

# **MA Interaction Design Communication**

Programme Specification 2019/20

<b>Awarding Body</b>	University of the Arts London
<b>College</b>	London College of Communication
<b>School</b>	University of the Arts London
<b>Programme</b>	Interaction and Visual Communications (L039)
<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 7 Masters
<b>Course Credits</b>	180
<b>Mode</b>	Full Time
<b>Duration of Course</b>	1 year
<b>Valid From</b>	September 1st 2019
<b>QAA Subject Benchmark</b>	Art and Design
<b>UAL Subject Classification</b>	Communication and graphic design
<b>JACS Code</b>	W212 - Multimedia design
<b>UCAS Code</b>	N/A
<b>PSRB</b>	N/A
<b>Work placement offered</b>	N/A
<b>Course Entry Requirements</b>	<p>MA Interaction Design Communication has a particular aim to appeal to communication designers who are interested in exploring these new and emerging areas of design practice.</p> <p>The course seeks students who have a critical understand of how technologies and digital culture are affecting design practices, and who are keen to work with network digital systems and in areas of design research and practice that challenge preconceptions.</p> <p>Although not an entry requirement, you should be comfortable with some basic coding (some i.e. HTML CSS) in order to communicate ideas with colleagues, although strong creative experience in this area is an advantage. We will introduce you to various coding languages and design prototyping platforms during the course, but expect that individuals will develop their skills base within specific project work.</p>

The course team welcomes applicants from a broad range of backgrounds, from all over the world. MA Interaction Design Communication attracts students who apply direct from an Honours degree course in a field relevant to graphic design, or those with other, equivalent qualifications.

The course team also welcomes students with relevant experience or those who may have previously worked in industry.

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. Your experience is assessed as a learning process and tutors will evaluate that experience for currency, validity, quality and sufficiency;
- 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.

	<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"><li>• IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) is required, with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four skills.</li><li>• If your first language is not English, you can check you have achieved the correct IELTS level in English on the <a href="#">Language Requirements page</a>.</li></ul> <p>For further details regarding international admissions and advice please visit the <a href="#">International Applications page</a>.</p>
<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<p>Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• 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 the ability to engage in and contribute to critical discussion.</li><li>• In the project proposal a description of the area of interest, field of study and the particular focus of their</li></ul>

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.
- A willingness to work in the physical realm with networked digital systems and in areas of design research and practice that challenges preconceptions.
- A willingness to work with networked digital systems and an awareness of how they shape the varied contexts of human behaviour.

# Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

## Year 1

<b>Percentage of Scheduled Learning</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Awards</b>	<b>Credits</b>
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 you with the opportunity to develop as a professional practitioner within the expanded field of Interaction Design Communication.
Aim	Provide you with an understanding of industry in order you understand the specialised industrial context of practice in this field.
Aim	Develop your ability to employ rigour in the analysis, synthesis and evaluation of Interaction Design Communication theory and practice, through the completion of a major project.
Aim	Enable you to solve problems with self-direction and originality, and to act independently in planning and implementing Interaction Design Communication projects.
Aim	Provide you with the opportunity to produce speculative design solutions that use critical ideas to propose areas of innovative design practice.
Aim	Provide you with the opportunity to develop your specialism within the expanded field of Interaction Design Communication.
Aim	Enable you to prototype digital and analogue design artefacts using processes widely used in industry and practice.
Aim	Enable you to communicate complex ideas from critical and user centred perspectives to advocate a particular direction.
Aim	Enable you to ask critical questions of established systems and processes and products.
Aim	Develop your ability to work collaboratively and express complex ideas to diverse audiences.
Outcome	Produce innovative project work within the expanded field of Interaction Design Communication across the physical and digital domains. (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Realisation, Communication)
Outcome	Demonstrate an understanding of the expanded field of Interaction Design Communication through advanced practice. (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Realisation, Communication)

Outcome	Use relevant digital and analogue design prototyping platforms and processes to realise projects. (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process, Realisation)
Outcome	Understand and use a range of software and media tools to communicate complex ideas. (Enquiry, Process, Realisation)
Outcome	Demonstrate an understanding of critical ideas that frame experimental practice – through practice and written reflection. (Enquiry, Knowledge, Process)
Outcome	Present complex ideas to diverse audiences. (Process, Realisation)
Outcome	Demonstrate an understanding of the value of Interaction Design Communication methodologies in framing design questions and proposing design solutions. (Knowledge, Communication, Process)
Outcome	Articulate user perspectives within complex design processes. (Enquiry, Knowledge)
Outcome	Work collaboratively to achieve research and design goals. (Process)

	<b>Distinctive Features</b>
1	<p>The Expanded Field of Interaction, Design and Communication: The subject mix of interaction design, speculative design, critical design and communication design is a distinctive feature of the course that enables students to work across these three domains in a highly fluid way that is representative of contemporary design and media practice. This builds on LCC's position as a leader in the development of communication design as a discipline and represents an opportunity to study and expanded field of interaction, design and communication.</p>
2	<p>Applied Critical Thought: The integrated approach of the course to critical thinking provides you with the opportunity to work with critical ideas in an applied design context – for example psycho-geographic practice as empirical research or engaging with other critical theories of space to generate user perspectives – this ensures that ideation processes take on both the macro as well as micro opportunities for innovation and speculation crucial to building a portfolio of highly engaged work.</p>
3	<p>Design Prototyping (making): The course introduces you to prototyping methodology through a range of innovative and contemporary processes and platforms including Arduino for physical computing and electronics prototyping to the more quick and dirty processes of paper prototyping and video prototyping. These allow you to feedback understanding quickly into a highly iterative design process. This enables you to understand issues of scope, function and outcome from multiple perspectives.</p>
4	<p>Portfolio Building: The practice-based nature of the course is derived from the understanding that the primary tool for successful graduate progression in this field is the portfolio of work. You will build a strong portfolio of critically agile work over the course that will enable them to progress to their chosen destinations. These projects may manifest themselves in the portfolio as outcomes such as installations, films, web projects, apps or other design artefacts or prototypes.</p>
5	<p>Low Tech / High Tech: You will connect past and future, physical and digital, learn how to use a real world approach with computing and computational thinking in the real world. This innovative and experimental approach is driven by course staff who founded the cross institutional LT/HT community of practice. Members are involved in exploring practice with technologies involving textile, sound, light, electronics and programming and finding commonalities in practice and engaging in new processes where they combine both Low Tech / High Tech approaches. This community provides opportunities for you to engage with related practice across UAL colleges with other members specifically at CSM and CCW.</p>

6	<p>Collaboration in Research and Practice: The course requires that you work in groups to explore critical ideas and produce design outcomes collaboratively. This is particularly true in the first term of the course and is crucial in building your ability to work in multi-skilled teams. You will also be expected to keep a weblog of your research and practice to ensure that your peers can develop a broader understanding of the practice of the group and so you take responsibility for your ideas in the social context of digital culture.</p>
7	<p>Course Staff: You will work with highly qualified and experienced educators and practitioners in design who deliver the course and who retain close involvement with the industry, continuing their professional practice and, engaging in scholarly research at an international level. In addition, there will be a programme of visiting experts from industry and academia.</p>
8	<p>Self-Direction: One of the differences you will experience between working at postgraduate level and working at undergraduate level is that you are expected to timetable and manage your own learning to a much greater extent at postgraduate level. 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. The level of self-management required of you will increase throughout the course.</p>
9	<p>Studio Culture: You will benefit from allocated studio space equipped with both creative IT and a physical computing lab. This facilitates a studio environment highly aligned with professional practice within the discipline. This studio is co-located within the Interactive and Visual Communication Programme ensuring you have access to a community of practice and broad resource base with aligned courses in games design, animation and visual communication.</p>
10	<p>UAL &amp; LCC: The University of the Arts London and the London College of Communication maintains strong industry links and delivers a world-class environment within which to study Interaction Design Communication. You can access resources ranging from our Stanley Kubrick archive or our industry standard production resources in addition to the largest specialist library within the university. The Design School currently has links with the BBC, Sennep, All of Us, IDEO the V&amp;A, Creative Review, Gamesys, Channel 4, Eye Magazine, Imperial War Museum, Tate, Bloomberg, Pentagram, Samsung and is the host of London's first Maker Faire. It is this environment within the Design School at LCC that distinguishes the course and ensures that you will benefit from this long established network and move with confidence into your chosen field.</p>

## Course Detail

The Master of Arts course in Interaction Design Communication is a full-time (30 weeks for Pg. Dip, 45 weeks for MA) practice-led design course that investigates both the theory and practice of interaction design in a broad, speculative and critical context. Its unique approach is that it explores interaction design as a specific form of design with particular communication design effects. This means the course addresses an expanded field of interaction, design and communication practice affording opportunities for you to develop rigorous experimental practice.

This approach equips you with both the intellectual abilities and practical skills to propose and produce innovative design solutions rooted in research, iterative design practice and applied contextual understanding.

With a focus on synthesising thought through rigorous design prototyping (making), digital processes and user perspectives the course provides an opportunity for experimental practice in an area of design that increasingly explores the intersection of the physical and digital domains.

The course places you in a position to work across digital and interactive communication design, interaction design for products services, data environments and innovation processes for networked products services. The course is as interested in questions just as much as answers and can also lead to further design research at MPhil/PhD level as well as to advanced self-directed experimental design practice.

The design of the course meets the terms and conditions for the award of the title of Master of Arts Interaction Design Communication / Postgraduate Diploma in Interaction Design Communication 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.

### Course Units

Each course is divided into units, which are credit-rated. The minimum unit size is 20 credits, with the maximum unit size being 60 credits.

The MA course structure involves six units, totalling 180 credits. 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.

In order to be awarded a Master Degree you must successfully complete 180 credits. The final award classification is comprised of the marks from the final major project unit only.

Each unit descriptor indicates the number of learning hours associated with that unit. The proportion of hours devoted to types of learning will vary according to the purpose and nature of the unit.

For more detailed information regarding your course's contact hours please check Moodle and '**My Contact Hours**', which can be accessed through

In addition, your own personal timetable will be available each year from the beginning of term via your Moodle page

[https://mytimetable.arts.ac.uk/timetable\\_navigate/](https://mytimetable.arts.ac.uk/timetable_navigate/)

### Learning and Teaching Methods

The above course objectives are taught using the following learning and teaching methods:

- Lectures/large group learning: the main areas of theory and its practical applications will be covered in a planned series of tutor-led sessions.
- Workshop & seminar learning: practical sessions that will enable the student to experiment with a skill or technique relevant to the area of study. Students will be able to share their understanding with others and obtain guidance from lecturers to identify solutions to practical or theoretical problems.
- Academic tutorials: individual assistance is provided by lecturers to assist students in their understanding and practical application of theory and skills. This is important for

clarifying the requirements for assessed work. These tutorials also specifically support the development of the thesis and project proposal element of phase three.

- Self-directed learning: independent study undertaken by the student to research, write and prepare assignments and to extend their knowledge and understanding. This can be undertaken at home or using college facilities.
- Outside speakers and visits: these provide students with a perspective of contemporary issues and recent events.
- Assessed assignments: these assess the student's attainment of the learning outcomes and develop the key skills that will form an important aspect of their learning. The completion of assignment briefs are therefore regarded as a method.

### **Assessment Methods**

The above course objectives are assessed using the following assessment methods:

- Practical project work and computer based activities
- Prepared writing i.e. academic reports, essays etc.
- Responses to case studies
- Oral presentations
- Personal presentations of prepared work
- Simulations and role plays
- Workshop based activities
- Written research projects
- The creation of a portfolio of collection of work, which may contain a number of different activities i.e. creative artefacts with supporting process documentation and/or reports and evaluations.

### **Reference Points**

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The College Assessment Strategy
- The UAL and College approach to Personal and Professional Development
- Feedback from current employers in the interaction design industry
- 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
- Feedback from current students
- Consultation with staff team



*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.*