

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

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| Name and level of final award: | MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture The MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture is a masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible. MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience (Two-year pathway, on successful completion of Extended Work Experience module). |
| Name and level of intermediate awards: | Postgraduate Diploma Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture Postgraduate Certificate Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture |
| Awarding body/institution: | University of Westminster |
| Teaching Institution: | University of Westminster |
| Status of awarding body/institution: | Recognised Body |
| Location of delivery: | University of Westminster, Regent site |
| Language of delivery and assessment: | English |
| Mode, length of study and normal starting month: | Full-time or Part-time, September or January start (MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience available full-time, September start only) |
| QAA subject benchmarking group(s) : | n/a |
| Professional statutory or regulatory body: | n/a |
| Date of course validation/review: | November 2015 |
| Date of programme specification approval: | May 2019 |
| Valid for cohorts: | 2019/20 |
| Course Leader: | Dr Peter Ride |

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| Course URL: | westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate |
| Westminster Course Code: | PMVCL02F / PMVCL03F (Full-time) PMVCL02P (Part-time) |
| JACS code: | P131 |
| UKPASS code: | P045882 |

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. [westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply)

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](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

Introduction

MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture and MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience examine how museums, galleries and other cultural organisations are developing to meet the needs of the 21st century. These MAs have been designed for students who wish to work as curators, arts organisers, museum professionals and other cultural managers and who want to know in particular how these institutions face contemporary issues.

The courses are grounded in a visual culture perspective that argues that culture is not static and that institutions and organisations play a crucial role in reflecting how contemporary society values, engages with and understands culture, from heritage to the arts. At the same time institutions and organisations play an important role in housing, funding, collecting, disseminating and interpreting cultural activities and products – they are a focal point for the consumption of culture. The MAs also addresses the historical and theoretical debates on the significance of cultural institutions, in particular those written from the perspective of the museum and gallery sector itself, addressing how it relates and contributes to contemporary culture.

The MAs have a strong vocational emphasis and have been developed through partnership with major cultural organisations in London and professionals from a wide range of professional contexts. The fundamental approach has been to structure teaching around the experience of professionals - using case studies that examine practice in museums and galleries. Students will be able to examine key issues and themes in museums, galleries and the cultural sector, and explore how these are dealt with not just in theory, but also on a day-to-day basis by leading institutions. The courses demonstrate that it is the 'practices' in museums and galleries - the skills and activities of archivists, researchers, curators,

programmers, and the web team - that actively produces our understanding of contemporary culture.

Students are encouraged to have a close involvement with institutions through internships and work placements and projects. The courses are also designed to facilitate students who are currently in professional employment or working with cultural institutions. Therefore, wherever possible students are encouraged to focus their learning on their own professional work and may base projects on their own work place.

Students registered on the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience have the opportunity to take an integrated Extended Work Experience module in addition to the taught components of the Course. Students taking this module will do a placement or internship of a minimum of 550 hours in a professional work environment as a sandwich element with assessments. Students will need to meet academic standards set for this module in order to have this opportunity; further details will be available in the handbook upon enrolment. Students unable to continue on to the Extended Work Experience module will be transferred to the one year MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture.

Students will be responsible for securing their own work placement and, although they will be supported by the Module Leader and other officers, a placement cannot be guaranteed. The University has well-established relationships with a number of museums, galleries and other cultural institutions who are keen to offer placements. We will advertise these opportunities when they arise so that all students can apply. In some cases, students will have their own contacts with museums and galleries and we will support students who might initiate a relationship with a potential host. Students unable to secure a placement will be transferred to the one-year MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture.

Students successfully completing this module will achieve an extra 60 credits and will be awarded the degree with the title: MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience.

Aims

MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture and the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience aim to:

- Examine the changing role of museums, galleries, and other cultural institutions and organisations through historical and theoretical debates and examples of contemporary professional practice.
- Combine academic teaching with instruction from museum and gallery professionals order to give students an understanding of vocational issues, contexts, practices and concerns.
- Assist students in gaining professional knowledge of professional institutions through direct contact, projects and to assist students in gaining internships and work placements.
- Give students a broad-based curriculum that enables them to develop their own preferences and specialisms.

In addition, the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience aims to:

- Gain professional skills and knowledge through extended practical work in the museum and gallery sector
- Learn about the needs and requirements of the professional workplace through integrated experience

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.

In addition, the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience ensures that:

- Through the Extended Work Experience module students have the opportunity for integrated and extensive learning from the professional workplace

The MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture is intended to provide students with sophisticated critical skills and a widely applicable knowledge base. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also particularly relevant to a range of professions in the creative and cultural industries, especially heritage and museum work and cultural policy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. They are threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course. These fall into four broad categories:

- The overall **knowledge and understanding** you will gain from your course (KU);
- **Graduate attributes** are characteristics that you will have developed during your course (GA);
- **Professional and personal practice** outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP);
- **Key transferable skills** are those that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (KTS).

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- LO.1 Demonstrate a wide knowledge of critical and theoretical concepts and debates relating to museums, galleries and contemporary culture (KU);
- LO.2 Critically examine the policies, strategies and programmes of museums and galleries (KU);
- LO.3 Undertake research using a wide range of academic and professional resources (GA);
- LO.4 Critically apply methodologies to research and professional practice (PPP);
- LO.5 Demonstrate advanced critical skills in design and planning of practical projects; (PPP);
- LO.6 Apply professional knowledge in museum and gallery practice (PPP);
- LO.7 Deploy advanced skills of argument, synthesis, research and presentation (KTS);
- LO.8 Demonstrate interpersonal and team working skills (KTS);
- LO.9 Demonstrate advanced communications skills in both written and oral forms (KTS);

Additionally, students successfully completing the MA with Professional Experience will be able to

- LO.10 Demonstrate extensive work-based learning experience (KTS).

Learning Outcomes matrix

| | 7MUST016W Major Research | 7MUST005W Current Issues | 7MUST001W Art Museums | 7MUST002W Audience and Public | 7MUST003W Collecting Today | 7MUST004W Curating Contemporary Art | 7MUST007W Educ, Learn & Events | 7MUST008W Exhibit Photography | 7MUST009W London Museums | 7MUST010W Museum Narratives | 7MUST011W Online Mus | 7MUST015W Special Topic | 7MUST01*W Extended Work Experience | 7CLST018W Work Plcmt | 7CLST013W Representing World Cultures |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| LO.1 Demonstrate a wide knowledge of critical and theoretical concepts and debates relating to museums, galleries and contemporary culture (KU) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| LO.2 Critically examine the policies, strategies and programmes of museums & galleries (KU) | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X | X | | X | | | |

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| LO.3 Undertake research using a wide range of academic and professional resources (GA); | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X |
| LO. 4 Critically apply methodologies to research and professional practice (PPP) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X |
| LO.5 Demonstrate advanced critical skills in design and planning of practical projects (PPP) | X | X | | X | | X | X | | | X | | | | | |
| LO. 6 Apply professional knowledge in museum and gallery practice (PPP) | X | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | |
| LO. 7 Deploy advanced skills of argument, synthesis, research and presentation (KTS) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | X | X |
| LO.8 Demonstrate interpersonal and team working skills (KTS) | X | X | | | | X | | | | X | | | X | X | |
| LO.9 Demonstrate advanced communications skills in both written and oral forms (KTS) | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| <i>Additionally, students successfully completing the MA with Professional Experience will be able to:</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LO.10 Demonstrate extensive work-based learning experience (KTS) | | | | | | | | | | | | | X | | |

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

Seminars

Modules are generally taught via seminars and are focused on student-centered learning. Module sessions typically involve presentations or case studies, reading of specific texts and class discussion. Modules may also involve online learning, online discussion and guided independent study. Modules may be structured as weekly sessions taught across a semester, or taught in burst mode, depending upon the subject.

Site visits and learning in the workplace

As well as seminars, teaching will also involve the use of London's cultural institutions as a resource. Teaching on some of the modules will take place in these other cultural institutions, and involving staff of those institutions and participation in professional activities or demonstrations in the workplace. Students are also encouraged to visit particular museums or galleries, archives, events etc. outside class time, and may be given some specific direction as to particular visits that would be relevant to each module.

Work placement, projects and work integrated learning

Learning may also include self-reflexive analysis of professional work through short work placements or professional projects. In the latter, the student undertakes an exercise that enables them to research, analyse and conduct a professional activity in a workplace, and through development and execution of the activity they achieve measurable knowledge and understanding.

On the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience, the Extended Work Experience Module consists of a supervised placement of at least 550 hours in duration, which combines professional learning with personal development.

Tutorials

Each student is assigned a personal tutor from among the staff with whom they can have at least one tutorial per semester. Personal tutors will also assist students in setting out a personal development plan.

Assessment:

Assessment methods used on the course vary across the modules, and include coursework in the form of essays, case studies, oral presentations, portfolios, project reports, critical analyses and a 12,000-word dissertation.

COURSE STRUCTURES

Requirements for award of the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture

The MA has two 'pathways':

Pathway 1 leading to the award of MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture: 180 credits taken over one year for FT students; two years for PT students

Pathway 2 leading to the award of MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience: 240 credits taken over two years for FT September starters only.

The modular content of Pathway 2 is almost identical to the content of Pathway 1 but it has an additional assessed 60 credit Extended Work Experience module and does not offer the 20 credit Work Placement in Cultural Institutions Option module due to the extensive work-based learning opportunity already offered.

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value.

Pathway 1: MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture

| Credit Level 7 | | | | |
|--|---|--------|-----------|------|
| Module code | Module title | Status | UK credit | ECTS |
| 7MUST016W | Major Research Project | Core | 40 | 20 |
| 7MUST005W | Current Issues in Museums and Galleries | Core | 40 | 20 |
| OPTION MODULES to the value of 100 credits selected from the following: | | | | |
| 7MUST001W | Art Museums and Contemporary Culture | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST011W | Online Museums and Galleries | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST003W | Collecting Today | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST010W | Museum Narratives | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST009W | London Museums | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST004W | Curating Contemporary Art | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST007W | Education, Learning and Events | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST015W | Special Topic | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7CLST013W | Representing World Cultures | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7CLST018W | Work Placement in Cultural Institutions | Option | 20 | 10 |

Note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

September start (full-time)

| Semester 1 (Sept-January) | Semester 2 (January-May) | Summer (May-September) |
|---|---|------------------------|
| 7MUST005W Current Issues in Museums and Galleries (40 credits) | | |
| Choose 100 credits from options | | |
| Option (20 credits) | Option (20 credits) | |
| Option (20 credits) | Option (20 credits) | |
| Option (20 credits) | Option (20 credits) | |
| Option (20 credits) | Option (20 credits) | |
| | 7MUST016W Major Research Project (40 credits) | |

January start (full-time)

| Semester 2 (January-May) | Summer (May-September) | Semester 1 (Sept-January) |
|---|---|---|
| | | 7MUST005W Current Issues in Museums and Galleries (40 credits) |
| Choose 60-80 credits from options* | | Choose 20- 40 credits from options* |
| Option (20 credits) | | Option (20 credits) |
| Option (20 credits) | | Option (20 credits) |
| Option (20 credits) | | Option (20 credits) |
| Option (20 credits) | | Option (20 credits) |
| | 7MUST016W Major Research Project (40 credits) | |

*Option choices must total 100 credits

Pathway 2: MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience

| Credit Level 7 | | | | |
|---|---|--------|-----------|------|
| Module code | Module title | Status | UK credit | ECTS |
| 7MUST016W | Major Research Project | Core | 40 | 20 |
| 7MUST005W | Current Issues in Museums and Galleries | Core | 40 | 20 |
| 7MUST017W* | Extended Work Experience* | Core* | 60 | 30 |
| OPTION MODULES to the value of 100 credits selected from the following: | | | | |
| 7MUST001W | Art Museums and Contemporary Culture | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST011W | Online Museums and Galleries | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST003W | Collecting Today | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST010W | Museum Narratives | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST009W | London Museums | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST004W | Curating Contemporary Art | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST007W | Education, Learning and Events | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7MUST015W | Special Topic | Option | 20 | 10 |
| 7CLST013W | Representing World Cultures | Option | 20 | 10 |

Note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

***This module must be passed in addition to 180 credits for students to have the MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture with Professional Experience award.**

Year 1

| Semester 1 (Sept- Jan) | Semester 2 (Jan-May) | Summer (May-Sept) |
|--|--|-------------------|
| 7MUST005W Current Issues in Museums and Galleries (40 credits) | | |
| Choose 100 credits from options | | |
| Option (20 credits) | Option (20 credits) | |
| Option (20 credits) | Option (20 credits) | |
| Option (20 credits)* | Option (20 credits)* | |
| | Secure placement | |
| | Begin 7MUST016W Major Research Project (40 credits) <i>If a student is unable to continue to the Extended Work Experience module then they will be transferred back to the one-year MA and will need to submit their Project.</i> | |

*If required (students will take 2 x 20 credit Options in one semester and 3 x 20 credits in the other).

Year 2

| Semester 1 (Sept-Jan) | Semester 2 (Jan-May) | Summer (May-Sept) |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|
| 7MUST017W Extended Work Experience (60 credits) | | |

Please note that, depending on the requirements of the placement provider, this may begin earlier than September.

Continue 7MUST016W Major Research Project (40 credits)

Academic regulations

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

Please note that course-specific regulations may apply.

How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

The Course is hosted in the School of Humanities, one of the four Schools within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences on the Regent Site, and modules are offered from a number of different disciplines and subject areas. The Course is directly managed by a Course Leader within the School of Humanities, and is overseen by a Programme Director with responsibility for the management and co-ordination of the Cultural, Critical and Literary Studies MAs suite as a whole. Each module on the course also has a designated Module Leader responsible for the administration and monitoring of its design and delivery. The Head of School has overall responsibility for all academic provision in the School.

The Course Leader is Dr Peter Ride

The MA Co-ordinator is Dr David Cunningham

The Head of School is Professor Alexandra Warwick

The course teaching team consists of staff from the School of Humanities. Key members of the course team meet regularly to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of the course. Staff in each School that are involved in the course undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by colleagues leading to staff development through course attendance and/or research and scholarly activity. Staff teaching on the course also attend events organised by Academic Standards and the Teaching and Learning Groups around current teaching, learning and assessment issues.

The MA course intersects with, and draws upon, the institutional resources provided by the wider set of events and research initiatives co-ordinated by staff within the School, as well as the research seminar series hosted by the School of Humanities, and the various events and collaborative ventures organised under the umbrella of the Westminster-Smithsonian Colloquium.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an orientation 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 Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. 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. 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 at 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 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 initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2011. 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 School 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 School 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.
- Each School also has its own School Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions 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.
- 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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