and digital domains (Process)
Outcome	Speculate on new and effective approaches to the subject and practice of graphic design that acknowledges other relative fields of knowledge (Communication)
Outcome	Communicate and work with collaborators effectively to achieve research and design goals (Communication)
Outcome	Present a portfolio of research and a self-directed major practical project that has been rigorously planned, is academically informed and offers outcomes and applications that meet professional standards (Realisation)

	Distinctive Features
1	Critical Studio Practice: Rooted in the logic of critical thinking through critical making (concept, text, artefact, event, etc.), you will deal with challenges (course and self-initiated) through a broad range of processes and media that incorporate traditional and emergent methodologies and technologies. An integrated approach to theory and practice is constant throughout the course delivered by accomplished tutors with particular expertise across contemporary graphic design practice, theory and history. Though challenging, this approach enables a distinct opportunity to develop an informed body of work that is relative and progressive, with a view to producing new and unlikely perspectives on and for the world.
2	Resourcing Excellence: The London College of Communication has an excellent history of bringing the practical, theoretical and conceptual to a meeting point for experimentation, debate and production. The exceptional resources available to our students span both the traditional and contemporary spectrums – from Letterpress, Screenprint, Photography, 3D construction and Bookbinding studios to 3D printing, the DigiLab suite and others. The UAL Futures platform offers further opportunities for our students to join an active and growing community concerned with creative technology.
3	Independent & Collaborative Working Practices: As a contemporary graphic design practitioner, it is increasingly important to build fluency in articulating and socialising your thinking, doing and feeling. Throughout your time on the course, you will explore new strategies to identify your stakeholders and their relation to a field of study/enquiry you will establish. This will take place through frequent presentations, seminars, tutorials and interviews with your peer group, the course team, visiting practitioners, external experts, the wider UAL body and elsewhere dependent on the priorities of your research. This pursuit will occur independently and in collaboration with your peers and the course team.
4	The course also explores ideas of the contemporary design studio. At points throughout the course you will work collaboratively in reading-writing-review-design groups offering an opportunity to test and examine new modes of working. We appreciate new modes of working through digital and technological developments, and welcome on and off-site collaboration through such faculties.
5	Course Expertise and Community: The MA Graphic Media Design course team are engaged in continuing professional practice across different specialist fields. We are also engaged in research concerning graphic design history, theory and pedagogy and through membership and activity in specialist research hubs and

	organisations, locally and internationally. This opens up opportunities for collaboration, discussion and employment for the course team and our students.
6	Design Discourse: The Design School has long been a 'go-to' establishment for informed opinion and critical contributions to contemporary design discourse within key industry periodicals; local, national and international academic forums; and also in the form of publications commissioned and distributed by leading international publishers. Teaching sessions and self-directed study will be supported by a curated lecture programme of leading practitioners offering a sharp focus upon alternative methods and approaches to graphic design related challenges and opportunities that acknowledge social, cultural, economic, political, technological and ethical contexts. In recent years, our students have attended lectures, seminars and discussions with leading practitioners, critics, artists and writers operating in local and international contexts. Participants within this course are situated within a thriving, active and progressive site of award-winning pedagogic development and critical subject debate. As such, discussions about learning and teaching approaches are brought into the dialogue, promoting a sharper understanding of how you learn, as much as what you learn. Such insight is pivotal moving forward to successfully engage in a design climate that is famously unpredictable and calls increasingly for entrepreneurial, collaborative, nomadic, polymorphic practitioners.
7	Network: It is understood the very first undergraduate graphic design course in the UK was established by renowned designer Tom Eckersley at the London College of Printing. This places the MA Graphic Media Design course in an excellent position to build and maintain connections with the staff, alumni and external partners who have engaged with the course and its counterparts within the Design School LCC over the years. The social, academic and business aspects of our students' developments are cultivated throughout their time on the course across a range of formats specifically for post-graduate students.
8	Research Community: The Design School at LCC champions the pursuit and engagement of scholarly activity at all levels, and particularly within the postgraduate department. A growing PhD community offers opportunities for our students to seek expert academic guidance, engage in research-oriented workshops and contemplate further academic progression onwards to PhD. Fields of research are identifiable through a growing number of distinct research hubs, such as 'Design & Activism', Design School and Creative Research into Sound Arts Practice (CRiSAP), Media School.
9	The Site of Engagement: The MA Graphic Media Design course runs alongside a suite of established and newly developed post-graduate courses spanning the rich and diverse spectrum of the current and emergent practices in the fields of visual communication, illustration, interaction design, service design, branding

	and identity, advertising, documentary, journalism, photography, publishing, public relations, sound arts and screenwriting. This diversity of individual and collective pursuits promotes a rich discursive arena for all engaged.
10	Self-directed Learning: A defining aspect of postgraduate study is the independent, self-directed approach. You are expected to timetable and manage your own learning according to your ambition and intentions. Your success or failure on the course will depend, to a great extent, on how rigorously and responsibly you take this self-direction and how well you respond to tutorial advice and advice from peers and collaborators. The level of self-management required will increase throughout the course.

Course Detail

Our approach is practice-led and research-oriented.

An integrated approach to theory and practice threads through the course delivered by an accomplished course team of awarded design practitioners, published researchers and experienced educators. This approach offers a distinct opportunity to develop a body of work that is relative and progressive.

What can you expect?

Your self-authored, practice-led enquiry will drive the programme of study. You will work in collaboration with the course tutors, fellow course participants and external partners.

Your long-term independent enquiry will be punctuated with specialist workshops, course-led briefs, tutor, peer and expert critique forums, site visits, lectures and talks from leading practitioners, thinkers and doers.

You will join and participate in a critical studio environment where practice-led, theoretical and historical contexts will be explored, critiqued and contemplated alongside one another.

MA Graphic Media Design runs alongside a suite of established and newly developed postgraduate courses, spanning the rich and diverse spectrum of the current and emergent practices in the fields of visual communication, illustration, interaction design, service design, branding and identity, advertising, documentary, journalism, photography, publishing, public relations, sound arts and screenwriting.

Work experience and opportunities

Throughout the course, you will have the opportunity to work in partnership with a team of course tutors and guests with specialist knowledge in practice/s of graphic design spanning commissioned work, research practice and teaching.

You will socialise your practice with key institutions, organisations and communities throughout the course with projects such as the In Search Of… series, Positioning Practice and A Line Which Forms a Volume: a critical reader of design research published by the course, with contributions from Stuart Bertolotti-Bailey (The Serving Library), Jack Self (Real Review), Francisco Laranjo (Modes of Criticism) and more.

Course structure

The course is comprised of four units, delivered across four terms. Throughout a taught week you will have scheduled teaching sessions as well as opportunities to access technical area as and a wide range of other College resources.

Tailored Skills Development, <u>Academic Support</u> and <u>Language Development</u> sessions are scheduled to support and inform your developing practical and academic literacies whilst you are with us on the course.

Outside of this core delivery, you will have the opportunity to utilise a range of excellent resources available at LCC to produce your experimentation and continue developing your projects.

Your success or failure on the course will depend, to a great extent on how rigorously and responsibly you exercise self-direction and how well you respond to tutorial advice and advice from peers and collaborators. The level of self-management required will increase throughout the course.

Please note: We will assume that you are technically proficient and able to research and develop any further skills you require. Technical tuition is restricted to the tutorial support of individual projects. If you need to acquire a significant skill base, then you are advised to do so before you apply for the course.

Mode of Study

MA Graphic Media 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

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 Graphic Media Design is comprised of four units:

- Unit 1 Critical Perspectives & Methodologies

- Unit 2 Collaborative Project (The Reciprocal Studio)
- Unit 3 Design Enquiry & Definition
- Unit 4 Major Project

Autumn, Term 1

Critical Perspectives and Methodologies (60 credits)

This unit functions as an introduction to postgraduate study, critical and reflective practice, and alternative working approaches that blend graphic design practice, history and theory.

This approach is employed to build a confidence in moving past the familiar into the unknown, through close readings of the variables that shape contemporary graphic design practice. A curated lecture series, anchored by key reference material, will support the studio-based delivery.

Spring, Term 2

Collaborative Unit (20 credits)

The Collaborative Unit urges you to independently initiate opportunities to socialise your research through building relationships with key partners associated with your research agenda/s i.e. institutions, subject experts, users, commissioners, producers, fellow practitioners/researchers, etc.

These activities may take place locally or remotely, through an excellent opportunity for you to establish links with relative industry partners within the thriving design culture here in London.

Design Enquiry and Definition (40 credits)

Alongside the Collaborative Unit, you will continue establishing a hypothesis for your Major Project by testing your projects currency in varied ways through practice-led design methodologies and processes; readings and writings around your field/area of study; and ongoing critical reflection.

The products of this enquiry will feed directly into your Major Project Definition, which you will submit as part of your Design Enquiry and Definition unit submission.

Summer, Term 3

Units summary:

Design Enquiry and Definition (continued)
Major Project (60 credits)

Within this stage of the course, you will further your knowledge and extend your critical and professional understanding through the consolidation and realisation of the Major Project.

You are expected to produce work demonstrating a significant synthesis of research and practice drawing on the skills and knowledge acquired in the first three stages of the course.

Autumn, Term 4

Major Project (continued)

Your Major Project will demonstrate, both in content and form, your advanced understanding of graphic design practice, history and theory. You will spend this phase of your study pursuing an argued and distinct line of inquiry working towards a major output (or body of work).

This will be supported by a critical context paper and critical rationale articulating the motivations and objectives of the project acknowledging key theories, contexts, and stakeholders for the research.

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Workshop
- Seminar
- Lecture
- Tutorials
- Self directed learning
- Speakers and visits
- Assessed assignments

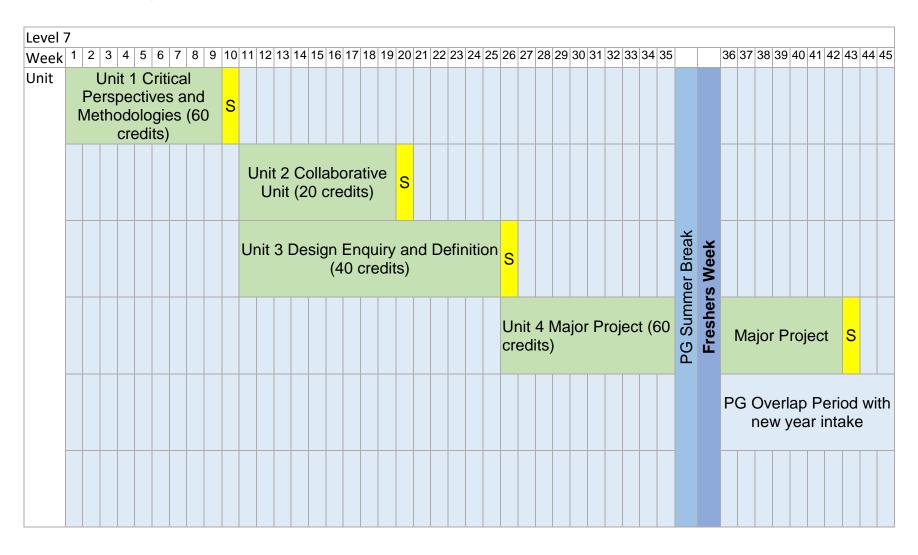**Assessment Methods**

- Projects
- Research Proposal
- Portfolio

• Critical Context Paper & Rationale

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
- Consultation with leading design practitioners and educators operating within LCC, UAL and external to the institution
- Consultation with current 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 Critical Perspectives and Methodologies (60 credits) — S

Unit 2 Collaborative Unit (20 credits) — S

Unit 3 Design Enquiry and Definition (40 credits) — S

Unit 4 Major Project (60 credits)

PG Summer Break

Freshers Week

Major Project — S

PG Overlap Period with new year intake

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