OCA is Evolving
Overview

This slideshow **provides an overview of changes** to the areas of learning, teaching, assessment, and curriculum at OCA, brought about by the recent Periodic Review process.

A series of forthcoming WeAreOCA posts will explore key themes, such as pathway changes, tools for learning, and the learning community, in more detail. We will also respond to your questions.

Periodic Review is a quality assurance process that reviews all of our degree programmes every five years.

It is an opportunity to update the curriculum and to consider how our learning, teaching, and assessment best supports students.

Listen to a video about Periodic Review

Changes have been informed by OCA's **core values** of widening access to the arts.

Programme Specs and **Unit Descriptors** outline the what, how, and why of your studies. Programme Leaders developed these in consultation with tutors and students. UCA and external panel members then reviewed these at a series of events in 2020 and 2021.

OCA is Evolving - Pathway Improvements
Who is impacted by the changes?

In **2021**, the changes only affect the following BA (Hons) degree programmes**:**

Creative Arts
Creative Writing
Painting
Photography
Textiles
Visual Communications

We are working towards **September 2021** launch date.

From **2022**, the changes will affect the following BA (Hons) degree programmes**:**

Drawing
Fine Art
Garden Design
Graphic Design
Illustration
Interior Design
Music

We are working towards a **September 2022** launch date.

Foundation students are not impacted by these changes.

Our **postgraduate courses** were also reviewed, but there are no key changes that impact on students.

OCA is Evolving - Pathway Improvements
When will I move to the new units?

We've **updated our terminology** to align with other HE providers across the sector.

For example:

A **stage of study** is the new term for your level of study, sometimes also referred to as HE4, HE5 and HE6. OCA BA (Hons) courses have three stages of study:

Stage One (Level 1/HE4)
Stage Two (Level 2/HE5); and
Stage Three (Level 3/HE6)

A **Migration Strategy** is in place to help students transition from existing units to the new ones:

New students will enrol straight onto the new 3x3 units, depending on their course and when changes come into effect.

Existing students will move onto the new units once they have completed a stage of study.

E.g. Susan is mid-way through her **second unit** of Photography Stage One. She will move to 3x3 **only after** she has finished her **third and final unit** and is ready for Stage Two.
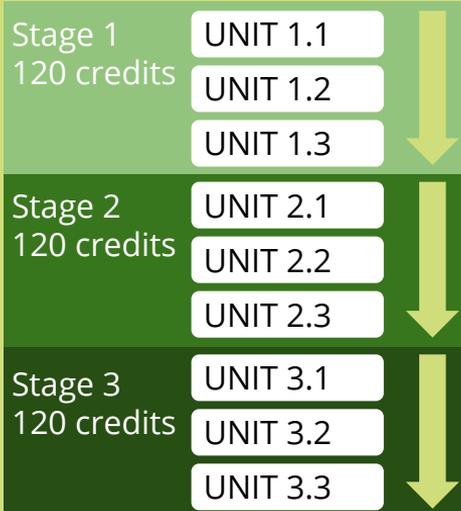
OCA is Evolving - Pathway Improvements
What changes are being made?

New courses are delineated into a **3 x 3 unit structure** meaning, every degree student within the new courses will undertake three 40 credit units at each stage of study.

The 3x3 structure

Stage 1 120 credits	UNIT 1.1	↓
	UNIT 1.2	
	UNIT 1.3	
Stage 2 120 credits	UNIT 2.1	↓
	UNIT 2.2	
	UNIT 2.3	
Stage 3 120 credits	UNIT 3.1	↓
	UNIT 3.2	
	UNIT 3.3	

The curriculum continues to offer **choice** of subjects and specialisms.

Students on existing pathways will continue to choose which available **unit** they wish to study next.

Students on the 3 x 3 units will have choices available **within each unit** itself, with taster options to help make informed decisions.

OCA is Evolving - A Diverse & Relevant Curriculum
What changes are being made?

Changes to the **curriculum** have focused on updating and diversifying content and reading lists, and using the 3x3 structure to help support students overall learning journey.

The **curriculum** has been refreshed to explicitly incorporate a range of perspectives including diverse and often unrepresented voices, environmental issues and social contexts.

Along with the Enterprise Hub, the new curriculum is providing more opportunities to explore **industry-focused** projects.

Our curriculum is starting to look more **international**, with examples of creative practitioners from around the world.

We have introduced a **learning design** process to help make all courses more accessible and flexible, with input from students.

OCA is Evolving - Tools for Learning
What changes are being made?

Changes to our **learning platform** have already started with the introduction of OCA Learn in 2020. This has allowed OCA to make learning materials more accessible and varied.

OCA Learn is our Virtual Learning Environment ("**VLE**"): https://learn.oca.ac.uk/

Learning materials are hosted on the VLE, meaning they can be easily updated. Increasingly they are also designed for online learning.

Physical materials are still available for those that most need them.

Department spaces offer opportunities to interact with other students across your course, and to contact your Programme Leader.

A new **WeAreOCA** space will provide cross-curriculum and student-led opportunities within OCA Learn.

With increased use of OCA Learn, better signposting and **useability** is planned.

OCA is Evolving - Tools for Learning
What changes are being made?

Additional support will be provided by new OCA Learn spaces, covering academic, enterprise, and student support. These will be available to all students.

Academic support will be available on OCA Learn to all students, to help with academic research, writing, and presentations.

A **Student Support** space will provide a central hub for uptodate guidance if you need any help. This includes guidance around finance, disabilities, well being, enrolment and progression, extensions and deferrals, and the student journey.

An **Enterprise Hub** will provide guidance on how you sustain your practice, and external projects you may want to get involved with.

All-new **reading lists**, will be available electronically, making them more accessible. The **OCA Library** will continue to provide a dedicated librarian and other resources.

OCA is Evolving - Improved Tutor Experience
What changes are being made?

Changes to **teaching** within our new courses, focuses on providing more frequent and varied tutor support, through feedback, tutorials and group sessions.

New **tutor contracts** start in August, moving tutors from freelancers to members of staff. This will support the planned changes, and give tutors more flexibility to respond to student needs.

Feedback from your tutors remains at the heart of OCA, and will continue for new and existing students.

For those on new courses, there will also be a number of shorter 1-2-1 **tutorials**, which will take at regular intervals. Tutorials are an opportunity to discuss your work with your tutor, ask questions, and get feedback. These can take place via zoom or as a written dialogue.

Group sessions are now a regular part of each programme, providing opportunities to discuss ideas, share work, and learn from other students.

These will continue for all students, **including Foundation students**. For many programmes, new and existing students will work side by side.

OCA is Evolving - Improved Learning Community
What changes are being made?

Changes to **learning** have focused on creating more flexible, accessible and meaningful creative experiences through the kinds of content, activities, and support we offer. Most of these changes will benefit all students.

Activities, such as exercises and assignments, are becoming more flexible, so you can make projects more meaningful to you.

There will be more **social and collaborative learning** opportunities, such as group exhibitions or publications, for those students who want to get involved.

Assessment for Learning has been complemented by new and simpler assessment criteria that cover all subjects and focus on the knowledge, understanding, and application of your learning.

We are developing more **case studies**, to share lived experiences of practitioners and students.

OCA is Evolving - Improved Learning Community
What changes are being made?

We want to encourage OCA students to become more involved, both with the Student Association, and in helping to shape the **learning community** you are a part of.

In addition to the usual **feedback and quality mechanisms** - level surveys, NSS, forums, speaking to PLs and External Examiners - it will become possible to give feedback on course materials via the VLE.

This way you will become part of an ongoing curriculum quality review.

The Student Association provides a voice for students. They hold the OCA to account; pushing for positive change and improving the OCA student experience.

Their website is the central place to join student groups, and attend the various regional and online events: www.ocasa.org.uk

OCA is Evolving - Timelines
What happens next?

Changes will take place in line with the **migration strategy** from August onwards. The first 3x3 courses for each stage will start from September.

Many changes will benefit all students, not just those on the new 3x3 courses. Please visit **OCA Learn** regularly to see what is now available.

If you want to **discuss the changes**, please submit questions or comments via this Google form: https://forms.gle/K7EQgNDaMkb4e1Kd8

We will respond to your **frequently asked questions** through more general responses rather than individual replies.

We will be publishing additional **WeAreOCA posts** on the changes, what to expect, and their benefits over the coming months in response to your questions: www.oca.ac.uk/weareoca/

This document was compiled by Moira Lovell, Director of Curriculum & Quality, Christian Lloyd, Director of Learning & Teaching, and members of the Student Association.