



UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR:

BA (HONS) ILLUSTRATION

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/19]

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, 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 ¹ | | |
| Teaching Body | OCA – OPEN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS | | |
| Final Award Title and Type | BA (Hons) | | |
| Course Title | Illustration | | |
| Course Location and Length | Campus: OCA/Open and Flexible Learning | Length: Maximum time allowed to complete the programme is 12 years | |
| Mode of Study | Full-time | | Part-time <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Period of Validation | 2016/17 – 2020/21 | | |
| Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body | Not Applicable | | |
| Type of Accreditation | Not Applicable | | |
| Accreditation due for renewal | Not Applicable | | |
| Entry criteria and requirements ² | | | |
| <p>Level 4 courses are open access so no prior qualifications are required. In order to progress to Level 5, students must have gained 120 credits at Level 4, through study or by Accreditation of Prior Learning.</p> <p><i>Internet access and IT skills*</i></p> <p>The primary mode of communication on OCA courses is online, therefore, it is important that all students must have readily available internet access and the basic IT skills listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to access, read and write emails, reply to emails and forward emails. • upload and download attachments • search for information on the internet and complete and submit web-based forms • save web pages and download files from the web • click on links on a webpage and navigate to another page • copy web content, including images, into a document and know how to | | | |

¹ Regulated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England

² This should be the standard University Criteria unless otherwise approved by the Academic Board and include UCAS entry profile for undergraduate courses.

print it out - use standard word processing software

Students must also be aware of network etiquette and security considerations when using email and the internet. There is a section in OCA's Student Regulations about online etiquette (point 17). In addition there is a Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy appended to the Student Regulations. OCA takes these issues seriously. Data protection rules form part of OCA's Conditions of Enrolment. In addition to the information located in our student documentation OCA is developing short videos to explain netiquette and online security.

Students will be required, as part of this programme of study, to develop further IT skills in specific applications, such as Photoshop and Illustrator.

An unaccredited OCA Foundation Certificate is available for students who need to develop their technical and visual awareness skills before embarking on degree study.

*This requirement may be waived, on rare occasions, by the Head of Learner Support if negotiated prior to the start of the course. Typically, exemptions are only given to students with specific disabilities or to those studying in prison.

Specific requirements

In addition to meeting the admission requirements for all courses, students should ensure they understand the nature of the challenges and requirements of the course they are enrolling on, as outlined on the OCA website.

Disabled students

Applications from students with disabilities are considered using the same criteria and principles as all other applicants. All students with a disability are encouraged to indicate this on their application form in order that advice can be offered on the facilities and services available. Prospective students with a disability are encouraged to discuss their requirements with the Head of Learner Support.

Maximum period of registration

The maximum period of registration for the course is 12 years. Students may take up to two years to complete a single unit, however, they must complete the entire course within the 12 years period.

UCAS entry profile:

n/a

Minimum English language requirements:

All students need to have an appropriate standard of English to complete their chosen course of study, which will include a substantial written element.

| | | | |
|--|--|------------------|-------------|
| <p>International or EU students will need to provide evidence of their ability, which could be i) prior education in the medium of English, ii) long term residency in an English speaking country or iii) one of the following international qualifications:</p> <p>IELTS (International English Language Testing Service): A minimum score of 6*</p> <p>TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): Minimum score of 550 (Paper PBT), 213 (Computer CBT), 80 (Internet IBT)</p> <p>Other equivalent exams will be considered.</p> | | | |
| Overall methods of assessment ³ | Written exams: | Practical exams: | Coursework: |
| Stage 1 | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| Stage 2 | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| Stage 3 | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% |
| Overall Learning & Teaching hours ⁴ | Scheduled: | Independent: | Placement: |
| Stage 1 | 12.5% | 87.5% | 0.0% |
| Stage 2 | 150 hours | 1050 hours | 0 hours |
| | 8.3% | 91.7% | 0.0% |
| Stage 3 | 100 hours | 1100 hours | 0 hours |
| | 5.0% | 95.0% | 0.0% |
| | 60 hours | 1140 hours | 0 hours |
| General level of staff delivering the course ⁵ | <p>The OCA's current policy is to recruit tutors who have at least an MA level professional practice in a relevant discipline or field and HE level teaching experience. All tutors are encouraged to work towards professional Recognition by the Higher Education Academy. This is a requirement for Programme Leaders and Unit Leaders. All tutors are expected to be professionally active, and engaged with contemporary developments in their field.</p> | | |
| Language of Study | English | | |
| Subject/Qualification Benchmark Statement: QAA Art & Design | | | |
| Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) | | | |

³ As generated by the most popular unit descriptors and calculated for the overall course stage data.

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

⁵ Include general information about the experience or status of the staff involved in delivering the course, for example Professor, Course Leader, Senior Lecturer

The course structure

The structure of all OCA undergraduate awards awarded by the University complies with the [Academic Regulatory Framework](#). The Academic Regulatory Framework includes information about the:

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

Appendix 1 – Table of Units for students registering on the BA (Hons) Illustration from the academic year 2018/19 onwards:

| Unit codes and titles | Level | Credit value | Elective/ Core | Most popular student choice of optional elective units or elective options in core units? |
|--|-------|--------------|----------------|---|
| Year/Stage 1 | | | | |
| VC4KSI - Illustration 1: Key Steps in Illustration (OILL4106) | 4 | 40 | Core | |
| VC4ISK - Illustration 1: Illustration Sketchbooks (OILL4131) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4VSD - Visual Skills 1: Visual Dynamics (OILL4126) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4GRF - Visual Communication 1: Graphic Fiction (OILL4150) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4CBD - Book Design 1: Creative Book Design (OILL4123) | 4 | 40 | Elective | Yes |
| DR4DRS - Drawing 1: Drawing Skills (OILL4105) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4GDC - Graphic Design 1: Core Concepts (OILL4130) | 4 | 40 | Elective | Yes |
| PT4UPM - Painting 1: Understanding Painting Media (OILL4133) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| PM4PMI - Printmaking 1: Introduction to Printmaking (OILL4113) | 4 | 40 | Elective | |
| CA4CAT - Visual Studies 1: Creative Arts Today (OILL4103) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |

| | | | | |
|--|---|----|------|--|
| | | | | |
| Year/Stage 2 | | | | |
| VC5ILL - Illustration 2: Responding to a Brief (OILL5105) | 5 | 60 | Core | |
| VC5VEX - Visual Skills 2: Visual Exploration (OILL5130) | 5 | 60 | Core | |
| | | | | |
| Year/Stage 3 | | | | |
| IL6ADP - Illustration 3: Advanced Practice (OILL6144) | 6 | 40 | Core | |
| IL6RES - Illustration 3: Visual Research (OILL6145) | 6 | 40 | Core | |
| IL6SYP - Illustration 3: Sustaining your Practice (OILL6146) | 6 | 40 | Core | |

Appendix 2 – Table of Units for students registering on the BA (Hons) Illustration from the academic year 2016/17 and 2017/18 onwards:

| Unit codes and titles | Level | Credit value | Elective/ Core | Most popular student choice of optional elective units or elective options in core units? |
|--|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Year/Stage 1 | | | | |
| VC4KSI - Illustration 1: Key Steps in Illustration (OILL4106) | 4 | 40 | Core | |
| VC4ISK - Illustration 1: Illustration Sketchbooks (OILL4139) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4VSD - Visual skills 1: Visual Dynamics (OILL4126) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4ABK - Book Design 1: Artists' Books (OILL4122) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4CBD - Book Design 1: Creative Book Design (OILL4123) | 4 | 40 | Elective | Yes |
| DR4DRS - Drawing 1: Drawing Skills (OILL4105) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| VC4GDC - Graphic design 1: Core Concepts (OILL4130) | 4 | 40 | Elective | Yes |
| PT4UPM - Painting 1: Understanding Painting Media (OILL4133) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| PM4PMI - Printmaking 1: Introduction to Printmaking (OILL4113) | 4 | 40 | Elective | |
| CA4CAT - Visual Studies 1: | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |

| | | | | |
|---|---|----|----------|----|
| Creative Arts Today (OILL4103) | | | | |
| VC4GRF – Visual Communication 1: Graphic Fiction (OILL4150) | 4 | 40 | Elective | No |
| | | | | |
| Year/Stage 2 | | | | |
| VC5ILL - Illustration 2: Responding to a Brief (OILL5105) | 5 | 60 | Core | |
| VC5VEX - Visual Skills 2: Visual Exploration (OILL5130) | 5 | 60 | Core | |
| | | | | |
| Year/Stage 3 | | | | |
| IL6ADP - Illustration 3: Advanced Practice (OILL6144) | 6 | 40 | Core | |
| IL6RES - Illustration 3: Visual research (OILL6145) | 6 | 40 | Core | |
| IL6SYP -Illustration 3: Sustaining your Practice (OILL6146) | 6 | 40 | Core | |

Section B - Course Overview

The BA (Hons) Illustration offers an accessible, flexible, and well-supported course of study through which students can develop their creative voice within a specialist understanding of the discipline. It is an academically rigorous course that integrates theory and practice and develops autonomous learning skills within a stimulating learning environment. It supports the development of a sustainable and reflective creative practice for employment, self-employment, further study, or continued personal development.

The course philosophy is informed by OCA's charitable commitment to provide a flexible and open learning experience that supports a broad range of student expectation and needs. The OCA attracts a diverse range of students, who are at various stages of their lives and careers and motivated by professional and/or personal aspirations. The course offers an accessible entry point to art and design education for this range of students through part-time and distance learning. Additional support and resources are in place to ensure students are at an appropriate level of study to succeed.

The curriculum focuses on drawing, image making, narrative and creative problem solving. Drawing and image making are central to the study of illustration and are explored through the use of sketchbooks, figure and reportage drawing and the relationships between ideas, visual research and outcomes in project work. Narrative illustration is examined through the use of sequential images, satirical illustration, visual storytelling, and in response to texts within the context of editorial illustration. Animation is introduced at HE Level 5 and students are encouraged to expand the definitions of illustration through contemporary practices such as street art and illustration as object. A process led approach to

creative problem solving examines the interpretation of briefs, the generation of ideas, visual research and outcomes. Project work is framed around the client / illustrator relationship, moving from a tutor to student led approach as the course progresses. This progression encourages students to undertake work-related learning, self-initiated external projects or develop forms of self or online publishing. Opportunities for collaboration with peers is encouraged through course material and supported via the OCA learning environment. Editorial based illustration informs the majority of the course, with students introduced to specialist practices including reportage, fashion, architectural and natural science illustration at HE Level 5.

Throughout the course, students are encouraged to develop personally meaningful work by interpreting their understanding of illustration and tailoring project work to their own creative and learning aspirations. They are supported in becoming visually literate illustrators, and in developing their own creative voice that they can apply to a range of contexts.

The course sits alongside a degree in Graphic Design and Visual Communication, sharing a range of learning material, resources and tutors. Shared units at HE Levels 4 provide a variety of entry points onto the degree, and allow students the option to identify an area of specialism or choose an interdisciplinary visual communication pathway. Alongside a core unit in illustration at HE Level 4, students can choose either a specialist illustration unit exploring the use of sketchbooks and/or a shared Visual Language unit that provides a practical framework to explore and develop students' creative processes. Depending on this choice, students can also undertake units in book design, drawing, graphic design, printmaking or creative arts. HE Level 5 is underpinned by a specialist unit in illustration and illustration options within the shared Visual Skills 2 unit that supports a process-led approach to generating ideas, and developing visual and technical skills across a choice of media and technologies. A shared structure and units at HE Level 6 provides a framework for students to contextualise their practice, develop a specialist understanding of illustration, synthesise critical ideas and visual work through a body of written and visual research, and undertake a self-directed major project culminating in an exhibition and/or publication. Integration of theory and practice across these units supports critical reflection in accessible ways and widens the cultural, social, political and commercial contexts that frame students understanding of illustration and their own work. This critical and contextual reflection is evidenced through research and reflective tasks at HE Level 4, two critical reviews at Level 5 and a body of visual and written research for the Visual Research unit at Level 6.

The course provides stimulating and high quality learning materials, tutor support and resources to help develop a sense of visual and intellectual enquiry. Learning materials are authored by a team of educators and/or practitioners, drawing on current academic research and teaching practice in the discipline. At HE Level 6, these have been supplemented by case studies from a range of contemporary practitioners, researchers and recent graduates. The course team is made up of a range of appropriately qualified and experienced tutors who are all either current practitioners within the field of illustration or allied disciplines and/or lecturing in the subject at other UK art colleges or Universities.

Within the existing OCA learning environment, the course supports students to develop the skills necessary for autonomous learning, encourages a personal creative voice within their work, and provides opportunities to apply their skills creatively within a range of projects. The course's focuses on developing the skills necessary for autonomous learners to succeed. These skills provide a platform for students to undertaken their studies, develop a range of technical skills, and fosters self-reliant approaches to on-going professional development and lifelong learning. An understanding of industry standard software, including freeware equivalents is supported through course materials, signposting to existing resources and telephone and/or email support from course advisors. The learning environment provides opportunities to join and contribute to a diverse learning community through forum discussions, study visits and other platforms that allows for wider interaction, networking, collaboration and reflection.

Students are supported in developing a personal and/or professional understanding of illustration that can be extended into employment, self-employment, further study, or continued personal development. The course supports the undertaking of live projects and work-related learning through project work. It encourages students to develop a sustainable approach to their practice by establishing studio spaces, support networks and by setting up individual or collaborative exhibitions and/or publications.

Section C - Course Aims

- To widen access to Creative Arts Education at Undergraduate level through flexible supported open learning
- To offer high quality and stimulating study material and tutor support through which students can develop a specialist understanding of illustration practices
- To provide flexibility for students to meaningfully establish their own creative voice and a personal and/or professional understanding of their practice
- To develop autonomous learners capable of applying their skills, knowledge and understanding creatively within a range of contexts

Section D - Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course students are able to:

Knowledge

LO1 Demonstrate a personal creative voice through the use of creative, analytical, visual and practical skills, techniques and media

LO2 Articulate a critical and contextual understanding of contemporary illustration practice and their location within it

Understanding

LO3 Generate creative ideas and solutions, adapting and translating them into outcomes that communicate effectively

LO4 Demonstrate informed and rigorous research, enquiry and reflection

Application

LO5 Select and apply creative, visual, technical and analytical skills in the realization and presentation of suitable ideas in response to a range of projects and/or contexts

LO6 Develop an autonomous, sustainable and reflective practice that can be applied to professional, post-graduate and/or personal development contexts

Section E - Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and Teaching Strategy

The course's learning and teaching strategy is framed by OCA's charitable purpose to widen access to Creative Arts Education through flexible supported open learning.

By 'widening access' we mean:

- this course can be studied from any location and does not require students to travel to attend classes – this is of particular relevance for those with mobility constraints, who live in remote areas or are in custodial institutions
- the needs of students with disabilities are factored into the design and delivery of the course

By 'supported' we mean:

- this course is supported by personal tutors who advise and guide their students' learning
- students have access to their peers through discussion forums that are animated and moderated by the OCA
- students can request adjustments or additional help to enable them to study successfully with the College.

By 'Open and Flexible Learning' we mean:

- this course can be studied successfully at a distance
- this course has flexible start dates and pace of study is negotiated between the Student and the tutor (within defined limits).

This approach translates into a **core offer** to students, which consists of:

- paper-based and/or digital learning materials for each unit
- one-to-one written and/or verbal formative feedback and support from a named tutor
- support materials (such as guides on aspects of study and course handbooks)
- access to dialogue with peers via the OCA student website / Google Hangout critiques
- learner support for any difficulties with the practicalities of studying via email or telephone
- digital library resources

In addition to these **core aspects** of study, students may access:

- study visits to exhibitions, workshops and other events in different parts of the country
- current creative art and design reviews, articles and discussion via the WeAreOCA Blog
- student-led initiatives such as study visits and seminars, supported by the student body, OCASA
- a range of social media resources that provide additional OCA content or signpost students to existing online material (via Flickr, Pinterest, Vimeo, YouTube).

PDP

Personal and professional development is linked to all levels of the course through the learning log which is integral to each unit and which helps students to plan, integrate and take responsibility for their personal, career and academic development. The log is used as a tool for self-reflection to document and reflect on creative progress, reflect on tutor feedback and to identify areas for development. In dialogue with tutors through formative feedback, students are encouraged to identify strengths and learning needs and establish learning goals that might improve perceived weaknesses and enhance strengths. The learning log is considered as part of the assessment process and contributes towards final marks.

Independent learning

The Art and Design Benchmarks say that 'Active learning through project-based enquiry has always been a feature of the art and design curriculum in higher education. Through this approach students have been encouraged to develop both the capacity for independent learning and the ability to work with others.' Through the OCA open learning model of project and research-based activities students learn to study independently with tutor support, and learn to work with others by interacting with them, providing and receiving support and exchanging ideas via the OCA forum.

For each unit, students receive paper-based or digital copies of course materials and access to a tutor. Course materials provide a contextual overview of the subject and a range of projects for students to engage with. Each project will contain written and visual content, a number of exercises and research tasks, leading towards a final assignment activity. Typically there are five assignments per unit,

which each take between 8 to 12 weeks, depending on the rate of study and how the deadline has been negotiated between students and tutor. At the end of each part of the unit, students submit their exercises, assignment and learning log via post or digitally.

Tutors establish a working relationship with students through initial email, telephone or video contact and welcome packs. Tutors respond to student submissions by providing written and/or verbal formative feedback that reflects on the work they have produced, provides guidance on areas to develop and frames the work within the assessment criteria for the unit. Tutors and Course Advisers are available to deal with any ad hoc support needs the student may encounter.

Tutor feedback reports are typically around 1000 words and provide the main interaction between student and tutor. Students are asked to reflect on this feedback in their learning logs. Tutor reports are copied to the OCA head office and subject to periodic review to ensure standards are being maintained. These reviews are conducted on a rolling programme, with tutors reports regularly reviewed by course leaders and the Director of Teaching and Learning Quality. All new tutors have their reports monitored for the first six months and mentoring is provided. Subsequently reports are looked at during each formal assessment event, in conjunction with student work and feedback is given to tutors, where necessary. If any cause for concern about a tutor's reports is raised, the tutor is closely monitored and mentored for a period.

Online learning and course materials

OCA has a dedicated student website to support online learning. It links students to OCA resources, provides discussion forums, and opportunities for students to share and critique their work. The student forums represent the main method of communications between students and their peers. Critiques of work, both in development and completed, are sought from peers through the forum. Concepts are discussed and knowledge developed through debates that can be informally moderated by OCA tutors. The use of Skype and 'Google Hangout for tutors is being encouraged as this can enliven the interaction between tutor and student.

Support materials are available to students via the OCA website and are sent to students at the start of each unit. These provide guidance on all aspects of OCA study, including keeping sketchbooks and learning logs, developing study skills and criticality, an introduction to higher education, course specific reading lists, and course handbooks. Illustration students are provided with copies of Association of Illustrators quarterly Varoom journal.

Digital library resources include:

- UCA's online library including access to Open Athens
- VADS, V&A Museum online resources for visual arts
- Bridgeman Education image library
- Oxford Art Online
- Scanned copies of essays and chapters from essential and recommended reading lists across all units (permitted under CLA Higher Education Licence)
- OCA study guides

- OCA videos
- Links to existing online resources, including Process Arts, TATE etc. online journal, JISC Media Hub and The Metropolitan Museum journal

Costs of additional materials/resources

As a general rule of thumb, students pay for their work to be sent to OCA, and OCA pay for it to be returned (where applicable). Costs will vary according to the size and nature of the student work, and how much can actually be done electronically. Rates for overseas students will be higher.

Use of materials will vary from student to student depending on the nature of their work, but generally all students will need sketchbooks/notebooks and basic drawing/writing materials, costing approximately £20 per course.

Given the nature of the discipline, digital hardware and appropriate software may also be required. The investment in computer equipment and lens-based media will be spread across the course as a whole. The cost of specialist software using Adobe Creative Cloud can be calculated at approximately £16 per month or £160 per annum (including student discount). The overall cost to a student will vary, depending on the duration of their course. Alternatively, students are supported in seeking freeware equivalents.

Work-related learning

Given the flexible supported open model of OCA's learning and teaching, it is possible for students to integrate employer engagement and part-time placement opportunities alongside their course work. This approach depends on students' individual circumstances and aspirations and is supported through learning materials associated with HE Level 5 and 6 units. Projects across the course provide guidance on developing client relationships and establishing self-initiated opportunities to test out work-related learning through live projects, studio visits and engagement with professional networks such as the Association of Illustrators.

Employability

The OCA is fully aware of the importance of degrees having a relevance to the world of work. Students are encouraged to develop a sustainable model for their practice, whether this relates to their personal or professional development, through the establishment of their own studio space, local support networks (which may include fellow OCA students) and access to resources. Learning materials and project work encourages students to frame their practice within wider professional contexts, present their practice to a professional level and identify potential opportunities for further study or employment. The Sustaining Your Practice Unit supports the development of a portfolio of work, marketing material and an external exhibition that can provide a platform for students to seek employment or establish their practice.

However, the context for an employability audit is different for the OCA than it is for a traditional campus based HE provider, with a very broad range of ages of students, motivations to study, and varying personal circumstances. OCA's aim is to instil in its students a creative ethos and the ability to structure creative practice and the motivation to continue their practice. For many students this will mean that

they continue to exhibit and publish their work; for others it will mean progression to post-graduate study in the field.

Additional learning and teaching resources

Alongside the WeAreOCA blog, which provides general art and design and specialist illustration posts, additional resources include a series of Pinterest boards relating to illustration, reportage illustration and expanded notions of illustrations, such as street art.

Assessment Strategy

Students are assumed to be planning to enter for summative assessment unless they declare otherwise during the unit. Tutors work with the student to advise them on presenting their work for assessment and students can access a number of OCA resources to help support their understanding of the assessment process.

There are no examinations. Assessment is through the examination of personal development planning and continual reflection in learning logs or blogs, practical projects, critical reviews and essays. The student uses OCA guidelines to prepare a body of work complete with sketchbooks, storyboards and learning logs (or blog) to send to OCA for assessment. This submission includes the summative assignments of each section of the unit.

Assessment tasks are linked to the objectives of each unit. As the student progresses through the unit the assessment increasingly encourages autonomous learning and self-evaluation. Tutors provide feedback during the unit, with constructive criticism, and assessment takes place once the student has completed a unit in full.

Summative assessment takes place at one of three annual assessment events at OCA Head Office with a team of tutors associated with the course and course leader overseeing the assessment process. For each unit, students submit a body of physical and/or digital project work, their learning log and a portfolio selection for assessment. First and second markers view the work in relation to level assessment criteria, before discussing the work and, if necessary calling on a third marker to moderate. Summative feedback and grades are provided to students and examples of good practice and student work are disseminated via the WeAreOCA blog. Formative feedback reports are reviewed by assessors to monitor feedback quality and tutor performance.

Assessment Criteria

Creativity

Employ creativity in the process of observation, interpretation, problem analysis, proposing, visualising and/or making; articulating independent judgements and a personal creative voice

Level 4: 40%

Level 5: 35%

Level 6: 30%

Research and idea development

Source, analyse and assimilate research material and develop, test, and evaluate ideas in order to generate ideas and solutions

Level 4: 20%

Level 5: 20%

Level 6: 20%

Visual and Technical Skills

Use visual skills in visualising, making and presenting, and materials, techniques and technologies to communicate ideas and information

Level 4: 20%

Level 5: 25%

Level 6: 30%

Context

Exercise awareness of appropriate historical, critical, professional and/or emerging contexts, debates; be informed by underlying concepts, principles and working practices; and use critical and reflective skills to support a self-directed and sustained personal and/or professional position

Level 4: 20%

Level 5: 20%

Level 6: 20%

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

Enhancing staff development

OCA is committed to enhancing staff development. Subject specific tutor training workshops are held annually at the OCA HQ in Barnsley, which focus on team building, updating tutors on new developments, and training – including sessions on improving the quality of feedback and practical exercises in evaluating student work. Communications with tutors is via a monthly Tutor Newsletter and a dedicated Tutor area on the student website.

Improving the effectiveness of student learning

We are committed to developing courses, improving existing courses, introducing technologies for enhanced interaction (such as Google +) and improving the effectiveness of student learning. We also regularly monitor tutors' reports to students and offer guidance and mentoring (the Director of Teaching and Learning is responsible for this) if the reports need improvement.

OCA have been trialling online tutor-led structured discussions via Google hangouts and using other technologies at HE Level 6, and plan to mainstream this activity in the forthcoming academic year.

Learning log

As part of the coursework on OCA programmes, students are required to keep a learning log. This is an important tool in developing their creative practice, recording their growing understanding of the subject, and provides a platform for ongoing reflection. For degree, diploma, and certificate students, the log is considered as part of the assessment process and contributes towards the final mark.

The exact content of the log depends on the unit. Typically they are used to record ideas, drawings, sketches, notes, influences, discoveries, thoughts, research findings and observations prompted by the projects, assignments and broader research. Students are encouraged to reflect on tutor feedback and identify key priorities as part of their learning log.

Many students choose to keep logs as online blogs. Their public status allows opinions to be expressed by fellow students, or the general public if desired, on the work being produced. Being accessible to other students, they offer a wide range of interpretations of unit projects to be seen, read and commented upon by others, allowing learning to take place through social activity centred around a programme of study.