UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION FOR:

BA (HONS) FINE ART

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	Fine Art

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	2022/23 – 2026/27
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]

Stage 1 courses are open access so no prior qualifications are required. In order to progress to Stage 2, students must have gained 120 credits at Stage 1, through study or by Accreditation of Prior Learning.

In addition to prior qualifications and learning accreditation, OCA specifies three general requirements for students to be admitted to its degree programmes:
- 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)

Full details on each of these requirements can be found in the OCA Student Regulations in the section Admission Requirements.

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 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.

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

---

[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.

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 will be 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%
Stage 2	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Stage 3	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Overall Learning & Teaching hours[4]	Scheduled:	Independent:	Placement:
Stage 1	17.5%	82.5%	0.0%
	210 hours	990 hours	0 hours
Stage 2	15.0%	85.0%	0.0%
	180 hours	1020 hours	0 hours
Stage 3	12.5%	87.5%	0.0%
	150 hours	1050 hours	0 hours
General level of staff delivering the course[5]	OCA requires Tutors and Programme Leaders (PLs) to have knowledge of their subject area, proven communication skills, experience of delivering learning and teaching, and a first degree or postgraduate or equivalent, and/or substantial professional experience to support their roles. Tutors and PLs are encouraged to obtain professional recognition by the Higher Education Academy at an appropriate level. All Tutors engage with an induction process, an annual 'Tutor Team Meeting' and 1-2-1s, and are provided with guidance on Formative Feedback, Group Work, and Summative Assessment		
Language of Study	English		
Subject/Qualification Benchmark Statement: AA 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, Programme Director, 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;

Unit codes and titles	Level	Credit value	Elective/ Core	Most popular student choice of optional elective units or elective options in core units?	Order of units
Stage 1					
FA41SSD, FA41SSD Fine Art 1.1: Fine Art Practices; Studios 2D & 3D (OFAR4154)	4	40	Core	N/A	1
FA42SOD, Fine Art 1.2: Fine Art Practices; Studio 4D (OFAR4155)	4	40	Core	N/A	2
FA43MAM, Fine Art 1.3: Materials and Making (OFAR4156)	4	40	Core	N/A	3
Stage 2					
FA51IRW, Fine Art 2.1: Ideas, Research and Writing (OFAR5142)	5	40	Core	N/A	4
FA52EES, Fine Art 2.2 Experimental Encounters (OFAR5143)	5	40	Core	N/A	5
FA53PTN, Fine Art 2.3 Presenting the Narrative (OFAR5144)	5	40	Core	N/A	6
Stage 3					
FA61PAR, Fine Art 3.1: Practice and Research (OFAR6154)	6	40	Core	N/A	7
FA62EPS, Fine Art 3.2 External Projects (OFAR6155)	6	40	Core	N/A	8
FA63MPT, Fine Art 3.3 Major Project (OFAR6156)	6	40	Core	N/A	9

Section B - Course Overview

The BA (Hons) Fine Art degree offers you the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of fine art as a creative, technical and intellectual activity.

The course offers an accessible, flexible, and well-supported course of study through which you can develop your creative voice in media of your choice within a specialist understanding of the discipline.

The curriculum focuses on subject and media that represent contemporary fine art practice. Three virtual studio spaces are dedicated to 2D, 3D and 4D practices, each acts as a repository for relevant material, information and interactive content whilst functioning simultaneously as a place for dialogue, exchange and communities of practice. Within the course it is recognised that a studio can take on different guises and this is reflected in the content of each virtual space.

During Stage 1, the course supports the acquisition of techniques and skills, establishing a knowledge base from where you can explore and innovate. In addition, practices of art writing and curation together with collaborative practice and process form course content in Stage 2. The course will appeal to those who wish to study their chosen media in depth alongside those who choose a more varied approach.

This is an academically rigorous course in which you will integrate theory and practice and develop independent learning skills within a stimulating learning environment. You will be encouraged to experiment as a way to develop your creative thinking and will receive guidance at all stages from your tutor's feedback.

At stage 2, you will have the opportunity to study the theory of collaboration, and to actively collaborate with other students, through an innovative unit mirrored with BA (Hons) Music. development.

The BA (Hons) Fine Art approach to learning encourages an active, flexible and engaged community of students that acknowledges, and champions practice based methods, techniques, broad encounters with various media and critical theories across a diverse global student population. The course recognises interdisciplinary and intercultural learning as being an active space that reflects outwardly facing, real world attributes (Last J, Lewis S, and Wade S, 2008). While we acknowledge historic precursors and theoretical groundings with respect, students interrogate what Fine Art practice is and can be for the 21st Century.

The overall aims of the course are to enable and support you to develop your own visual language - your creative voice - towards a sustainable and reflective creative practice for a professional career, 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 expectations 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 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.

Stage 1 : Developing concepts and skills

At Stage 1, you will establish your visual communication in 2D, 3D and 4D media such as drawing, printmaking or painting, sculpture, video and sonic work alongside the study of visual culture, thereby establishing a practical and contextual understanding that is mutually supportive. You will be introduced to the Fine Art virtual studios where you can access relevant material and connect with your peers. Stage 1 unit assignments support you through a series of investigations that help you to apply your learning and to present your ideas and work

Stage 2: Intermediate stage

At Stage 2, you will progress in your chosen discipline, with each Stage 2 unit taking you on a journey towards greater autonomy and a wider awareness of the contemporary practice of fine art. The Stage 2 units encourage you to investigate contemporary fine art practice more widely, going beyond your own studio, or place of production to explore what fine art practice is more globally.

Unit 2.2 provides an opportunity to extend personal practice into collaboration, working alongside peers in order to take a more experimental approach to work. This unit serves as a test bed for the development of creative practice, where students will work together in order to explore and develop and reflect on new ideas and innovative approaches that may incorporate risk taking as a way to learn and try out new approaches. Unit 2.2 is underpinned by an exploration of collaborative methods and theories to help inform an academic understanding of collaborative practices.

Stage 3: Becoming an independent practising artist

The final stage represents the culmination of your creative and academic enquiry. You will be encouraged to analyse the contemporary art world and your position within it and to use this knowledge to present yourself and your work professionally. Unit 3.1 Practice and Research is complimented and informed by Unit 3.2 External Projects; you will plan and negotiate your research into your own specialist subject area; practice and writing become mutually dependent as creative work is underpinned by

growing knowledge and understanding, through analysis of contextual influences and studio methodologies.

To frame your understanding of theory and practice, you will be supported to become increasingly critical, and to reflect on the cultural, social and political contexts that frames fine art and your own work. Critical and contextual reflection is developed and evidenced through research and reflective tasks at Stage 1, critical writing at Stage 2 and a body of visual and written research for Stage 3.

Approach to learning

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. 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 fine art and/or lecturing in the subject at other UK art colleges or Universities. The learning environment provides opportunities for you to join and contribute to a diverse learning community through forum discussions, virtual study and studio visits and other platforms that allow for wider interaction, networking, collaboration and reflection. The course encourages you to develop a sustainable approach to your practice by establishing shared spaces, support networks and by setting up individual or collaborative exhibitions and/or publications.

Progression

You may choose to can complete the Foundation in Drawing course before starting BA Fine Art. This course introduces you to drawing, collage, printmaking, mixed media, painting and textiles and assists in helping you to assess where your interests lie in mediums and ways of visual expression. This diagnostic course helps you to identify your own areas of strength and OCA tutors and student support advisors will assist you to make appropriate choices for the progression of your studies.

BA Fine Art sits alongside a degree in Painting and in Drawing and shares a range of learning material, resources and tutors. Shared units at HE Level 4 (Stage 1) provide a variety of entry points onto the degree, and allow students the option to identify, refine and consolidate an area of specialism.

On completion of BA Fine Art, you may wish to continue study at a higher level, and you can progress onto OCA's MA Fine Art course, subject to selection. MA Fine Art at OCA is cohort based, and enables you to develop and deepen your ideas in media and subject of your choice supported by specialist tutors, course materials and real time sessions.

The course supports collaborative working, exhibiting and other forms of presentation of works, that you can continue to develop as you establish your own professional practice.

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 Fine Art 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 learners capable of applying their skills, knowledge and understanding creatively within a range of contexts

• To develop students' theoretical, conceptual and contextual understanding of fine art and contemporary debate in the discipline.

• To develop autonomous learners capable of applying intellectual and practical skills in a chosen fine art medium appropriate to enjoyment, further study or life-long learning

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 fine art practice and their location within it.

LO3   Manage the learning process resourcefully and independently and make appropriate use of primary sources and scholarly reviews.

LO4   Evaluate your own work and that of others critically and objectively

Understanding

LO5   Generate creative and innovative ideas and solutions, adapting and translating them into outcomes that communicate effectively

LO6   Demonstrate informed and rigorous research, enquiry and reflection.

LO7   Understand the relationship your work has to wider contemporary and historical culture

Application

LO8   Select and apply creative, visual, technical and analytical skills in the realisation and presentation of ambitious work to a professional standard.

LO9   Demonstrate a breadth of inventiveness, ideas generation and techniques in the creation of creative work.

LO10 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 Open College of the Arts (OCA) strategic vision is "to be at the forefront of student-led creative arts education through open, enhanced, & supported distance learning, for an evolving society". OCA is a non-profit educational charity, whose purpose is to widen participation in arts education through open flexible distance and online learning.

OCA uses a learning design process to consider the content, activities, and support needed to deliver course aims This flexible approach recognises and supports a diverse range of student experiences, ambitions, and needs. In line with OCA's core values, it also considers how to encourage more open, empowering, engaging, social, sustainable and evolving approaches to learning, teaching, and assessment.

As distance learners, students will need to work independently and to develop appropriate research and study skills. An induction programme and 'Getting Started' introductions are in place to support students to do this, and to help establish relationships with peers and tutors. Ongoing study skills support is available through #weareoca, OCA's blog content, and other cross-curriculum study skills resources.

OCA's virtual learning environment, OCA Learn, provides a platform for content, activities, and support for each unit. A dedicated Degree Space is in place to foster course wide dialogue and peer support through forum activities and shared resources. OCA has a responsibility to ensure all learning environments, content, and communication are as accessible as possible for individuals who have sensory, cognitive, neurological, physical, or other disabilities, and to provide an inclusive learning environment that acknowledges the diversity of our students' experiences. OCA's Student Engagement Strategy places a key focus on accessibility, with provision for designing learning materials with enhanced operability for mobile devices, which conform to all appropriate accessibility standards.

Course content is delivered through a range of learning materials, including written, video, and interactive media. These materials provide introductions and framing of subject related content, technical guidance, case studies, and other appropriate information. Materials are primarily accessed through OCA Learn, as well as #weareoca, which provides opportunities for current tutor and student-led content and debate.

Accompanying activities, such as exercises, research tasks, and assignments, encourage students to work independently and flexibly by selecting, testing, and interpreting relevant research, and applying understanding of critical thinking and creativity. Through these activities, students will begin to identify, develop and manage their own projects and document their progress through a learning log, or similar format. Learning logs are provided through OCA Spaces.

Students are expected to have a basic grasp of any software required for their course and to learn more complex usage as necessary as they progress. OCA provides students with G Drive online storage which includes word processing, presentation, drawing, and mind mapping tools. While OCA does not provide a help desk service to students for software, learning activities provide structured context for software learning at staged points throughout the course, and forums provide opportunities for peer support.

Learning is supported by tutors who provide timely, well-grounded and constructive formative feedback that aims to stretch and challenge learners at staged points within the unit. In parallel, tutor and student-led learning takes place through online group work. Group work offers opportunities to discuss and shape ideas, and share and support approaches to learning within video, webinar, study events, and/or forum activities and support. Critically reflecting on work through self-evaluation provides a valuable way for students to observe and learn from peers, to develop increasingly professional personal and graduate skills, and to develop a deepening recognition of subject boundaries. Students are encouraged to do this through their learning log, reflective assessment presentations, and by reflecting on formative feedback.

Student Services provide study planning and pastoral support for any student who requests it. This is available personally via telephone, online, or within student forums, or more generally through additional resources, signposted through OCA Learn and/or #weareoca.

Students will engage with a range of academic literature throughout the course, supported through library access and seminars. Essential and recommended reading lists have been selected for their academic currency, and from authors and practitioners across a range of viewpoints, ethnicities, identities, and cultures. All reading lists can be accessed through the digital library services and eBooks. Additional online texts and journals are also available via UCA's online library. Students are supported through OCA's Link Librarian via OCA Learn and #weareoca content and debate.

As students' progress, their research will become more self-directed. Independent research and projects will be undertaken alongside a consideration of any ethical issues. Guidance, resources, and support for any external and/or collaborative projects are available through the Enterprise Hub and in discussion with tutors.

In addition to OCA's core support, OCA's Student Association (OCASA) provides opportunities for students to physically engage with cross-curriculum Study Events, asynchronous Virtual Study Events, or to become involved in wider student discussions or other events.

Assessment Strategy

OCA's assessment strategy is based on an assessment for learning model which emphasises assessment *for* learning rather than assessment *of* learning. Therefore, assessment is seen as an integrated and meaningful part of the learning journey. Assessment outcomes encourage learners to critically reflect on their progress and to articulate ideas and outcomes effectively through appropriate presentation formats.

Assessment criteria focus on the extent to which knowledge of relevant concepts, practices, theories, and contexts are demonstrated, the level of understanding demonstrated through the testing and application of knowledge, and the degree to which knowledge and understanding are demonstrated through the application of technical, communication, personal, transferable, and graduate skills. To help articulate these, assessment criteria are presented at each stage through a set of range statements.

Summative assessment can take place online or at a physical assessment event. Students will submit work in line with course assessment guidelines, and will be assessed through group marking overseen by the Programme Leader. Quality assurance is provided through moderation of marks, internal verification of the assessment process, parity checks to ensure grades are consistent across OCA, plagiarism checks, and scrutiny by External Examiners. Students will be provided with summative marks and feedback at the end of each unit.

Costs of additional materials/resources

Software and digital equipment
As part of some units, students are required to use specialist applications. Students are responsible for sourcing and, where necessary, purchasing any additional software specified. Where possible, open or freeware equivalents will be discussed alongside industry standard options. Students are eligible for any student discounts on computer equipment and software.

Materials and resources
Students are responsible for sourcing and purchasing the materials, resources, and any additional equipment used in the production of their work. These costs will differ from student to student, depending on each student's area of focus.

Transportation of work
Students are responsible for any postage costs of work to/from tutors or OCA for formative feedback and/or assessment. OCA will charge students for any excess postage payable on work submitted for formal assessment which exceeds the maximum permitted weight. Alternatively, students can submit work digitally for free.

Learner Support Scheme
In line with OCA's Access and Participation Plan, the College continues to invest in schemes to improve engagement into creative arts from those from low socio-economic backgrounds through a bursary fund.

For further details on your specific course costs, please visit www.oca.ac.uk

Section F - Employability

OCA recognises that its current student body holds a broad range of employment and enterprise aspirations. Many students have established careers, see their studies as a change in direction, and for an increasing number of younger students, as a first step into a creative career. As distance learners, OCA students are located across the UK and internationally and consequently have differing levels of resources and opportunity. In order to provide meaningful and consistent educational experiences and outcomes for all of these students, OCA encourages students to interpret the concept of 'enterprise' in ways that are personally relevant to their particular aspirations, social contexts, and locations.

As a charity, OCA supports a curriculum that has a positive impact upon people's lives and society as a whole, and encourages engagement with enterprise that has a clear societal impact. This means undertaking external projects that can have a wider social benefit, and developing practices that are socially aware and environmentally sustainable.

To encourage this, learning materials and activities provides a framework for students to begin to define, establish and sustain their practices at a variety of scales and ambitions, and encourage students to think about freelance, employment, social enterprises, or entrepreneurship outcomes. A focus on research and ethics helps to frame these activities within wider social contexts. Students are also encouraged to undertake collaborative projects with other students, and to work on competition briefs or other external opportunities.

A key benefit of distance learning is in allowing self-sustaining ways of developing a creative practice to build over time, and by balancing study/work/life commitments. Students can establish studio spaces and build resources throughout their studies, to feel prepared and equipped at the end of their course. Therefore, enterprise related themes are embedded through the course to encourage this sustainable approach.

An Enterprise Hub will provide a central online resource to support self-directed student activities. The Hub will provide guidance and resources on key enterprise themes, such as establishing and undertaking external projects/work-related learning, working collaboratively, establishing business or enterprise opportunities such as external exhibitions, business plans, or social enterprises, and connecting to appropriate professional networks.

OCA will use the Enterprise Hub to help establish relationships with other organisations, businesses, and funding opportunities. These in turn will provide the potential for business incubators, mentoring options, internship opportunities and enable access to seed-funding for students.

Section G - 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