

Programme specification

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	MA Fine Art
Teaching Institution	Open College of the Arts
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of first OU review	June 2022
Date of latest OU review	
Next review	
Credit points for the award	180
UCAS Code	
JACS Code	
Programme start date	
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	QAA Master's Degree Characteristic Statements
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes	
Professional/statutory recognition	
Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL & Face-to-Face)	PT DL
Duration of the programme for each mode of study	2 Years
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	N/A
Date of production/revision of this specification	June 2022

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

1. Widen access to Fine Art education at postgraduate level through an open, enhanced, and supported distance learning experience;
2. To encourage and equip you with a rich seam of discipline relevant knowledge, appropriate skills and future directed capabilities to operate as an effective practitioner;
3. To foster thoughtful, ethical, sustainable, flexible practitioners informed by rigorous research;
4. To provide opportunities to learn collaboratively, that engages in constructive and critical dialogue and connects you with a community of artists and researchers;
5. To promote inclusive and intercultural approaches to artwork and research practice;
6. To promote inquiry, experimentation and research informed approaches to the development, resolution and dissemination of artwork;
7. To promote informed and focussed independent learning, placing the student at the centre of the learning experience;
8. To develop your critical understanding of the theoretical and conceptual issues central to art and the social, historical and cultural context in which it is practiced;
9. To increase confidence in the development of individual practices, individual research and collective debate;
10. To develop autonomy of intellectual and practical skills in a chosen area of art practice appropriate to employment, further study, or life-long learning;
11. To enable you to develop a clear vision and a strategy for sustained professional practice beyond the course

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards

(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon

completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

Students who choose not to pursue the full MA award may be considered for an exit award of a PGCert or PGDip.

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60 credit work-related learning takes place

N/A

2.4 List of all exit awards

PGCert Fine Art
PGDip Fine Art
MA Fine Art

3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

Programme Structure - LEVEL 7

Compulsory modules	Credit points	Optional modules	Credit points	Is module compensatable ?	Semester runs in
MA Fine Art 1.1 Research and Practice (FA7RAP)	60	N/A	N/A	NO	N/A
MA Fine Art 1.2 Contextual Perspectives (FA7CPS)	60	N/A		NO	N/A
MA Fine Art 1.3 Resolution (FA7RES)	60	N/A		NO	N/A

Intended learning outcomes at Level 7 are listed below:

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7

3A. Knowledge and understanding

Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>A1 Identify, define, and describe current and relevant principles, concepts and subject knowledge to a high level.</p> <p>A2 Navigate and critique emerging practices and wider contexts, to shape your knowledge of fine art and its subject boundaries.</p>	<p>Course materials delivered through OCA Learn an online learning environment through a combination of written, audio and audio visual and links to external online content.</p>

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 7

3A. Knowledge and understanding

A3 Select, question, test, interpret and synthesize relevant and specialist knowledge to inform your intentions, ideas, and outcomes.

A4 Apply highly fluent critical thinking to develop an informed personal position through critique, group work, and critical thinking tasks

A5 Apply transferable and graduate skills in sustaining appropriate professional practices and standards through undertaking ethical research, group work, and in your relationships with the creative industries

Activities such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.

Contextual information is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.

Critical reviews, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.

Skills Hub to facilitate all discipline specific skills learning for the application of relevant skills content to students ideas and programme learning. Coursework Self-directed individual learning produced and recorded in the form of a learning log/online blog and portfolio presentation, including a personal framework.

1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.

Group tutorials to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.

Summative assessment is carried out digitally with students providing links to their online learning logs, images and videos of work and a written or video reflective evaluation

3B. Cognitive skills

Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>B1 Identify, define, and describe current and relevant principles, concepts and subject knowledge to a high level.</p> <p>B2 Identify, define, and describe contemporary and historical practices, theories, and debates to help inform your artistic practice</p> <p>B3 Navigate and critique emerging practices and wider contexts, to shape your knowledge of fine art and its subject boundaries.</p> <p>B4 Select, question, test, interpret and synthesize relevant and specialist knowledge to inform your intentions, ideas, and outcomes.</p> <p>B5 Apply highly fluent critical thinking to develop an informed personal position through critique, group work, and critical thinking tasks.</p> <p>B6 Apply curiosity, creativity, and intellectual enquiry to initiate, test, and articulate ideas and outcomes in professional and innovative ways.</p> <p>B7 Employ highly fluent communication skills to effectively present ideas, intentions, and outcomes through your work, collaborative projects, and other outcomes.</p>	<p>Course materials delivered through OCA Learn an online learning environment through a combination of written, audio and audio visual and links to external online content.</p> <p>Activities such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p>Contextual information is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p>Critical reviews, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p> <p>Skills Hub to facilitate all discipline specific skills learning for the application of relevant skills content to students ideas and programme learning. Coursework Self-directed individual learning produced and recorded in the form of a learning log/online blog and portfolio presentation, including a personal framework.</p> <p>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p>

3B. Cognitive skills	
<p>B8 Use advanced personal and transferable skills to effectively sustain independent learning and reflect on progress as an independent artist.</p> <p>B9 Apply transferable and graduate skills in sustaining appropriate professional practices and standards through undertaking ethical research, group work, and in your relationships with the creative industries</p>	<p>Group tutorials to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Summative assessment is carried out digitally with students providing links to their online learning logs, images and videos of work and a written or video reflective evaluation</p>

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p>C1 Demonstrate an advanced awareness of the use of fine art skills, technologies, methods, practices and processes related to your artistic practice.</p> <p>C2 Navigate and critique emerging practices and wider contexts, to shape your knowledge of fine art and its subject boundaries.</p> <p>C3 Select, question, test, interpret and synthesize relevant and specialist knowledge to inform your intentions, ideas, and outcomes.</p> <p>C4 Apply curiosity, creativity, and intellectual enquiry to initiate, test, and articulate ideas and outcomes in professional and innovative ways.</p>	<p>Course materials delivered through OCA Learn an online learning environment through a combination of written, audio and audio visual and links to external online content.</p> <p>Activities such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p>Contextual information is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p>Critical reviews, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>

3C. Practical and professional skills

C5 Select, test and use relevant materials, media and techniques to resolve and present innovative ideas and solutions through an exhibition.

C6 Apply specialist technical skills and processes to develop and produce professional outcomes.

C7 Employ highly fluent communication skills to effectively present ideas, intentions, and outcomes through your work, collaborative projects, and other outcomes.

C8 Use advanced personal and transferable skills to effectively sustain independent learning and reflect on progress as an independent artist.

C9 Apply transferable and graduate skills in sustaining appropriate professional practices and standards through undertaking ethical research, group work, and in your relationships with the creative industries

Skills Hub to facilitate all discipline specific skills learning for the application of relevant skills content to students ideas and programme learning. Coursework Self-directed individual learning produced and recorded in the form of a learning log/online blog and portfolio presentation, including a personal framework.

1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.

Group tutorials to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.

Summative assessment is carried out digitally with students providing links to their online learning logs, images and videos of work and a written or video reflective evaluation

3D. Key/transferable skills

Learning outcomes:

Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods

3D. Key/transferrable skills

D1 Demonstrate an advanced awareness of the use of fine art skills, technologies, methods, practices and processes related to your artistic practice.

D2 Select, question, test, interpret and synthesize relevant and specialist knowledge to inform your intentions, ideas, and outcomes.

D3 Apply highly fluent critical thinking to develop an informed personal position through critique, group work, and critical thinking tasks

D4 Apply curiosity, creativity, and intellectual enquiry to initiate, test, and articulate ideas and outcomes in professional and innovative ways.

D5 Select, test and use relevant materials, media and techniques to resolve and present innovative ideas and solutions through an exhibition.

D6 Apply specialist technical skills and processes to develop and produce professional outcomes.

D7 Employ highly fluent communication skills to effectively present ideas, intentions, and outcomes through your work, collaborative projects, and other outcomes.

Course materials delivered through OCA Learn an online learning environment through a combination of written, audio and audio visual and links to external online content.

Activities such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.

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1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.

Group tutorials to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.

3D. Key/transferable skills

D8 Use advanced personal and transferable skills to effectively sustain independent learning and reflect on progress as an independent artist.

D9 Apply transferable and graduate skills in sustaining appropriate professional practices and standards through undertaking ethical research, group work, and in your relationships with the creative industries

Summative assessment is carried out digitally with students providing links to their online learning logs, images and videos of work and a written or video reflective evaluation

Exit Award at HE7 PGCert Fine Art- 60 credits

Exit Award at HE7 PGDip Fine Art - 120 credits

Exit Award at HE7 MA Fine Art - 180 credit

4. Distinctive features of the programme structure

- **Where applicable, this section provides details on distinctive features such as:**
- **where in the structure above a professional/placement year fits in and how it may affect progression**
- **any restrictions regarding the availability of elective modules where in the programme structure students must make a choice of pathway/route**

This degree programme offers graduates the opportunity to scrutinize and advance their fine art existing practice, working towards their career aspirations through an innovative and exciting programme with art production at its core. The curriculum is centred around dialogic exchange with dynamic and supportive individual and group work to enable students to deepen their own chosen concepts and ways of working. Unique as the only cohort based online degree of its kind in Europe, the programme supports students through a curriculum that is built on critical enquiry, risk taking and innovation. The production of studio work and material investigation takes place alongside responsive written, aural and/or verbal presentation which contextualises studio concepts. Professional practice is embedded throughout the two-year programme, and students test their ideas through public presentation in their location, giving them the skills, ambition and confidence to establish a contemporary professional practice of the student's choice. Led by highly skilled educators who are also practising artists, students are guided through a programme of seminars, lectures, tutorials and studio days to develop a resilient, enquiring and self-motivated approach that enables them to debate and contribute to the field of fine art.

The course is delivered by online distance learning, and offers a unique opportunity (the only MA Fine Art course in Europe combining wholly distance delivery with the subject) for students who would not be able to attend a course on campus to enable them to develop high level skills in the field. Whilst studying from home, students have access to excellent training, material, support and feedback from subject experts. The course welcomes applications from students from a wide range of visual arts backgrounds who wish to extend and redefine the theoretical and practical base of their understanding of fine art at an advanced level. Through the geographically diverse locations within a cohort, students are able to share knowledge of international cultural contexts and opportunities and there is a history of OCA's MA students arranging a touring exhibition across countries of student residence.

Unit/module 1: 1.1. Research and Practice

This unit/module supports students to develop independent study skills and to examine a range of independent research methods appropriate to their practice. Working in their chosen medium and area of interest, students interrogate their practices through a series of practical approaches within a carefully constructed

critical framework that identifies relevant theoretical positions and enables students to develop personal research methodologies.

Unit 2: 1.2. Contextual Perspectives

This unit/module is predominantly practice based. Students build upon methods, processes and learning initiated in Research and Practice, moving towards more independent study. Contextual Perspectives invites students to test ideas, developing propositions for reasoned enquiry based on methodologies developed in Unit/module 1.1, framing studio production with a critically defined set of conceptual and theoretical concerns. Students study the breadth of contemporary fine art practice including, but not limited to, writing as making, socially engaged practice, public art and time based work

Unit 3: 1.3. Resolution

To complete the programme, students produce a substantial body of practical work and accompanying contextual material for public presentation. A programme of critiques, seminars, tutorials and lectures support the students technical, conceptual, methodological and theoretical development over an extended period of study. The unit/module material will support critical awareness to enable students to arrive at a discerned and ambitious conclusion. Students leave the programme with a breadth of intellectual, practical and transferable skills, prepared to continue their practice for personal development and/or professional practice.

5. Support for students and their learning

OCA Learn, provides an accessible virtual learning environment for learning materials, support, and other resources. Through OCA Learn you will access your course content and activities, submit your work for feedback from tutors, and engage in online group activities.

Course content is provided through written materials, recorded lectures, visiting speakers, and/or case studies, and is designed to be engaging and accessible. Course activities provide learning opportunities that are relevant, engaging, and adaptable. Both course content and activities offer a starting point to undertake self-directed learning to achieve your learning outcomes.

Tuition is provided at timetabled points during the academic calendar, through a mix of:

- **Synchronous group activities** offered as live events with supporting forums.
- **Tutorials** as 1-2-1 online sessions.
- **Feedback reports** offered as written or verbal formats.

- **Asynchronous group activities** within forums or other online platforms.

All forms of tuition offer formative feedback through constructive and well-grounded comments that aims to stretch and challenge learners at set points within the course. The balance of tuition is weighted towards live group activities and 1-2-1 tutorials because of the timetabled cohort delivery of this postgraduate.

Students should expect a minimum of 9 hours of tuition per 60 credit unit/module. Tuition is the amount of contact time academic staff will offer to students to deliver formative feedback.

Your degree has an online Department space, within OCA Learn, to help encourage academic dialogue and develop a learning community. This space will offer an overview of your degree, regular group activity opportunities, spaces to ask questions, signposting to additional support and/or resources, and access to your Programme Leader.

Online library access, reading lists, and additional resources are available via the Library page on OCA Learn. Library support is offered by a librarian, via 'Ask the Librarian' forums. Key reading lists are accessible electronically.

OCA Spaces provides students with a secure online journal service, to be used during your studies, and for tutor feedback and assessment. Templates are provided relevant to your course, along with guidance and support on setting up your online journal or learning log.

The Student Handbook, on OCA Learn, provides additional guidance, information, and support to all students to cover study skills, time management, and academic skills, and signposting to appropriate wellbeing, pastoral, or other support, provided by the Learner Support Team.

The Enterprise Hub, on OCA Learn, offers guidance on sustaining your creative practice, careers, employability, and other enterprise related opportunities throughout your studies. Group activities support the Enterprise Hub.

OCA Discuss, offers a forum platform to all students, to help encourage peer support.

WeAreOCA, provides a dynamic and collaborative space, across OCA learning communities, to test, discuss, showcase, journal, and support experiences of learning, teaching, and/or practices within the creative arts.

At the end of your course, you will submit your work for summative assessment. The Assessment Guidance page, on OCA Learn, provides information on assessment, how best to prepare, and a forum to ask questions. Support for assessment will be provided through group activities via your Department space.

6. Criteria for admission

All applicants must be aged 18 or over at point of over admission to the course

OCA specifies four general requirements for students to be admitted to its programmes:

1. **English language competency**
2. **Access to a desktop computer or laptop with internet access**
3. **Access to basic technology to document work,**
4. **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 Admissions Policy

Students and prospective students are required to self certify their ability and confidence with Information Technologies as set out above as part of their application and enrolment to OCA. OCA bears no liability in this regard.

Students may apply for an ICT Exemption where they have a medical reason, or disability, or other compelling reason (for example, service overseas) that may prohibit them from using ICT or be detrimental to them to use ICT. Cases for ICT exemption are considered by the Learner Support team, and evidence will be requested in support of your application. This may include medical documentation, Needs Assessments, or other documentation depending on the nature of your application

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.

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 learnersupport@oca.ac.uk.

All applicants to the MA Fine Art will be required to complete the OCA Master's application form, submit a written statement and a recent portfolio of artwork in order to be considered for the course. The written statement will detail reasons for wishing to join the course and the portfolio of artwork will have been produced during the two years prior to application.

Enrolment to any of OCA's Masters degrees is subject to the following entry criteria. Students will normally be accepted onto courses, where they can apply and claim for 100 points, made up as follows:

- A degree in any subject - 40 points
- A degree in a relevant subject - 50 points
- Evidenced experience of working in any relevant creative industry or context - 50 points
- Certificated and/or other training below degree level equating to three years or more of study - 50 points
- Higher National Diploma/Foundation degree or equivalent in Art - 30 points
- Higher National Certificate or equivalent in Art - 20 points
- A-Level Art or equivalent - 10 points
- A written statement detailing reasons for wishing to join the course and what is hoped to be gained from it - 25 points*
- A portfolio of work produced during the last two years - 25 points*

*All applicants will be required to submit a minimum of a written statement and portfolio of artwork in order to be considered for the course.

7. Language of study

English

8. Information about non-OU standard assessment regulations (including PSRB requirements)

N/A

9. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

Effective learning and teaching is underpinned by regular quality checks, as outlined in the Quality Handbook, and routine evaluation and monitoring of provision, learning, teaching, and assessment.

Quality checks take place when course content and activities are initially designed. These ensure that learning materials meet the expectations of validated documents, assessment requirements, accessibility requirements, and are in line with the QAA Quality Code.

Annual Monitoring provides a quality process through which the curriculum, learning, teaching, and assessment are evaluated by your Programme Leader. Annual Monitoring reports are reviewed by senior members of OCA staff, and an action plan established to help improve the course over the following academic year.

OCA collects feedback from students, formally and informally, to contribute to the Annual Monitoring process. OCA runs two internal surveys, the Unit/module Evaluation Survey which gathers feedback and opinions on individual unit/module experiences, and the Stage Analysis Survey which looks at perspectives across a whole stage of study. Informal evaluation and monitoring also takes place through the ongoing dialogue between students and academic staff. This is facilitated through group activities, student surveys, and forums. We also collect feedback from External Examiners that is outside the remit of the assessment process and academic standards of the course, which is communicated to the Programme Leaders and OCA Directors to note.

Feedback reports are subject to routine checks by OCA staff to ensure accuracy and consistency.

OCA uses a Peer Supported Review (P-SR) process to evaluate and develop teaching practices. This offers teaching observations, peer-to-peer discussions, and self-reflections, with a view to developing and enhancing teaching skills and knowledge.

Effective learning and teaching is informed through reflective practice. OCA supports academic staff to engage in relevant professional development through access to appropriate staff development opportunities. Training for academic staff is provided to fulfil the main duties of their roles. Where appropriate, further professional development will be provided. Reflective practice is supported through academic team meetings, and through the Higher Education Academy Fellowship scheme.

10. Changes made to the programme since last (review
N/A