

Programme Specification

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism The MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism is a degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Documentary Photography and Photojournalism Postgraduate Certificate Documentary Photography and Photojournalism
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Westminster School of Media Arts and Design (Harrow)
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	One year (full time). September start. Two years (part time day/evening). September start.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s) :	Art and Design, and Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	N/A
Date of course validation/review:	21 September 2015
Date of programme specification approval:	July 2016
Valid for cohorts:	From September 2017
Course Leader:	David Moore
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate
Westminster Course Code:	PMPHT01F (FT) PMPHT01P (PT)
JACS code:	P500 (Journalism)
UKPASS code:	P035659

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all undergraduate 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: westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism, has been designed to:

- Enable you to develop an independent documentary practice, which may include documentary photography, photojournalism, the photo-book, performance, installation or any relevant approach
- Enable you to develop varying writing styles from editorial to critical theory
- Enhance and promote your ability to respond to a variety of circumstance as a visual artist both within the realm of 'artistic practice ' or within commercial outcomes
- Develop your capacity to participate in contemporary cultural debates
- Develop awareness of the political, ethical & aesthetic contexts of your work and others
- Enable you to develop a broad range of relevant transferable skills appropriate for work in a variety of contexts
- Prepare you for career opportunities in photography, photojournalism, picture editing, picture research, curating and other related practices; (See section: career opportunities)
- Prepare you for further PhD studies, MFA or a Teaching/Lecturing degree, such as a PGCHE.

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
- There are 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 course offers both formal (intern work placements office) and informal (internships, that you might seek yourselves) opportunities for work experience, we normally recommend for a minimum of 15 days. We encourage you to ensure that this is in an aspect of the professions most appropriate to your personal career goals. Our aim is to foster a culture of gathering expertise, building professional networks, and expanding academic learning with the knowledge and skills gained in professional working environments.

All course modules incorporate Key Transferable Skills (KTS), which are also integral to the course employability strategy. Key Transferable Skills support you in seeking entry into a broad range of photographic professions & related employment.

A further element of our employability strategy is the use of Personal Development Planning (PDP). This enables you to reflect upon personal and career goals, and the means by which these may be achieved. We build this process into the Personal Tutorial system.

Not all the students who graduate from MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism follow a career as photographers. Even though this will probably be the intention on entering the programme, it might transpire that through exposure to related photographic areas that your pathway could take on another direction. This course aims to embrace all these possibilities and to equip you with skills that will be adaptable to whatever career pathway you choose to follow.

Upon completing MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism you will have engaged in a variety of photographic approaches, critical theory, analysis, design layout and related disciplines that will enable you to embark on a successful career such as:

- Documentary photography,
- Photojournalism,
- Magazine production,
- Publication, the photo-book
- Picture editing,

Below are some examples of practical experience that would help you in future careers;

- Lighting is a key element to your practice. Whether for the gallery, the photo-book, editorially, advertising or as a photojournalist.
- Production and organizational skills can be applied in many differing situations.
- From filming, stills shoots, complex productions as well as documentary and photojournalism.
- Budgeting and understanding of UK tax laws deployed in a variety of business scenarios, from the budget, to large advertising productions.
- Personable skills are a vital asset to working with your colleagues and future clients, be these galleries or corporate clients. Your job is to, problem solve get the job done efficiently and seamlessly.
- Problem solving and finding solutions, to whatever challenges arise. Fundamentally, this is what employer's desire, to be adaptable as problem solver.
- You will be employable at whatever level to "solve problems, not create them" Hugh Pinney, Vice President of Gettyimages.UK

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements of what you will be able to practice as a result of successful study and learning. These threshold statements of achievement are linked to the knowledge and skills that a student will have gained on having successfully completed MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism.

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

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

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

Note that all core modules have specific learning outcomes as identified in modules section of the Course Handbook.

Level 7 Course Learning Outcomes	Assessed in modules
Knowledge and Understanding (KU)	
KU 7.1 Demonstrate a broad and informed historical, critical and theoretical framework for future practice.	(Modules: History and Theory of the Published Page / Writing Photography /Photography Dissertation)
KU 7.2 Demonstrate awareness of career opportunities for employment or PhD study, including the requirement of adaptability in the creative industries.	(Modules: Independent Study / Major Project OR Dissertation)
KU 7.3 Demonstrate confidence in critically informed practice and excellence in contextualised photographic production.	(All practice based Modules) Orientation, Independent Study, The Major Project
Personal and Professional Practice (PPP)	
PPP 7.1 Demonstrate creative and enterprising methods of problem solving and negotiation within professional production and project management. Utilising knowledge of commercial photography and the various areas from web to advertising;	(Modules: Independent Study / Major Project)
PPP 7.2 Use planning strategies, conceptual development methods and critical tools to produce work that is situated within and critically engages with contemporary professional photographic practices in diverse contexts	(All core level 7 modules)
PPP 7.3 Define themes, develop a range of complex and informed responses to your chosen themes, and select and communicate appropriate solutions such as through single images and photo documentary.	(Modules: Orientation/ Major project OR Dissertation)

Key Transferable Skills (KTS)	
KTS 7.1 Effectively communicate in written, oral modes and through photography, meeting academic standards and professional protocols and using self-promotion to a range of audiences.	(All core level 7 modules)
KTS 7.2 Manage study time and information, taking responsibility for your own learning, and apply critical reflection to this process	(All core level 7 modules)
KTS 7.3 Work effectively with others, recognising the varied contributions and roles that result in effective collaborative working, and offering leadership or support as appropriate.	(Modules: Independent Study / Orientation / Photography Major Project OR Dissertation)

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

Learning

We have created a learning environment that encourages the constructive development of critical analysis, reflective thinking and self-evaluation.

Processes such as questioning, examining, problem solving, comparing, analysing, reflecting, speculating, deconstructing and experimenting are all encouraged to function within an intellectual framework of concepts, critical positioning, cultural awareness and diversity.

We engage you with the broader ethical and social contexts that affect us all, and support you to become an effective communicator through photography for a global audience, whilst developing your creative and technical skills as photographers.

Teaching

The course team implements a range of teaching strategies and methods that follow the University's guidelines in supporting independent learning. Our intentions are to foster and develop Graduate Attributes (as identified below in employment and further study opportunities) that can help students become critically aware and skilled individuals and professionals.

In the Independent Study module, there are opportunities for you to work collaboratively in designated editorial groups. This enables you to develop skills in working effectively with others, giving and receiving information, being proactive in leadership, learning to compromise and negotiate with others including dealing with conflicting opinions, learning to take individual responsibility and to delegate tasks and support others. Collaboration is encouraged within the Faculty.

The Modules provide a framework for problem solving tasks, which invite you to find solutions and to consider formats, critical and cultural contexts, issues of audience and consumption, proposed form, medium, presentation via proposal forms. Guidelines for essays and induction to essay writing are given at the start of the course and continuing support is offered through Study Skills Support and tutorials throughout. Guidelines and advice on the Dissertation

module (should you elect this as your 'major project) is given at the commencement of the third semester.

To achieve these objectives we deliver modules that support and develop knowledge, and technical skills across this Masters. You are encouraged to integrate theory and practice throughout. Teaching includes lectures, seminars, workshops, supervised use of facilities, visiting speakers, work reviews, group, editorial group or individual tutorials and independent study. You receive formative feedback through group and one-to-one tutorials and work reviews, throughout your studies and before final assessments.

The Major Project OR Dissertation is supported through group tutorials focused one- to-one tuition and work reviews, which provide the context for the discussion and development of your work. These group sessions are highly constructive in enabling students to further develop skills in critical analysis, reflective thinking, self- evaluation, communication, supporting others and the presentation of ideas, which will have been introduced in the first semester.

Research refers to a broad range of information gathering, synthesis and selection, which informs and enhances the development of your work in considerable depth. Research is documented through journals, workbooks and written logs and includes the reflective and critical analysis of visual examples and contemporary photographic practice. Research will not only be library based and should include visiting exhibitions, galleries, museums, viewing films, attending performances, lectures, and seminars, and immersing yourselves in the broad cultural diversity, that London has to offer.

Lectures (approximately 8-10, in the first and second semester) address the whole module group, in contrast to workshops, which are normally limited to groups of approximately 12-15 students or fewer. The Visiting Lecturers, (photographic artists, documentary practitioners, picture editors, and agency professionals) will address skills required for career development and professional practice.

Visiting Lecturers have included:

Mark Neville, Documentary Photographer
Leonie Hampton, Documentary Photographer
Monica Allende, Picture Editor (former Sunday Times)
Stu Smith, International photographic book designer.
Hilary Roberts, Curator of Photographs, Imperial War Museum.
Simon Norfolk., Photographer.
Bruno Ceschel, Book Publisher. Self-Publish Be Happy.
Chris Steele Perkins, Magnum Photographs
Venetia Deardon, Documentary and Advertising Photographer
Dewi Lewis, Book Publisher
Cristina de Middel, Documentary Photographer. David Brittain, Reader/Researcher MMU
Zelda Cheatle Curator
Tom Edwards. DNEG. CGI Supervisor.
Gandee Vasan. Digital Photographic illustrator.
Dominic Hawgood. Photographic Artist
George Georgiou, Documentary Photographer

Assessment and feedback

The course applies a range of assessment procedures that aim to measure the learning outcomes described above. Modules on this Masters are assessed through Modular coursework, essays, critical self-evaluations, research papers and journals. Clear assessment criteria are stated in module documents, and these are linked to the module learning outcomes.

All modules are assessed in reference to learning outcomes, assessment rationale and assessment criteria which allows you to connect elements of learning from different modules and show your accumulated knowledge and understanding of photographic practice and theory.

Formative feedback is given to you during modules in tutorials, group discussions, seminars and work reviews to inform you of areas for improvement, and to suggest how you might continue to acquire and develop strengths in your practice.

You receive written summative feedback from all coursework assessments, which relate directly to the assessment criteria for each module. You also have an opportunity to discuss feedback with the module team.

Each module will be assessed and 'double marked' within three weeks after the specified 'hand in date' The modules will have no interim assessment, however, feedback will be offered throughout the modules on a weekly basis. Provisional marks will be posted on the student record system.

Final marks will be ratified by the two assessments boards, with an Interim board, normally in June. Both boards are assessed by the MA DPP's external examiner. Final board and definitive marks normally occur in October and again assessed and ratified by the MA DPP external examiner.

The University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Blackboard supports all your modules by making available online material including course information, staff contacts, module documents, technical support, key references, discussion groups, blogs, and many other functions.

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.

Clusters

The course sits within a group of masters courses (the Creative Practice and Art Theory cluster) this and the modular structure will enable you to integrate your studies with other courses in the cluster and faculty MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism is particularly closely aligned with MA Photographic Arts (MAPA) from which you may select Option modules, separate from MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism core and Option modules. The ability to attend modules outside of the core structure of MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism, will be subject to availability and suitability of knowledge and qualifications of the student.

MA ONE YEAR FULL TIME PATHWAY

Module code	Module title	Status	UK Credit	ECTS Credit
7IMAG019W	The Photo Book	Core	20	10
7JRNL007W	History and Theory of the Published Page	Core	20	10
7JRNL010W	Independent Practice	Core	40	20
7IMAG024W	Writing Photography	Core	20	10
One of the 20 credit options below				
7IMAG012W	Contemporary Debates (MA Photography Arts)	Option	20	10
7IMAG011W	Photography and Aesthetics (MA Photography Arts)	Option	20	10
7IMAG016W	Orientation	Core	20	10
Either				
7IMAG015W	Final Major Project	Option	60	30
OR				
7IMAG017W	Dissertation	Option	60	30

*Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. The attendance of modules outside of the core and option structure of MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism will be subject to availability, suitability of knowledge and qualifications of the student.

MA TWO YEAR /PART TIME PATHWAY

FIRST YEAR/PART TIME: SEMESTER 1

TWO of these modules totalling forty credits only

7IMAG019W	The Photo Book	Core	20	10
7IMAG016W	Orientation	Core	20	10
7IMAG024W	Writing Photography	Core	20	10
7IMAG014W	Theories of the Image (MAPA)	Option	20	10
7IMAG012W	Contemporary Debates (MAPA)	Option	20	10

SEMESTER 2

ONE of these modules totalling either forty or twenty credits only

7JRNL010W	Independent Practice	Core	40	20
7JRNL007W	History and Theory of the Published Page	Core	20	10
7IMAG011W	Photography and Aesthetics (MAPA)	Option	20	10
7IMAG019W	The Photo Book	Core	20	10

SEMESTER 3: NO MODULES

SECOND YEAR/PART TIME: SEMESTER 1

One of these modules twenty credits, that was not taken in the first year

7IMAG019W	The Photo Book	Core	20	10
7IMAG016W	Orientation	Core	20	10
7IMAG024W	Writing Photography	Core	20	10

SEMESTER 2

One of these modules twenty credits or forty credits that was not taken in the first year

7JRNL010W	Independent Practice	Core	40	20
7JRNL007W	History and Theory of the Published Page.	Core	20	10

SEMESTER 3

7IMAG015W	Final Major Project	Option	60	30
OR				
7IMAG017W	Dissertation	Option	60	30

Note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. The attendance of modules outside of the core and option structure of MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism, will be subject to availability, suitability of knowledge and qualifications of the student.

Academic regulations

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

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

The MA Documentary Photography and Photojournalism is taught within Westminster's Creative Practice and Art Theory cluster. The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- David Moore, Course Leader, responsible for day to day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum. He can be contacted by email: D.Moore1@westminster.ac.uk
- Jonathan Stockdale, Head of Postgraduate, holds academic responsibility for the course and for other courses run within the Media and Society cluster.
- Kerstin Mey, Dean of Faculty, holds overall responsibility for the course and for the other courses run by the Faculty of Media, Arts & Design.

The Course Leader will be responsible for:

- Admissions
- Approving students' programme of study
- Organisation of tutorial and supervisory support and pastoral care
- Co-ordination of Dissertation supervision
- Co-ordination of marks for assessment boards
- General management of the course

The course team reviews and develops the course and sets the framework for the above procedures, in which all members of course team participate. Module leaders oversee the delivery of all aspects of the module(s) they are responsible for. They consult students on matters relevant to their module.

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 Faculty Registry Office. 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.

Learning Support

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.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the

subjects taught at that site. Students¹ 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 at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student Affairs 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. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

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

The course was reapproved by a University Validation Panel in 2015. The panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty 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 outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review 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 review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees 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 Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.

¹ Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty 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.
- The University also has an annual Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey or PTES which helps us compare how we are doing with other institutions, to make changes that will improve what we do in future and to keep doing the things that you value.

Please note: 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 s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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