

**MA Photojournalism and Documentary  
Photography (online)  
Programme Specification 2021/22**

<b>Awarding Body</b>	University of the Arts London
<b>College</b>	London College of Communication
<b>School</b>	Media
<b>Programme</b>	Photography (L046)
<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 7 Masters
<b>Course Credits</b>	180
<b>Mode</b>	Part Time, Distance Learning
<b>Duration of Course</b>	2 years
<b>Valid From</b>	September 1st 2021
<b>Course Entry Requirements</b>	<p>The course team welcomes applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, from all over the world. MA Photojournalism and Documentary Photography attracts students who apply direct from an Honours degree course, or a professional or academic qualification recognised as equivalent to an Honours degree, or those with other, equivalent qualifications.</p> <p>Graduates of all disciplines may apply, although most students have a background in Arts and Humanities. You must be socially aware, inquisitive, self-motivated and passionate about a career in photojournalism or documentary photography. Relevant professional experience or work experience in the industry is increasingly important.</p> <p>Educational level may be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honours degree (named above);</li> <li>• Possession of equivalent qualifications;</li> <li>• Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required;</li> <li>• Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required.</li> </ul>

## **APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential 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 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](#).

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:

- Evidence of prior knowledge and/or experience of Photography that would indicate potential to successfully complete the programme of study.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social awareness, inquisitiveness and passion about a career in photojournalism or documentary photography.</li><li>• An ability to work on one or more projects over a sustained period of time and in an intimate and involved way (portfolio).</li><li>• A journalistic and documentary awareness and an understanding of research and practice methodologies and a realistic idea of what makes a strong project (project ideas).</li></ul>
<b>Scheduled Learning and Teaching</b>	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. Scheduled learning and teaching activity may include lectures, seminars, studio and workshop briefings, tutorials, external visits and project briefings.

## Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

### Year 1

<b>Percentage of Scheduled Learning</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Postgraduate Certificate	60

### Year 2

<b>Percentage of Scheduled Learning</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>Credits</b>
Postgraduate Diploma	120
Master of Arts	180

## Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Facilitate substantial development of your creative abilities, techniques, self-reflection, evaluation and personal vision within photojournalism and documentary photography;
Aim	Prepare you for the realities of the current marketplace by equipping you with the necessary methodological frameworks and in-depth knowledge to operate in the professional arena and the relevant skills needed in the new digital landscape of communications;
Aim	Facilitate you in the organisation and development of a body of photojournalism and documentary photography that reflects a commitment to intelligent, involved, research-driven and ethical photography as practiced at the forefront of the industry;
Aim	Establish a dynamic and meaningful framework of critical analysis and awareness of the nature of contemporary and historical photojournalism and documentary photography and its relation to other forms of practice, and to situate this within the context of wider social, economic and political forces;
Aim	Facilitate the development of critical self-reflection, problem-solving in complex and unpredictable situations, analysis and evaluation through both critical engagement and practical application in a collaborative engagement with fellow students;
Aim	Equip you with a range of knowledge and frameworks to conduct an independent self-directed major documentary project that reflects academic and journalistic rigour, a developed visual sense and critical self evaluation.
Outcome	Demonstrate your creative, visual, intellectual and technical abilities to produce a body of work of professional standard within the fields of photojournalism and documentary photography (Enquiry, Knowledge, Realisation, Communication, Process)
Outcome	Critically evaluate newsworthy and documentary ideas in terms of their visual and commercial potential for development and presentation in the contemporary marketplace, as well as current

	research and advanced scholarship in the field (Knowledge, Enquiry, Process)
Outcome	Critically analyse photojournalism and documentary photography within both historical and theoretical frameworks, evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline, as well as in contemporary discourse on technological change, representation, ethics and other issues, and apply your appreciation of these concerns to the location of your practice within a wider context (Enquiry, Knowledge, Communication)
Outcome	Demonstrate, within your creative output, a thorough understanding of the ethical, legal, moral and commercial issues that impinge upon the forefront of current professional practice (Knowledge, Enquiry, Communication)
Outcome	Present a professional portfolio of work and market your ideas and stories, in a professional manner, to the marketplace, with a thorough appreciation and application of the opportunities offered by digital technology (Process, Realisation)
Outcome	Engage in critical self-reflection and formative peer review, reflecting your developed skills in evaluation and communication within an interactive online environment (Enquiry, Process, Realisation)
Outcome	Conduct a rigorously planned and academically informed self-directed major project, completing the necessary original research and production, to industry standard, for a major documentary or photojournalistic project, supported by a critical, evaluative and analytical report, showing originality in the application of knowledge and critique (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Realisation)

	<b>Distinctive Features</b>
1	The course's identity and reputation within industry is second to none. Every year, graduates from the course go on to be commissioned by national and international newspapers, magazines, NGOs and other creative organisations.
2	At present, this is the only course of its kind and level available entirely via online part time delivery. The course is intended for mature self-motivated students who are already established in their practice, or who can prove a dedicated commitment to a career in the industry. The tightly structured and highly specialised nature of the course encourages you to develop your practice to a recognisably professional level, whilst at the same time encouraging you to develop a critical perspective on photojournalism and documentary photography, to analyse and reflect upon your own work and to develop a personal vision and strategy within the medium. The longer timeframe of the part time option will allow students to explore the development of their practice in a reflexive and considered way. This will allow students who are already in employment either as staff or freelancers, or in another industry, to participate, as well as those who seek the extended support of a 2 year programme to complete a major body of work. The unique nature of the course with its focus on real time interaction with tutors and other students through live web conferencing, allows for 'situated learning', i.e. the participants can get feedback and support whilst actually working on their practice based projects without having to return physically to the classroom for tuition. Additionally, because of the wide range of backgrounds and locations of the cohort, the course generates a stimulating and energetic environment for debate and discussion.
3	The course uses a series of overlapping interactive spaces with differing temporalities to create our 'virtual commons'. This replicates the physical face-to-face environment of the academy, with spaces that are akin to classrooms, libraries, cafes and 'water coolers', ensuring that there is a dynamic and engaging environment in which there is a substantial degree of real time 'live' interaction with tutors, fellow participants and visiting faculty.
4	The course team has an excellent track record of teaching the practice of photojournalism and documentary photography to the highest levels as well as undertaking their own practice-based research projects leading to exhibition and publication internationally. The team's approach to teaching is marked by a close, informal, but very professional working relationship with an energised group of students.
5	Students' progress in a structured way from small, set assignments towards the final self-directed major project, thus building a repertoire of skills and

	methodologies. The course is practice based and highly vocational, and founded on a problem based experiential approach to learning.
6	The integration of theory and practice is foundational to the course. Students are introduced to critical concepts and ideas from the history and theory of photojournalism and documentary photography, and they are encouraged to wrestle with and respond to these in a way that actively informs their development as photographers. This is achieved through dialogue and discussion, reading, research and reflective writing. At each stage, students are equipped to develop a combination of journalistic, academic and practice-based research skills, the culmination of which is a critical and evaluative report that underpins their final major project.
7	The course also offers a programme of visiting speakers (including ex- students), consisting of leading and influential figures from the world of photojournalism and documentary photography. These speakers may also contribute to seminars and tutorials. The course maintains close connections with the industry, including agencies, photography magazines, editorial publications, galleries and book publishers.
8	An essential feature is the group dynamic of the enrolled community of students which has become a flourishing element of the course, providing mutual support, criticism and networking, as well as skill and information sharing.
9	Professional and Personal Development (PPD) is embedded in every term of the course through regular discussions of professional practice and the visiting lecturer program.
10	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 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. This reflects the degree of initiative and commitment that you will need to operate in the professional arena. As an online course you will need to be especially rigorous in managing your time and in attending the timetabled tutorials and group sessions online.
11	The course's teaching philosophy is centered on the creation of a collaborative learning space, where individuals can enhance their practice through interaction with their peers. This forms a 'community of practice' that mirrors the larger professional community of photojournalism and documentary photography. Mapping and modelling this larger community prepares the students for entry

	<p>into the profession, providing a ‘sandbox’ in which they can develop their professional practice in a controlled environment. Our intention is that students learn through growing into a practice based collaborative learning community, which then enables them to be part of the wider community of practice of photojournalists. The combination of practice based, experiential learning is underpinned by theoretical and contextual studies that locate the practitioner within a community of practice, and locate that community within a broader socio-cultural milieu of the media.</p>
12	<p>Students on the MA Photojournalism and Documentary Photography course come from a variety of backgrounds. Many will already be working practitioners who wish to further develop and hone their practice through the completion of a long-term project at MA level. Others may come from other related areas of interest such as journalism, the humanities and social sciences, graphic design and fine art, environmental and other sciences and want to establish the photographic and journalistic methods to translate their interests into visual terms. In the experience of the course team, some of our most successful students have had limited photographic experience before undertaking the course, but all had the passion and commitment to the medium necessary to survive in an extremely competitive marketplace.</p>
13	<p>Students are expected to be mature, self-reliant and highly motivated. These qualities are absolutely essential for those aspiring to work in a profession that is largely freelance in nature. Photojournalism and documentary photography involves engaging with the real world, working on stories and ideas for publication and exhibition. Although extremely rewarding and often enjoyable, it can be physically, emotionally and financially demanding at times and you should bear this in mind when developing and planning projects and schedules.</p>
14	<p>The course will prepare graduates for a future career as a freelance or staff photographer working the fields of photojournalism and documentary practice additionally, the course is a suitable preparation for those wishing to work as picture editors, researchers, curators and in photo agencies, editorial publications and NGO picture desks. The research elements of the course are also a suitable preparation for higher levels of study including PhD. The course readily acknowledges that a career within the world of photojournalism and documentary photography can take many different forms and is by no means restricted to becoming a practicing photographer alone. We welcome students with a broad interest in the documentary process and encourage all participants to look beyond the traditional image of the solo-practitioner towards a future in which collaboration and adaptability are essential as multiple medias converge and evolve in the story telling process.</p>

## Course Detail

Photojournalists and documentary photographers explore and record human experience. Beginning with figures like Henri Cartier-Bresson (regarded as the father of modern photojournalism), they have recorded significant moments in history, documented unfolding news and created images that have gained iconic status. Central to their work is the telling of a story through images.

This internationally-recognised course is aimed at people who want to pursue a career in photojournalism or documentary photography, or who are already active in these fields but wish to develop new skills and ideas.

### What can you expect?

The aim is to equip you with a thorough grounding in the discipline, whether through film or digitally-based photography.

You'll follow a rigorous programme of photographic assignments, as well as initiating and developing your own projects examining topics and issues of special interest to you. All this takes place within the framework of the history and development of the medium, together with critical ethical and theoretical contexts.

You'll be encouraged to develop a wider vision of the practice and potential of the medium through an exploration of the uses of documentary and reportage photography in magazines, portfolios, exhibitions, books, television, online and other multimedia areas.

Graduates of this course have won numerous awards, including the World Press Photo (Daily Life, singles category) and the Taylor Wessing Portrait Prize.

MA Photojournalism and Documentary Photography is taught in both full-time and part-time/online modes. This course is taught within the Media School at LCC.

### Mode of Study

MA Photojournalism and Documentary Photography Online is in part-time mode which runs for 90 weeks over 2 academic years. You will be expected to commit 20 hours per week to study.

## Course Units

Each course is divided into units, which are credit-rated. The minimum unit size is 20 credits. The MA course structure involves five units, totalling 180 credits.

## **Year 1**

### **Photojournalism Practice (40 credits)**

#### **History of Photojournalism and Documentary Photography (20 credits)**

In the first week, you'll take part in an online induction programme, using web conferencing, in which you will:

- Become familiar with the course structure
- Be introduced to the teaching staff and your fellow students
- Access information about the Student Union, Student Services and Learning Resources
- Become familiar with PGNET, delivered through the software Moodle

In the Photojournalism Practice unit you will examine the theoretical, methodological and practical frameworks necessary for the research and production of successful photo essays.

The unit will explore the technical, aesthetic and journalistic aspects of the photo essay, including the generation of ideas, research, shooting, picture editing and caption writing.

Particular emphasis will be placed on developing a news sense of what 'makes' a story, and on the application of multimedia techniques in narrative storytelling.

History of Photojournalism and Documentary Photography unit traces and analyses the development and historical context of photojournalism and documentary photography, identifying the major practitioners and movements and paying particular attention to their methodologies.

The production, distribution and reception of contemporary photojournalism will be contextualised within a historical framework that takes account of social, political, cultural and economic factors.

### **Photojournalism Practice (continued)**

#### **History of Photojournalism and Documentary Photography (continued)**

#### **Documentary Practice with Research Methods (40 credits)**

#### **Collaborative Unit (20 credits)**

The unit Documentary Practice with Research Methods further develops your knowledge of the methodology of documentary and photojournalistic production, culminating in the production of larger scale photo essays.

This is underpinned by an emphasis on research principles, strategies and methods and their application to a photojournalism/documentary context.

## **Year 2**

### **Documentary Practice with Research Methods (continued)**

#### **Collaborative Unit (continued)**

#### **Major Project (60 credits)**

Major Project unit is an original self-directed major research project involving the development and production of a substantial body of photographic work, supported by a critical, analytical and evaluative report.

You will also write a proposal and full captions to a professional standard. You'll be expected to apply the methodologies developed on the course, and demonstrate evidence of a mature and considered personal vision.

#### **Major Project (continued)**

If you are unable to continue or decide to exit the course, there are two possible exit awards.

A Postgraduate Certificate will be awarded on successful completion of the first 60 credits and a Postgraduate Diploma will be awarded on successful completion of the first 120 credits.

## **Learning and Teaching Methods**

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Tutorials
- Group work

## **Assessment Methods**

- Portfolio
- Essay

- Critical reports
- Research papers
- Documentary and photojournalistic projects

## **Reference Points**

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- The College policies and initiatives
- Level descriptors
- Benchmark statements

# 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	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
	<b>Year 1</b>																																																			
Unit	Unit 1 Photojournalism Practice (40 credits)												Unit 1 Photojournalism Practice cont.												Unit 3 Documentary Practice with Research Methods (40 credits)																											
	Unit 2 History and Theory of Photojournalism and Documentary Photography (20 credits)												Unit 2 History and Theory of Photojournalism and Documentary Photography cont.												Unit 4 Collaborative Unit (20 credits)																											
	<b>Year 2</b>																																																			
	Unit 3 Documentary Practice with Research Methods cont.																																																			
	Unit 4 Collaborative Unit cont.												Unit 5 Major Project (60 credits)												Unit 5 Major Project cont.																											

S = Summative Assessment

Independent Study Time

Holidays

*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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