

**UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS**

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR:**

**MA PRODUCT DESIGN**

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION ACADEMIC YEAR 2021/22**

This Programme Specification is designed for current students, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each unit can be found in the Unit Descriptors.

## Section A – Material Course Information

Validating Body	University for the Creative Arts <sup>1</sup>		
Teaching Body	University for the Creative Arts		
Final Award Title and Type	Master of Arts		
Course Title	Product Design		
Course Location and Length	Campus: Farnham	Length: Full time one year. Part time two years <sup>2</sup>	
Mode of Study	Full-time	✓	Part-time
Period of Validation	2016/17 to 2021/22		
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not Applicable		
Type of Accreditation	Not Applicable		
Accreditation due for renewal	Not Applicable		

### Entry criteria and requirements<sup>3</sup>

A good Honours degree or equivalent qualification in the subject or a related discipline and/or relevant work experience, demonstrating an ability to study at postgraduate level.

Consideration will also be given to applicants who can make a strong case for admission in relation to a particular project and can demonstrate their potential to satisfactorily complete the course.

#### Minimum English language requirements:

If your first language is not English a certificate is required as evidence that you have an average IELTS score of 6.5 (with a minimum of 5.5 in each individual component) or equivalent.

- You may be offered a place on a course on the condition that you improve your English language and study skills. We offer two pre-session English language courses that can improve your IELTS score by a maximum of 1.0 and 0.5, or equivalent.

### Portfolio and Interview

All applicants are invited for interview, where practicable. All applicants should prepare a portfolio evidencing their suitability to the course. Further information on how to compile a portfolio and the specific requirements for examples of work to be

<sup>1</sup> Regulated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England

<sup>2</sup> PT mode suspended and withdrawn from 2021/22.

<sup>3</sup> This should be the standard University Criteria unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board and include UCAS entry profile for undergraduate courses.

included will be provided on the Applicant portal.			
Overall methods of assessment <sup>4</sup>	Written exams:	Practical exams:	Coursework:
Course:	0%	0%	100%
Overall Learning & Teaching hours <sup>5</sup>	Scheduled:	Independent:	Placement:
Course:	17.5%	82.5%	0%
	315 hours	1485 hours	0 hours
General level of staff delivering the course <sup>6</sup>	The University's current recruitment policy for Lecturers and Senior Lecturers states that they must have either an MA or equivalent professional practice in a relevant discipline or field. All lecturing staff are encouraged to work towards a teaching qualification or professional Recognition by the Higher Education Academy and this is a requirement for Senior Lecturers. Senior Lecturers are required to be professionally active or engaged in research in their discipline. All Lecturers and Senior Lecturers undertake scholarship in their disciplines. There are also Sessional Staff to link courses with professional practice and Technicians to provide technical support.		
Language of Study	English		
Subject/Qualification Benchmark Statement: QAA Master's degree characteristics, September 2015 Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)			

### The course structure

The structure of all of the University's awards complies with the University's [Common Credit Framework](#). The Common Credit Framework includes information about the:

- Rules for progression between the stages of a course;
- Consequences of failure for reassessment, compensation and exit awards;
- Calculation and classification of awards;

Unit codes and titles	Level	Credit value	Elective/ Core	If elective is this the most popular student choice?
<b>Course</b>				
FPRD7005 Theory and Analysis	7	30	Core	n/a
FPRD7009 Exploratory	7	30	Core	n/a

<sup>4</sup> As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

<sup>5</sup> As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

<sup>6</sup> Include general information about the experience or status of the staff involved in delivering the course, for example Professor, Course Leader, Senior Lecturer

Practice				
FPRD7003 Reflective Practice	7	60	Core	n/a
FPRD7006 Major Project	7	60	Core	n/a

## Section B - Course Overview

The crafts and design postgraduate subject area at UCA is situated within a dedicated School containing a community of specialist courses including glass, ceramics, jewellery, metalwork, textiles, product design, silversmithing and goldsmithing. This commitment to crafts and design reflects both a long and distinguished tradition within it and a passionate belief in its continuing relevance and future.

As an integral part of this community, the MA Product Design operates within a unique context nationally. The direct proximity of extensive in-house specialist crafts production possibility and expertise permits a depth of material and process investigation unavailable elsewhere. A resurgent interest in craftsmanship and the consequent re-emergence of the designer / maker has been a defining characteristic within the Product Design subject area over the last five years. This interest does not deny or negate the obvious necessity and benefits of mass production, but rather it recognises the qualities of the handmade and craftsmanship that often lends products greater, more enduring appeal. The course objective is to promote and explore a heightened awareness of this and interrogate how it might still have meaningful relevance or otherwise within a contemporary consumer context. Consequently the subject area is framed by discussion on 'making' from the outset, providing a thematic and philosophical framework within which students can position their own exploration.

The MA Product Design is closely supported by two internationally recognised craft and design research centres: the Craft Study Centre and the Centre for Sustainable Design. The course's proximity to the former, with its extensive archive of craft artifacts, lends a tangible theoretical foundation within the context for influencing new Product development, whilst the latter provides a significant and long established reference point for topical debate on the sustainability agenda. All postgraduate courses within the School are mutually supporting, operating within a PG framework where appropriate elements of the learning and teaching experience are shared, actively supporting interdisciplinary opportunity and expanded practice outlook.

This, combined with specialist workshop facilities among the best in the UK - glass blowing, fusing, slumping, casting and handcraft and digital technologies, ceramics throwing, casting and hand building, forge work, silversmithing, jewellery processes, textiles print, weave and stitch and bronze casting - make studying Product Design at UCA a unique prospect.

The programme supports professionals and graduates in the further development of their skills and experience within Product Design. It is aimed at highly motivated, ambitious students who wish to practice at the forefront of the discipline. The Programme is research based and practice interest led and fosters the development of a design philosophy in line with individual interest and skill set. A wide range of approaches are supported by specialist tutors and practitioners, from traditional skills to contemporary technologies underpinned by leading edge research.

Students evaluate the local and global language of their practice and consider ways of engaging new audiences and output opportunities. Constructive critical debate and the communication of individual research ideas and developmental progress feature. Students have opportunities to participate in live projects, competitions, and professional practice. The School has extensive links with companies, galleries and individual makers in the UK and abroad.

Graduates emerge from the course in Farnham with a deeper understanding of individual motivation expressed through a substantial body of work, creating the confidence to establish themselves in their field as designers, makers, practitioners, specialists and researchers.

### **Section C - Course Aims**

- A1 Provide a creative and intellectual environment in which students can rigorously pursue a project of self-directed study and the systematic production of a body of work on a topic of specific interest.
- A2 Promote in-depth, rigorously conducted research to ensure that students are able to contextualise their own work in relation to the leading edge practice.
- A3 Establish a cross-disciplinary postgraduate community enabling a critical dialogue to enhance innovation and break down boundaries between creative individuals and practices.
- A4 Support students with the means for establishing and understanding the place of their own projects within the context of relevant and contemporary professional debate and future practice.
- A5 Provide students with the opportunity for extended critical debate, critical reflection and integration of theoretical and practical concerns as part of the realisation of an ambitious body of work.

### **Section D - Course Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the course students are able to:

#### Knowledge

- L01 Articulate ideas, concepts and processes to a specialist and broad audience, putting into practice new knowledge acquired in a professional context

#### Understanding

- L02 Acquire a critical understanding of the relevant practical, theoretical and professional contexts as well as broader debates of current creative practice
- L03 Exercise a high degree of independent thought, learner autonomy and experimentation in the implementation of individual projects

### Application

- L04 Plan and implement a project of self-directed and systematic research using appropriate research skills and methods
- L05 Develop a clearly articulated, sustained and ambitious body of work that places the project within relevant critical debates and professional contexts, drawing on and extending current ways of thinking.

## **Section E - Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

### **Learning and Teaching Strategy**

The School of Crafts and Design has a comprehensive postgraduate portfolio including Glass, Ceramics, Metalwork, Jewellery, Textiles, Product Design, Silversmithing, Goldsmithing and Contemporary Jewellery. The programmes share complimentary creative practice and so benefit from participation in a learning and teaching community. The School operates a postgraduate framework with a common unit structure to facilitate this. Courses consequently exhibit a measure of permeability allowing students to experience subject specific learning and teaching across programmes informally or more formally, to share it directly where appropriate and according to campus. The framework facilitates a holistic experience of incremental learning. Term 1 introduces analysis of craft and design theory and creative exploration, Term 2 refines and develops this further into a clearly framed Proposal and term 3 is dedicated to the resolution of the Major Project.

Learning and teaching centres on students establishing a creative territory within which a self-reflective and public critique may be sustained. This is achieved through a rigorous process of exploratory, self-initiated research negotiating uncertainty and risk. The process is managed by each student to weight exploration and final resolution appropriately, informed by individual agenda and to deliver impactful, challenging outcomes. Students are supported with tools and strategies to navigate each stage of the process. The intensity of delivery is more focused in the earlier stages with greater student independence and momentum emerging with progress. A broad range of core learning and teaching methods are employed, including:

- Tutorials to discuss individual student work, guiding students towards independent learning and the assumption of responsibility for their own development and progress
- Lectures and seminars for the presentation of theoretical issues and their extended discussion relative to research and practice
- Constructive critical reviews at strategic design stages to facilitate broad debate and feedback, and to develop and refine communication effectiveness
- Support seminars to facilitate the strengthening of specific skills
- Technical workshop support

An Education for Sustainable Development agenda is operated. This includes programme goals of independent, lifelong learning, onward employment / other destination orientation, local/global citizenship and an awareness of interdependent contexts, industry collaboration and an interdisciplinary and international outlook.

Programmes emphasise that all design work occurs in context and it is the designer's responsibility to recognise and respond to this accordingly. With a clear understanding of making, materials and manufacture, students are able to influence change. Environmental impact can be significantly improved with collaborative creative initiatives across cultures and a sense of global citizenship.

The learning and teaching strategy is inclusive by default, and able to accommodate adaptation or alternative as required. The School recognises that a 'one-size-fits-all' model is inappropriate for an increasingly diverse student demographic that needs to be accommodated without disadvantage. Courses embrace an international outlook and cultural diversity. Individual student interest and independence is fully supported. The workshop/studio learning environment engenders close staff / student contact and a sensitivity to individual need. UCA Learning Enhancement and Support team (part of Library and Student Services Department), consists of learning and teaching services as well as support for disability and specific learning differences (SpLD). The learning and teaching services are made up of the Learning Development Tutors, who provide study and language advice and tuition, and the Learning and Teaching Librarians who offer research advice and tuition, both offer tuition on a one-to-one basis and as part of the curriculum. Access to all Learning Enhancement and Support services can be accessed through the Library 'Gateway'.

The programmes' research focus and industry outlook encourage progression to longer term research projects and further study opportunity. All courses are closely supported by the School's three internationally recognised research centres: the Craft Study Centre, the International Textiles Research Centre and the Centre for Sustainable Design.

### **Assessment Strategy**

The assessment strategy incorporates a number of methods, providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate how they have met both the programme and individual unit Learning Outcomes. For each unit a timetable of assessment is published, together with a clear statement of assessment requirements, criteria and assessment methods. Whilst assessment is how the University measures performance, it is also used to provide feedback to students to enable them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and plan steps for improvement on the course or final progression to onward destinations. Assessment strategies include:

- Design projects
- Seminar presentations
- Project presentation (oral and visual)
- Essay
- Research journal
- Portfolio
- Written assignment
- Report

Assessment is both summative and formative. Summative assessment occurs at the end of a unit, counts towards the unit grade and is accompanied by written summative feedback. Formative assessment typically occurs at an interim point and does not count towards the unit grade but provides opportunities for students to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Formative feedback may also be disaggregated from formal assessment as it is ongoing with each staff / student and peer interaction. Courses maintain an inclusive, flexible approach to assessment.

Assessment strategies are articulated in course documentation and Unit Handbooks as well as at project briefings. Courses may also use technology-enhanced learning, supporting assessment and feedback processes for teaching and learning where on-line feedback provides more effective communication, with wider access to academics and industry in collaboration with the University.

Reference Documents:

UCA Strategic Vision; UCA Creative Education Strategy; HEA ESD and Holistic Curriculum Change, Guide and Review 2011; HEA The Future Fit Framework, HEA L&T Guide 2011; HEA Inclusive Curriculum Design in HE 2011; QA Handbook; Common Credit Framework.

## **Section F - Enhancing the Quality of Learning and Teaching**

The course is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 5 years. This process ensures that the course engages with the applicable national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

All courses are monitored on an annual basis where consideration is given to:

- External Examiner's Reports
- Key statistics including data on retention and achievement
- Results of the Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Feedback from Student Course Representatives