



Open
College
of the Arts



UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR:

BA (HONS) GRAPHIC DESIGN

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION [ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/21]

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	Graphic Design			
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	✓
Period of Validation	2016/17 to 2020/21			
Name of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body	Not Applicable			
Type of Accreditation	Not Applicable			
Accreditation due for renewal	Not Applicable			
<p>Entry criteria and requirements²</p> <p>Level 4 are courses 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>In addition to prior qualifications and learning accreditation, OCA specifies three general requirements for students to be admitted to its degree programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English language competency; ● access to a desktop computer or laptop with internet access*; ● the ability to easily manage a range of basic functions through ICT (information and communications technology) <p>Full details on each of these requirements can be found in the OCA Student Regulations in the section Admission Requirements.</p> <p>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 . In addition there is a Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy appended to the Student Regulations. OCA takes these issues seriously. Data protection rules forms part of OCA’s Conditions of Enrolment. In addition to the information located in our</p>				

¹ Regulated by the Office for Students

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

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.

UCAS entry profile:

n/a

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%
	150 hours	1050 hours	0 hours

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.

Stage 2	8.3%	91.7%	0.0%
	100 hours	1100 hours	0 hours
Stage 3	5.0%	95.0%	0.0%
	60 hours	1140 hours	0 hours
General level of staff delivering the course ⁵	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.		
Language of Study	English		
Subject/Qualification Benchmark Statement: QAA Art & Design			
Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)			

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) Graphic Design from the academic year 2019/20 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				
VC4GDC - Graphic Design 1: Core Concepts (OGRD4130)	4	40	Core	

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

VC4CBD - Book Design 1: Creative Book Design (OGRD4123)	4	40	Elective	Yes
VC4VSD - Visual Skills 1: Visual Dynamics (OGRD4126)	4	40	Elective	No
VC4GRF - Visual Communication 1: Graphic Fiction (OGRD4150)	4	40	Elective	No
VC4KSI - Illustration 1: Key Steps in Illustration (OGRD4106)	4	40	Elective	Yes
VC4ISK - Illustration 1: Illustration Sketchbooks (OGRD4131)	4	40	Elective	No
PH4EYV - Photography 1: Expressing your Vision (OGRD4111)	4	40	Elective	No
CA4CAT - Visual Studies 1: Creative Arts Today (OGRD4103)	4	40	Elective	No
Year/Stage 2				
VC5GRD - Graphic Design 2: Working with a Client (OGRD5104)	5	60	Core	
VC5VEX - Visual Skills 2: Visual Exploration (OGRD5130)	5	60	Core	
Year/Stage 3				
GD6ADP - Graphic Design 3: Advanced Practice (OGRD6147)	6	40	Core	
GD6RES - Graphic Design 3: Visual Research (OGRD6148)	6	40	Core	
GD6SYP - Graphic Design 3: Sustaining your Practice (OGRD6149)	6	40	Core	

Appendix 2 – Table of Units for students registering on the BA (Hons) Graphic Design 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				
VC4GDC - Graphic Design 1: Core Concepts (OGRD4130)	4	40	Core	
VC4CBD - Book Design 1: Creative Book Design (OGRD4123)	4	40	Elective	Yes
VC4VSD - Visual Skills 1: Visual Dynamics (OGRD4126)	4	40	Elective	No
VC4GRF - Visual Communication 1:	4	40	Elective	No

Graphic Fiction (OGRD4150)				
VC4KSI - Illustration 1: Key Steps in Illustration (OGRD4106)	4	40	Elective	Yes
VC4ISK - Illustration 1: Illustration Sketchbooks (OGRD4131)	4	40	Elective	No
PH4EYV - Photography 1: Expressing your Vision (OGRD4111)	4	40	Elective	No
CA4CAT - Visual Studies 1: Creative Arts Today (OGRD4103)	4	40	Elective	No
Year/Stage 2				
VC5GRD - Graphic Design 2: Working with a Client (OGRD5104)	5	60	Core	
VC5VEX - Visual Skills 2: Visual Exploration (OGRD5130)	5	60	Core	
Year/Stage 3				
GD6ADP - Graphic Design 3: Advanced Practice (OGRD6147)	6	40	Core	
GD6RES - Graphic Design 3: Visual Research (OGRD6148)	6	40	Core	
GD6SYP - Graphic Design 3: Sustaining your Practice (OGRD6149)	6	40	Core	

Appendix 3 – Table of Units for students registering on the BA (Hons) Graphic Design from the academic year 2016/17 and 2017/18:

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				
VC4GDC - Graphic Design 1: Core Concepts (OGRD4130)	4	40	Core	
VC4CBD - Book Design 1: Creative Book Design (OGRD4123)	4	40	Elective	Yes
VC4VSD - Visual Skills 1: Visual Dynamics (OGRD4126)	4	40	Elective	No
VC4ABK - Book Design 1: Artists' Books (OGRD4122)	4	40	Elective	No
VC4KSI - Illustration 1: Key Steps in Illustration (OGRD4106)	4	40	Elective	Yes
VC4ISK - Illustration 1: Illustration Sketchbooks (OGRD4139)	4	40	Elective	No

PH4EYV - Photography 1: Expressing your Vision (OGRD4111)	4	40	Elective	No
CA4CAT - Visual Studies 1: Creative Arts Today (OGRD4103)	4	40	Elective	No
Year/Stage 2				
VC5GRD - Graphic Design 2: Working with a Client (OGRD5104)	5	60	Core	
VC5VEX - Visual Skills 2: Visual Exploration (OGRD5130)	5	60	Core	
Year/Stage 3				
GD6ADP - Graphic Design 3: Advanced Practice (OGRD6147)	6	40	Core	
GD6RES - Graphic Design 3: Visual Research (OGRD6148)	6	40	Core	
GD6SYP - Graphic Design 3: Sustaining your Practice (OGRD6149)	6	40	Core	

Section B - Course Overview

The BA (Hons) Graphic Design 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 the visual language of graphic design and application of creative problem solving to deliver visual solutions that communicate effectively. The combination of typography, image and layout are the basic visual building blocks of graphic design and are explored through an investigation of visual language and dynamics, in relationship to wider visual culture and through their application in a range of design contexts. A practical and contextual understanding of typography and type design is introduced at HE Level 4 and extended at Level 5. Editorial design, info-graphics, wayfinding, branding, campaigning and identity design are introduced as specialist practices at Level 5. Students are encouraged to expand their definitions of graphic design through an exploration of contemporary practices and the relation to on-going developments in print, new media and other forms of communication. A process led approach to creative problem solving examines the

interpretation of briefs, the generation, selection and testing of ideas, visual research and outcomes. Project work is framed around the client / graphic designer relationship, moving from a tutor to student led approach as the course progresses. This progression encourages students to undertake self-initiated and client-led 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. Paper-based graphic design informs the majority of the course, with students introduced to web, screen-based and moving-image applications.

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

The course sits alongside a degree in Illustration 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 graphic design at HE Level 4, students can choose either a specialist Creative Book Design unit exploring editorial layout and design 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 exploring artists' books, illustration, graphic fiction, photography or creative arts. HE Level 5 is underpinned by a specialist unit in graphic design and graphic design 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 graphic design, 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 frames students understanding of graphic design 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 material 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 graphic design 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 focuses on developing the skills necessary for autonomous learners to succeed. These skills provide a platform for students to undertake their studies, development 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 graphic design 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 graphic design 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 graphic design 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 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 (including Oxford Art online, Bridgeman Education Art
- Library and scanned copies of essential and recommended essays and chapters)

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 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

Communications between the OCA, tutors and students is predominantly by email. We are encouraging the use of Skype and Google Hangout for tutorials, as this can enliven the interaction between tutor and student. OCA has a dedicated website for students which includes online resources, discussion forums and portfolios for individual student's work. Peer communication takes place in the student forums, or via comments on the WeareOCA blog or other student blogs, as well as study visits.

The student forums represent the main method of communication between students and their peers. Concepts are discussed and knowledge developed through debates that are informally moderated by OCA tutors. Critiques of work, both in development and completed, are sought from peers through the forum.

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. Graphic design students are provided with copies of the quarterly Eye typography 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 graphic design posts, additional resources include a series of Pinterest boards relating to graphic design, typography, book design and illustration.

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.