

Visual Arts

MA Programme

Programme Summary	
Awarding body	University of Sussex
Teaching institution	West Dean College
Programme title	Visual Arts
Final award / FHEQ level	Master of Arts / level 7
Mode of study	Full-time, 46 weeks
Programme Leader	Dr David Stent
External reference points/benchmarks	<p>The UK Quality Code for Higher Education Chapter A1 Qualification Descriptor Level 7 Subject Benchmarks Statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art and design
Criteria for admission to the programme	<p>The following qualifications will be considered for entry on to the MA in Visual Arts programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good Honours Degree or equivalent qualification in Visual Arts or a related discipline • Relevant work experience in an arts-related field which demonstrates the ability to study at postgraduate level • Portfolio: including evidence of current practical work, sketchbooks and evidence of critical writing. An appropriate level of engagement with current debates in contemporary arts and making is required • English language: CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) Level B2 or IELTS 6.5.

Programme Aims

The Aims and Learning Outcomes of the MA component of the Visual Arts programme are consistent with the descriptors for a qualification at Level 7 of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Part A)

The aims relating to the MA component of the Visual Arts programme are to:

- Provide facilities and support through which students can further develop their skills and fluency to an advanced level as accomplished practitioners, gaining a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- Provide access to facilities, workshops and expertise for the fabrication of artworks relating to the individual student's approach and intentions
- Encourage innovative approaches to practical making through which conceptual ideas are tested and informed by use of selected media
- Develop originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the Visual Arts
- Provide a stimulating environment of academic enquiry which encourages the critical evaluation of current research and advanced scholarship in the Visual Arts
- Develop a climate of critical debate within which theoretical, cultural, historical and philosophical perspectives are explored, compared and utilised
- Evaluate methodologies, develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new and original strategies
- Consolidate a systematic understanding of knowledge and critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is informed by the forefront of Visual Arts practice and theory
- Consolidate students' potential and aptitude for professional practice, research and employment by encouraging independence and self-management in addressing problems, as well as planning and implementing projects
- Educate students to possess independence, self-reliance, as well as promotional enterprise skills, motivated toward future learning, practice or employment

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the MA component of the Visual Arts programme, students are able to:

Practical

Ideas and Intentions

Exhibit of a body of original work that demonstrates the culmination of self-directed studio practice at an advanced level, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of the discipline

Materials and Methods

Employ an advanced use of materials, media and techniques in the development of creative ideas, synthesising a comprehensive understanding of ideas, forms and methods in the realisation of practical work

Innovation and Creativity

Develop practical ideas and approaches that test and inform the creative boundaries of the specialist area of study

Theoretical

Contextual Knowledge

Effectively situate their studio practice within a critical context, evaluating existing research and scholarship through reference to practice-based and theoretical source material

Conceptual Understanding

Display a command of theoretical and philosophical ideas and the application of knowledge, together with an understanding of how techniques of research and enquiry are used to generate and interpret works of art

Research and Enquiry

Undertake advanced research and to continue to advance their understanding of how such methodologies inform and extend their individual practices

Professional

Communication

Effectively communicate ideas and information using a vocabulary appropriate to various practical, theoretical and professional contexts

Professional Standards

Demonstrate professional standards throughout the development, production, presentation and documentation of practical and theoretical work

Independence & Self-Management

Show an informed, independent awareness of future opportunities and career development, including use of transferable skills in relation to continuing practice, further study or related employment

Alignment to External Reference Points

The programme documents reflect subject benchmarks associated with the QAA Quality Code, including specific statements within descriptors of individual study units.

The programme also benefits from the ongoing practices and research interests of staff, including the Programme Leader and Associate Tutors. This includes international exhibition profiles, active publishing projects, networking opportunities and evidence of collaboration with other institutions, staff involvement in symposia and related events. The Programme Leader is also a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA).

In addition, there is regular student engagement with professional artists through the Artist-in-Residence programme and the series of Visiting Artists and guest speakers. Students are also given resources to conduct study visits that best suit individual needs.

The Teaching and Learning strategy reflects a College-wide mission statement concerning shared skills development between the Visual Arts provision and other departments (such as Conservation) in common areas such as Writing / Research Skills, documentation and archiving of artworks/artefacts, Information Technology (such as shared online resources).