

MA Documentary Film
Programme Specification 2018/19

APPROVED

Course AOS Code	05059
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No. of Terms	4
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FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
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QAA Subject Benchmark	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
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Course Credits	180
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Term Duration	10 Week(s)
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Valid From	September 1st 2018
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Programme	Film and Television
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PSRB	
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No PSRB Assigned	
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Work placement offered	No
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Course Entry Requirements	<p>You should have a proven interest in documentary films and a keen desire to make your own documentary films. You should know what kinds of documentary interest you and why you have an ambition to deepen your involvement in documentary film study and production. A portfolio is not essential but applicants will be asked to send links to documentary work they have already made (if available).</p> <p>Q. Do I need to have made documentary film work before applying? Successful applicants have generally made their own videos and have some experience of filming, but we can also consider candidates without a production background who demonstrate exceptional film ideas and directing potential. We often have applications from mid-career photographers or producers in related fields.</p> <p>A first degree is desirable but not essential. If you do not have the required qualifications, but do have professional experience, you may be eligible to gain credit for previous learning and experience through the Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APeL) i.e. professional experience or a combination of courses and work experience. Your experience is assessed as a learning process and tutors will evaluate that experience for currency, validity, quality and sufficiency. An awareness of and interest in current developments in documentary film is expected. Knowledge of film and media history and theory is not a requirement but we expect candidates to be interested in studying such questions.</p> <p><u>Language requirements (International/EU)</u> 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</p>
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	<p>English test score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IELTS 7.0 (or equivalent) with a minimum of 6.0 in each of the four skills is required. - 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>http://www.arts.ac.uk/lcc/courses/support-for-international-students/</p> <p>Deferring an offer:</p> <p>Applicants holding an offer for the coming academic year are permitted to defer their place to the following academic year, e.g. 2019/20 place deferred to 2020/21. International applicants should first meet any offer conditions and pay the deposit in order to defer. In all cases, deferred places will be held for one year.</p> <p>Making a deferred application:</p> <p>Home/EU applicants are permitted to make a deferred application, for example to the following academic year instead of the next, e.g. to 2020/21 instead of to 2019/20. Immigration regulations prevent International applicants from making a deferred application.</p>
Selection Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that you have knowledge and awareness of documentary film culture, practice, directors, films and debates • Evidence of an understanding of what goes into making a good documentary idea and a keen desire to make your own authored documentary films

Introduction to Course

The course is designed to enable you to direct and produce, shoot and edit original documentary actuality footage, culminating in a creative, individually authored documentary film for the Major Project. In so doing you will have the chance to develop a full range of practical skills, including researching, writing, camera work and sound recording, producing and editing. This is situated within the context of a creative and critical understanding of the theory, methodology and practice of each stage in documentary film-making from conception to thinking about audiences. The course covers researching a documentary, writing treatments, proposals and creating Taster Films to producing, directing shooting, promoting and exhibiting your film.

The design of the course meets the terms and conditions for the award of the title of Master of Arts Documentary Film as approved by the University of the Arts London.

We are committed to teaching, learning and assessment designed to enhance, nurture and recognise your employability, individuality and entrepreneurship.

Enterprise and employability within a creative education in arts, design and media is about the integration of practice, behaviours and qualities that enable you to develop and sustain a rewarding professional life.

The curriculum is designed to communicate and open up the possibilities of your own creativity by developing your career aspirations and professional awareness for enterprise and employability, whether for the creative and cultural sector or beyond.

Enterprise and employability is about more than getting a job, it is about enabling you to find, make and take opportunities and to meet your aspirations in a changing world, whether as a successful creative professional, innovator, practitioner, employee and/or entrepreneur in the UK and globally.

Outline of Curriculum

The course is made of six units that interleave documentary filmmaking practice with conceptual work on the history and theory of Documentary Studies. They closely relate and support one another. The more you wrestle with the defining questions of Documentary Studies, the better your thinking will be when you're filmmaking; conversely, the more fully you develop your filmmaking practice, the richer your experience will be to engage with thinking and ideas.

Unit 1.1 Documentary Process and Practice. This unit introduces documentary film making to equip you with the core skills of documentary film production. You will be inducted into documentary camerawork, directing and editing and be encouraged to take on different team roles as appropriate including producing, directing, camera, sound recording and editing.

Concurrent with this is **Unit 1.2** that positions documentary production practices within a cultural, historical, social and political context. The MA is conceived as a place where theory, history and practice meet, inform and influence one another — you will learn to approach practice-led enquiry and research so that you develop practical skills alongside the facility to ask key questions about documentary practices. This blended approach is employed to build a confidence in moving past the familiar to the unknown, through close readings of documentary texts and films alongside reflexive examination of your own work.

This period of study concludes with submission of a group film and academic essay.

Unit 2.1 is the Collaborative Unit. Building on the collaborative work of your group film, this Unit is designed to enable you to reflect on how you identify, form and develop collaborative working relationships with a range of potential partners.

Filmmaking is an inherently collaborative activity as we know from each term's work but some individuals arrive at this MA with experience only as self-shooters in documentary. Although there are times when this approach is effective, the emphasis on collaboration in this Unit enables you to develop a deeper understanding of each singular specialism in documentary filmmaking and how to work effectively with colleagues specialising in particular areas (e.g. sound recording or camerawork). You're encouraged to independently initiate opportunities to socialise your research and film ideas through building relationships with key stakeholders associated with your practice e.g. viewers, commissioners, producers, fellow practitioners/researchers, subject or technical experts etc. This may take the form of meetings, on-line groups, location visits, projects, interviews, focus groups, field trips etc. These activities may take place locally or remotely, and is

an excellent opportunity for you to establish links with documentary industry partners within the thriving film culture here in London.

Unit 2.2 Documentary Practices: Taster Film & Pitch & Critical Context starts a nine- month period of making your graduation film. After a period of exploration and experimentation in previous production units, you now identify the documentary film idea you would most like to make for your Major Project, research it, develop a style and make a Taster Film as part of an assessed pitch and proposal for the graduation film.

Unit 3.1 Documentary Practices: Ethics & Methodologies gives historical and theoretical support and context to your documentary practice, further deepening an understanding of documentary production practices with a sharper focus on documentary ethics and legal frameworks. We explore theoretical and conceptual questions alongside the ethics and practices of documentary filmmaking for example where the relationship between filmmakers and their subjects have long been debated. Key areas include: aesthetic practices and styles; ethics of different types of documentary practice; the kinds of audiences addressed and the spaces of exhibition of documentary films. The Unit builds on Unit 1.2 where students situate their chosen enquiry in cultural, historical, social and political contexts. This is a key opportunity to design and develop your own research ideas. For some this has led to successful PhD thesis proposals and publications in Documentary Studies.

Unit 4 is the Major Project that features your graduation film. Building on Unit 2.2, this Unit is where you fashion your voice as an author and director, creating a film as a sole-credit director that will support – even underpin - your career development. Here you make your graduation film - the culmination of your documentary practice on the MA. A great graduation film is an effective calling card in the industry.

You are encouraged to track your progress in making the film through keeping a self- reflective journal throughout the research and production process. This will support you in both refining the film and in producing a critical, analytical and evaluative report on your experience in research and production.

Distinctive Features

	Distinctive Features
1	The course takes a broad and creative view of documentary film, from mainstream documentary film to gallery installations, documentary cinema, activist or guerrilla documentary with the freedom to explore the use of animated or dramatised sequences. Successive external examiners of this MA describe it as leading the field in the UK nationally.
2	You will be introduced to methodologies, as well as the theories, contexts and methods for specific forms of documentary filmmaking. You will also learn how to compile research dossiers to support your films. Your study will be framed by lectures and seminars on ethics, law, and documentary film history.
3	The synthesis of theory and practice has enhanced the success and employability of our alumni from whom there are many examples of successful projects culminating in engaging and even compelling films, many of which address significant social issues with creativity and flair and have resulted in many documentary film festival screenings, award nominations, television commissions and prizes.
4	In addition to the course units on history, theory and practice of documentary film, you will be able to develop collaborative projects that allow you to pursue specific areas of interest and frame your documentary ideas within other contexts.
5	<p>You will work with a highly qualified and experienced team of practitioners, educators and researchers who deliver the course. The MA makes the most of the documentary industry in and around London, engaging with London as a media centre rich in stories, film-making opportunities, work experience and expertise.</p> <p>LCC embraces and contributes to London as a global city, drawing strength from London's internationality and diversity. Staff are drawn from a combination of academic backgrounds and the documentary film, television and NGO/charity sectors. The Course team regularly publish and produce film and television programmes, as well as maintaining links with other specialist institutions and the industry. Specialist guest lecturers from the industry who teach on the course know the industry at a national and international level, thus ensuring that the course reflects ongoing developments in the documentary sector.</p> <p>MA Documentary Film has a reputation for developing reflexive and thoughtful practitioners highly attuned to the context of production and the ethical responsibilities of the documentary director.</p>
6	The course maintains links with a range of venues and film festivals. You are actively encouraged to attend screenings at venues such as the BFI Southbank, The Dothouse and Renoir cinemas, community screenings, Tate Modern and Tate Britain, the ICA, Rich Mix and festivals such as the Sheffield International Film Festival (SIDF) IDFA, The Open City Festival, BritDocs and many others. We particularly encourage students to attend a documentary festival such as SIDF or the Open City documentary Festival in the summer term. You are also encouraged to use specialist libraries such as the British Film Institute's Reuben Library nearby on the Southbank.
7	One of the differences you will experience between working at postgraduate level and working at undergraduate level is that you will be expected to timetable and manage your own learning to a much greater extent at postgraduate level. Your success on the course will depend, to a

	<p>great extent, on how rigorously and responsibly you take this self-direction and how well you respond to tutorial advice. The level of self-management required of you will increase throughout the course. We strongly recommend that you do not try to work “ even part-time “ whilst on this MA, especially during term-time. Our experience is that students enjoy the MA and achieve better if they resolve financial issues before coming to us.</p>
8	<p>Terms one and two of the course, will provide you with a detailed knowledge of creative documentary film making methods and practice, contextualised within a historical, critical and theoretical framework. You will explore contemporary documentary film practice alongside documentary histories. You will be encouraged and guided to develop your ability and skills to write treatments and proposals, shoot, direct and edit short films individually and in groups. Your ability to work both in groups and independently is equally important to your progress. The knowledge and skills that you acquire on the course will enrich your ability to work in documentary film environments within television, film or related industries and sectors. The documentary film-making skills you develop are sought-after and highly marketable which can lead to work in many other fields.</p>
9	<p>In terms three and four of the course, you will further your knowledge and extend your experience and practice of documentary film making by conducting a self- directed Major Project including your individually authored documentary film. This project should emerge from your own documentary film interests and is likely to be linked to your career aspirations and creative goals. In conducting this research, you will need to employ a set of skills and knowledge that are appropriate to both academic study and documentary film production. In this term your initiative and ability to work independently becomes increasingly important, as does that of working as part of a team in shooting and directing films. This phase of the course emphasises your ability to engage in the process of peer review and self-reflection. By engaging in and completing a self-directed major research project, you will be well placed to move into a documentary film-making role, on either a full-time or freelance basis. You may also see the MA as a pathway into full- time research, a higher research degree (MPhil / PhD) or higher education.</p>

Years

Year 1

Credits	180	Percentage of Scheduled Learning	18
Exit Awards	Postgraduate Certificate – 60 Credits Postgraduate Diploma - 120 Credits		

Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows: :

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Contextualise documentary film practices within broad historical, ethical and legal frameworks applicable to diverse sectors, from broadcast documentary to documentary cinema, activism and gallery contexts.
Aim	Develop your documentary film knowledge and techniques for professional application, career opportunities and enhancement.
Aim	Equip you with the skills and methodologies to create documentary films, including developing your basic skills in camerawork and editing, creating 'Taster Films' and writing treatments and dossiers, and engaging in documentary practices to industry standards.
Aim	Develop your abilities in self-reflection, problem-solving, analysis and evaluation through both theoretical engagement and practical application.
Aim	Equip you with research and production skills to create a self-directed major film project that reflects your distinctive thinking and analysis, synthesis and evaluation of documentary practice, whilst reflecting academic rigor in supporting reflexive documentation.
Outcome	Conduct a rigorously planned and academically informed self-directed Major Project, supported by a critical, evaluative, reflexive and analytical report. (Research / Analysis / Subject Knowledge / Technical Competence / Communication and Presentation / Personal and professional Development / Collaborative and / or independent professional working)
Outcome	Use the full range of documentary-making skills for a successful production - from research to camerawork, producing, editing and promotion of your film. (Research / Analysis / Subject Knowledge / Technical Competence / Communication and Presentation / Personal and Professional Development / Collaborative and / or independent professional working)
Outcome	Apply your knowledge of documentary film practices and methods to the creation of films, treatments, proposals, 'Taster Films' research dossiers and supporting documentation in line with professional practices. (Subject Knowledge / Research / Communication and Presentation / Technical Competence / Collaborative and / or independent professional working)
Outcome	Critically engage in theoretical perspectives on documentary and evaluate contemporary discourse on representation. (Analysis / Subject Knowledge)
Outcome	Apply a broad range of research strategies to a variety of different projects in a diverse range of formats. (Analysis / Experimentation / Research / Technical Competence)
Outcome	Contextualise documentary film practices within an historical framework that understands documentary's evolving relationship in the in the digital media world. (Analysis / Research / Subject Knowledge)

Outcome	Apply concepts of narrative to the creation of a documentary film (Subject Knowledge / Experimentation / Communication and Presentation / Collaborative and / or independent professional working)
Outcome	Analyse the ethical and legal debates relating to documentary film practices within a legal framework. (Research / Analysis / Subject Knowledge / Communication and Presentation)
Outcome	Engage in critical self-reflection and peer review, developing your skills in evaluation and communication. (Analysis / Communication and Presentation / Personal and Professional Development / Collaborative and / or independent professional working)

Course Diagram – MA Documentary Film

		Autumn Term (Term 1 10 Weeks)										Spring Term (Term 2 10 weeks)										Summer Term (Term 3 10 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									
Freshers Week	Induction Week	1.1 Documentary Process and Practice (20 Credits)		F	DPP cont'd		Christmas Break										DPP cont'd	F	S	Easter Break																								Induction Week																										
		1.2 Documentary: History and Theory (20 Credits)		F	H&T cont'd		S	2.1 Collaborative Unit (20 Credits)										S	Documentary Practices: TFP & CC cont'd.										S	PG Summer Break Independent Study / Writing Up Period														PG Overlap Period with new year intake Sept 2018																										
																						2.2 DP: TFPCC (40 Credits)										F	3.1 DP: E&M (20 Credits)										F	DP: E&M cont'd		S																								
																																										F	4.1 Major Project (60 Credits)		PG Summer Break Independent Study / Writing Up Period																									
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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