

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of

MFA in Fine Art

Managed by the Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment

delivered by Department of Computing and Communication Technologies

Date approved:	Date approval confirmed, on recommendation of University validation panel or other authorised body.
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 2018

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**
July 2016	Transferred to new template	CMA Compliance
May 2017	Section 1 updates and checks	Updates following validation

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Oxford Brookes University, Headington Campus
Language of study:	English
Final award:	MFA
Programme title:	Master of Fine Art in Fine Art
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	Postgraduate Diploma in Fine Art Postgraduate Certificate in Fine Art
Brookes course code:	VA54
UCAS code:	
JACS code:	W100
HECoS code:	100059
Mode of delivery:	Full-time (face to face/on-campus) Part-time (face to face/on-campus)
Mode/s and duration of study:	Face to Face Full time One year/ Part time Two years
QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	(http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Masters-degree-characteristics.pdf).
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	NA
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

The MFA programme offers opportunities for PGT students to study in Oxford towards the internationally recognised qualification of Master of Fine Art on a broad based Fine Art programme that includes practice, critical theory and professional studies. This studio-centred programme supports students to develop their own distinctive artistic practice alongside and integrated into a taught theoretical and professional framework for the contemporary arts. Teaching approaches of the programme offer group tutorials in addition to individual supervision. Commentary on work by both peers and tutors contributes to a supportive ethos that encourages a self-reflexive approach to practice. Exposure to a wide range of contemporary artistic practice through lectures by visiting contemporary artists, field trips to local and regional exhibitions encourage students' confidence in engaging with critical commentary. Students are expected to participate in informed criticism in group tutorials, seminars and critiques following exposure to contemporary arts in both theory and practice.

A unique feature of the programme is the integration of professional experience opportunities into the taught curriculum. Through the Professional Experience module students are offered one of several routes into a career in the arts either as an extension of their artistic practice, such as arts residency, or as professionals supporting public engagement with the arts such as curatorial interventions or arts management. Students may alternatively use these professional practice opportunities to engage in research activities in order to prepare to undertake MPhil/PhD study.

The programme will provide a broad based and inclusive contemporary fine art curriculum at Masters level that encourages critical engagement, imaginative exploration and creative risk taking, towards development and enhancement of independent fine art practice. This is designed to enable fine arts practitioners to engage with issues relevant to critical, current contexts and the wider society within a supported academic environment. The programme will equip students with creative, interpretive, critical and analytical skills to develop an advanced understanding of contemporary art and its social, cultural and historical contexts. This will enable students to develop into confident, reflective and self-motivated graduates within an environment that is supportive and intellectually challenging. The programme will consolidate students' potential for further progression within creative contexts within and beyond university, including employment and further graduate research.

The programme aims to graduate students with a confident ability to place their artistic practice within a theoretical framework of the contemporary arts. This is achieved within an environment of inquiry and criticism generated by the robust research activities of the teaching staff, studio practice and lectures. Students will develop the ability to articulate their practice and to place it within a theoretical framework through self-reflection, individual supervision and group tutorials and lectures. In summary, the overarching aim of the programme is to create an engaged student cohort through committed staff teaching, external influences and a supportive workshop environment that includes provision in the varied specialist media areas of: printmaking, book arts, painting, drawing, woodwork, casting, metalwork, photography, video and sound. Professional experience opportunities aim to provide students with the skills and knowledge required for a successful career as a practicing artist and as a member of regional, national and international arts communities.

Please refer to the following link to view the staff profiles within the School of Arts:

<http://arts.brookes.ac.uk/staff/index.html>

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

- 3.1.1 Critically evaluate their own practice within current theoretical contexts
- 3.1.2 Synthesize historical, theoretical and practice-based concepts relevant to their own creative activities within the broader context of the fine art discipline

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

- 3.2.1 Locate, articulate and apply practice-based, theoretical and subject appropriate research methodologies to create and interpret knowledge in the fine arts
- 3.2.2 Employ creative research strategies to conceptualise, define and structure an agreed programme of research and practice leading to a major piece or body of art work for public exhibition
- 3.2.3 Locate, identify and effectively utilise technical skills supporting practice and research.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

- 3.3.1 Identify and articulate current and contextual concerns in their artistic practice
- 3.3.2 Effectively communicate reflection and evaluation of their own practice-based research in the context of historic and current ideas and research practices in the field of fine arts.
- 3.3.3 Effectively disseminate their ideas to various public audiences and constituencies

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

- 3.4.1 Locate, evaluate and apply appropriate digital technologies relevant to the research, development, production, management and dissemination of creative work

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- 3.5.1 Articulate their engaged personal involvement within and contribution to local, national and global art communities.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
P65500	Professional Experience	30	7	Compulsory PG Dip MFA	100% coursework
P65501	Fine Art Practice I: Outcomes of Research in Practice	40	7	Compulsory PG Cert PG Dip MFA	100% coursework
P65503	Fine Art Theory I: Topics in Contemporary Fine Art Culture	20	7	Compulsory PG Cert PG Dip MFA	100% coursework
P65504	Fine Art Theory II: Extended Critical Essay	30	7	Compulsory PG Dip MFA	100% coursework
P65502	Fine Art Practice II: Major Project	60	7	Compulsory MFA	100% coursework

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

As indicated in table above

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

None.

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Updated May 2016

There are three main areas of teaching and learning in this programme: one that develops a student's individual practice as a contemporary artist, another that develops understanding of historical and theoretical frameworks and contexts and a third that enables development as a functioning and contributing member of broader local, national and international arts communities. The teaching and learning strategy seeks to integrate students' advanced work as reflective, practising artists with a robust and critical understanding of their own work within current theoretical frameworks of contemporary art practice.

Studio and technical resources

Students will have access to practical making and digital resources, including technical staff, in a range of specialist areas including: sculpture, photography, video, sound, printmaking, book-works. The School of Arts recognises that at Masters level, studio provision by the teaching institution is not always necessary nor appropriate for all students. For this reason, students may select to locate their studio at Brookes or make their own arrangements for studio provision. Students will find details of these arrangements in the Programme Handbook.

Regular supervisor feedback, individual and group critiques are an essential component of teaching and learning in the fine arts. Whether students are utilising Brookes studio space or maintaining their own work environment, this support for progression in their practice will take place in a Brookes teaching environment. Most effective is face to face meetings on campus and students whose work is developed at a distance will be asked to provide evidence of progression by either bringing work to campus, or providing digital evidence using in appropriate technologies from which comments can be provided. Wherever the work is created, the student's final work must be available for public exhibition either on site or in a group exhibition space.

Theoretical framework

Alongside and leading towards students' ability to articulate their own position in practice modules, they are enabled to develop a broad knowledge and critical engagement with a range of theories informed by diverse and often challenging practices by nationally and internationally recognised artists, collectives and movements. This strategy is adopted in order to move students beyond level 6 studies into a self-determined criticality commensurate with level 7 study, engaged with their own and others' practice. This coordinates with the University Strategy for Enhancing Student Experience in moving students towards working as independent learners and as confident self-critical practitioners.

In the case of both practice and theory, modules are designed to move from supported to independent study and practice. Theory modules P65503 (20 credits) and P65504 (30 credits) help students gain a critical knowledge of contemporary theory. In P65503 these are introduced through seminars informed by selected readings at which students articulate their understanding and viewpoints supported by scholarly evidence. As students move into the second of these theoretical modules (P65504), teaching moves towards individual tutorials with supported reading enabling a more intense involvement with theory and discourse related to individual research topics.

Developing student's individual practice

In practice modules, the independent studio environment enables students to develop their own work within a supported critical framework. Through group and individual tutorials, staff/peer critique and presentations, an incremental approach is applied whereby students confidently develop their work towards public exhibition/dissemination. In the first of these modules, students present an interim exhibition which is Oxford-based; at the conclusion of the second of these practice modules (the summation of their Master's degree), students will exhibit their work within a public environment which will include an exhibition in Oxford and/or beyond. The nature of artist's work means that the exhibition environment for individual students will be reflective of the work itself. Students will be provided with guidance on working with different types of exhibition space and curatorial actions—individually and collectively—throughout the programme. In each of these cases the approach to teaching and learning is entirely in line with encouraging and enabling independence in MFA students.

Teaching and learning for P65500 Professional Experience starts in Semester 1 when students identify which of four elective strands they will follow (Research preparation, Placement, Collaborative project or exhibition management/curatorial practice). An assessed written proposal follows and is required in order to progress into Semester Two where it is put into practice. This work may extend into the summer

period and will result in an analytical report summarizing how this experience informs the student's career trajectory.

Inclusion and Diversity: In order that each student is able to achieve full involvement with the programme, additional support will be made available to students where necessary. Where a need arises, there are a number of strategies available to adjust teaching, assessment and access to resources. These will be negotiated between the teaching staff, individual student and the relevant supporting directorate.

Assessment

In the practice based modules (P65501 and P65502), assessment runs through conception, research, development production and public dissemination of their work. In semester 1, this is practiced through an interim exhibition and culminates in Semester 3 through a major piece or body of work presented in a professional context through the MFA show. All practical work is assessed alongside research and development materials which demonstrate the critical contextual underpinnings to each project and also document work in progress as well as editorial decision making. A written evaluation is also presented placing students' work into informed critical and theoretical contexts through a reflective process of articulation. This approach to assessment is selected because it replicates the expectations placed on professional artists when working with external agencies and stakeholders and encourages good practice.

The assessment of the theory modules is based on written work. Formative and summative feedback leads students to develop the ability to rationalise theory within contemporary arts practices. The teaching includes a limited number of sessions on research and writing skills. In P65503 and P65504 these sessions are loaded towards the start of the semester. This enables students to put these skills into practice through their individual work, but also to continue to focus on their work in practice based modules alongside and informed by this research.

The assessment designed for P65500 is designed to support and formalize the career aspirations of individual students. From the initial proposal (which is summatively assessed) to the final analytical report (both formatively and summatively assessed), the assessment leads students to practice identifying, ordering, prioritising and assessing personal goals within a dynamic work environment.

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Prior qualifications necessary for entry to the programme, including English language requirements.

Entrants to the programme should possess the following minimum qualifications:

- A second-class (or higher) honours degree, or equivalent, in Fine Art or a related subject from within the creative industries.
- A personal portfolio of works/projects evidencing a sustained and developed engagement with creative practice relevant to the fine art discipline.
- A commitment to developing creative work through practice relevant to the fine art discipline.

Applicants' qualifications will usually be evidenced through the application process, references and at interview during which time they will be required to present a portfolio of prior and ongoing work. For non UK-based applicants, the presentation of this portfolio and the interview may be through appropriate communication technologies (e.g. e-portfolios and Skype interviews).

English language requirements

If English is not the applicant's first language, or if the applicant has not studied at degree level in an English teaching environment, an English language level of IELTS 6.5 overall with a minimum 6.0 in each of the subtests. Test results must be within a two-year date of application. Please also see the University's [standard English language requirements](#).

6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

While students have access to a range of work experience opportunities, these would not, in the normal course of events, require DBS checks. However, in some cases, for example, students who opt for P65500 experience in secondary schools or with children, they will need to arrange for DBS checks. Advice on this process will be provided by the Module Leader for P65500.

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Graduates from this programme will be well equipped to continue their visual arts practice as independent artists. Their practice will have been developed to the point where they are ready to work fully independently. They will have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to work as independent artists not only by honing their understanding of the theoretical contexts of current and contemporary arts but also through their knowledge of the residency and grant awarding practices of the visual arts field as it relates to public art, collections (museums and heritage centres, for example). Further, the professional experience module along with the development of their own practice will effectively equip graduates for entry into arts management, curatorial and teaching roles, depending on the option they address in this module.

This programme is delivered within the School of Arts, which offers a vibrant environment for the creative industries. Through the modules, which address both practice and theory, students are provided with links to engage with employment opportunities, either as independent practitioners or as participants within a range of group and collaborative practices. Students will have access to the extensive list of external speakers who present on contemporary issues in the visual and other arts. In addition, P65503 Professional practice offers extensive links with employers in the creative visual industries.