

Course record information

Name and level of final award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Arts - Art and Visual Culture <p>The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible</p>
Name and level of intermediate awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Art and Visual Culture • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Art and Visual Culture
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Primary: Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	N/A
Professional statutory or regulatory body	N/A
Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA Art and Visual Culture FT, Full-time, September or January start - 1 year standard length • MA Art and Visual Culture PT, Part-time day, September or January start - 2 years standard length
Valid for cohorts	From 2023/4

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply>.

Aims of the programme

The MA Art & Visual Culture aims to familiarise students with a range of historical and contemporary debates around the significance of visual arts and culture, and to develop their expertise in critical analysis. It aims to enable them to reflect upon their own experience and awareness to develop a critical framework and individual perspective with which to evaluate and situate the role of Visual Culture Studies and visual culture.

The MA aims to give an understanding of the role of historical and theoretical practices in Visual Culture Studies, and in the practices of visual culture itself, through its emphasis on the arts and other creative industries. By drawing on the intellectual and cultural resources of institutions in London, the course also aims to balance theoretical accounts of visual culture and thinking with the application of these perspectives to visual representations in various contexts such as museum exhibitions and gallery curatorial practice.

The course aims to give students intellectual, vocational, and research skills, such as the ability to think critically, operating within different artistic and conceptual frameworks, and to work in interdisciplinary ways in the media, creative, and cultural industries.

Supporting the University of Westminster's Black Lives Matter Commitment Plan as well as the wider Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity agenda, the course has been developed using an inclusive approach that ensures you will have a learning experience that respects diversity, encourages active participation, considers students' varying needs, encourages and enables you to tailor your learning according to your career and individual aspirations, and equips you with the skills to work in a changing and diverse world.

The course team is committed to equality, diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum, in teaching, learning and assessment practices, and in our learning spaces. We aim to eliminate all arbitrary barriers to your learning and to work with you to achieve that aim.

Practically, you will see our commitment working in the following ways:

- Inclusive learning environment: accessible materials are provided across all modules and as far as possible, a choice of readings or types of preparation for individual class sessions are offered
- A range of assessment modes is employed – for example, policy briefing documents, presentations, analyses of primary sources, designs, book reviews, reflective pieces, and traditional essays, which take into account different learning styles and student strengths. In a considerable number of these, students are able to choose their own topic focus, texts, or approach, and thus have opportunities to explore what is most important to them within the realm of the module content.
- Diversification of the curriculum and approaches to include a range of voices and perspectives
- Diverse and inclusive co- and extra-curricular activities: the choice of professionals and visiting speakers will prioritise issues of diversity and inclusion across the range of professions and industries relevant to the course; fieldwork and study visit locations will be selected in consultation with students.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

The MA Art and Visual Culture aims to help you develop the knowledge, skills, motivation, networks and connections to work across a wide variety of professions. The course is intended to provide you with sophisticated critical and research skills, a widely applicable knowledge base, a variety of advanced communication techniques and interpersonal competences. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also particularly relevant to professions in a wide range of creative, cultural, and communication industries. As well as the more obvious careers, such as education, journalism, museum and gallery work or arts policy and management, students are encouraged to explore the wide applicability of their skills in other fields, such as PR, digital content creation or business communication. The flexible toolkit of advanced skills developed on the courses facilitates movement into and between many different careers in rapidly-changing professional worlds, and you will have the opportunity to take a work placement module as part of your course in order to experience employment fields that may be new to you and to apply your learning in a professional context.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)

Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)

Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Level 7 course learning outcomes: upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- 001 Demonstrate a wide knowledge of the critical and theoretical concepts and debates, past and present, relating to the fields of art and visual culture studies. (KU)
- 002 Critically analyse archival, display and curatorial practices. (KU SS)
- 003 Critically evaluate and articulate the complex relations between theory and practice. (KU)
- 004 Show a comprehensive and critical knowledge of the professional, technical and commercial contexts within which works of art and visual culture are produced, displayed, exchanged, communicated, debated and consumed. (KU CS)
- 005 Demonstrate a comprehensive and critical understanding of a range of appropriate research methods and a highly-developed ability to exploit a broad range of primary and secondary sources. (KU KTS)
- 006 Demonstrate sophisticated research, data management and information retrieval skills. (KTS CS)
- 007 Select and apply appropriate research methodology to a specific topic area in art and visual culture. (KU SS)
- 008 Demonstrate interpersonal and team skills relating to the ability to work flexibly, creatively and respectfully with other people (PPP KTS)

- 009 Demonstrate time-management and organisational skills, as shown by the ability to plan and present findings effectively and to deadline. (PPP KTS)
- 010 Confidently utilise advanced communication skills (written and oral) in a range of registers, including long-form writing. (KTS)

How will you learn?

Learning methods

Learning and teaching on the MA Art and Visual Culture benefits from stimulating teaching facilities, extensive and varied learning resources, and a wide range of student support services, all of which combine to deliver a high-quality academic experience. In practice, this means appropriate physical and virtual environments for learning and teaching; learning facilities and resources that are accessible and relevant to the development of your knowledge and skills; actively encouraging and monitoring your engagement individually and collectively; supporting all students in achieving successful academic outcomes; and designing and delivering learning and teaching to develop subject-specific and transferable skills that enhance your personal development and employment opportunities.

The emphasis is on the supported development of independent learning. This takes place in the seminar sessions, but much more extensively through your own personalisation of your study. Each module is fully supported by material and activities in the virtual learning environment (Blackboard) with guidance on directions that might be taken through the resources. You are encouraged and assisted in personalising your studies to focus on aspects that interest you and can further your own development while extending the range and reach of your own learning. Learning also happens in peer study groups and through formative assessments throughout the course. Practical learning is fostered in the combination and blending of the theoretical and practical elements of the subject.

Teaching methods

The central teaching mode is the weekly seminar. Seminars are focused on student-centred learning, with use of non-assessed presentations and in-class projects to encourage student participation. You will be expected to read (or watch or listen to) specific texts for discussion prior to your seminars, which are then made up of varying combinations of short, lecture-style presentations from seminar leaders, student presentations and peer-to-peer feedback, plenary discussion and work in small groups. Some modules will also include tutorials, which are one-to-one or small group sessions that provide focused developmental work on group or individual tasks. Students can meet with lecturers informally, but where tutorials are scheduled, they are part of the curriculum, for example a small group tutorial to agree a task topic. Individual supervision is provided to students working on their final Project or Dissertation. The final Project or Dissertation module is a key part of the course and is designed to unify and integrate skills and knowledge gained on the individual taught modules. It provides the opportunity to put into practice and extend what has been learnt in relation to specific, real-world contexts. To support students in successfully completing the Dissertation or Project, all students are allocated a supervisor who is a member of academic staff.

As well as seminars and tutorials, teaching will also involve the use of London institutions as a resource. Depending on module choice, this may include the directed use of various archives, museums, and galleries. Site visits are an important part of some modules. These are accompanied by staff, although you are also encouraged to visit particular museums or galleries, archives or events as part of your independent learning, and may be given some specific direction as to particular visits that would be relevant to each module.

Assessment methods

Assessments and feedback are an integral part of the learning process and enable you to (a) gauge your progress in relation to learning outcomes; (b) reflect on what you have learned; (c) identify areas in which you are strong and areas in which you may need to improve in order to develop the right skills to enable you to achieve the learning outcomes; and (d) help you make informed decisions on the pace and focus of your own independent learning. On the MA Art and Visual Culture all assessments and feedback mechanisms are designed to form part of the learning experience and will take a variety of forms. For example, assessments may involve practical exercises ranging from small tasks that might be completed during a seminar to more complex tasks, such as the design and creation of an artefact, or the investigation of or research into a critical or theoretical question. Some of the assessments are designed to be completed individually, whereas other assessments may require you to work as part of a team, emulating as closely as possible the environment you may face in a professional setting. Types of assessment used on the course include essays, oral presentations or the creation of artefacts such as an educational resource or exhibition design; in some modules you will be able to choose the format for your assessment.

Assessments can be (a) formative - these do not receive a grade but help establish where you are in your learning journey, what you have learned so far, and where you may improve, or (b) summative - these measure your learning and contribute to your final grade. The type of assessment varies depending on the module and its associated learning outcomes, but the guiding principles in designing a module's assessment and its associated feedback are that they should fit the purpose of the module, contribute to the progression of your learning and permit personalisation in topic, format or both.

Timely and forward-looking feedback is given for all assessments and all assessments that contribute to final grades are marked against clear assessment criteria that will be shared with you as part of the assessment preparation. Feedback is given in various forms and stages; for example, in response to assessment, in response to questions in seminars, workshops and tutorials, and in guidance given during the supervision of student dissertations/projects. Feedback will also come from peer-to-peer work with other students. The Dissertation and Project are substantial pieces of independent work which involve research into and an investigation of a critical, theoretical and/or practice-based problem. There are no formal examinations on the course.

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules

Level 7

Module requirements for the award of MA Art & Visual Culture

Core modules to the value of 100 credits.

Option modules to the value of 80 credits.

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
7CLST016W	Contemporary Art and Visual Culture	Core		20	10
7CLST017W	Critical Approaches to Art and Visual Culture	Core		20	10
7HUMS001W	MA Dissertation	Core		60	30
7CLST001W	Capitalism and Culture	Option		20	10
7CLST024W	Digital Cultures	Option		20	10
7CLST005W	Engaging the Archive	Option		20	10
7MUST022W	Heritage in Action	Option		20	10
7MUST021W	Management in Cultural and Heritage Institutions	Option		20	10
7MUST010W	Museum Narratives, Audiences and Programming	Option		20	10
7CLST013W	Representing World Cultures	Option		20	10
7CLST015W	Urban Cultures	Option		20	10
7CLST018W	Work Placement in Cultural Institutions	Option		20	10
7MUST001W	Art Institutions and Contemporary Culture	Option	1	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

Professional body accreditation or other external references

N/A

Course management

The Course is hosted in the School of Humanities and is directly managed by a Course Leader. Each module on the course also has a designated Module Leader responsible for the administration and monitoring of its design and delivery. Key members of the course team meet regularly each year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of the course.

The Head of School holds overall responsibility for all the courses hosted in the School.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you

will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard>

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development).

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice>.

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union>

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university, a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.
- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;
- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes

that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students. Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2022©

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