

## Programme specification

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	BA (Hons) Illustration
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Open College of the Arts
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of first OU review</b>	June 2022
<b>Date of latest OU review</b>	
<b>Next review</b>	
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	360
<b>UCAS Code</b>	
<b>JACS Code</b>	
<b>Programme start date</b>	
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	Art and Design (2019)
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes</b>	
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	
<b>Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL &amp; Face-to-Face)</b>	PT DL
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study</b>	
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>Date of production/revision of this specification</b>	May 2025

**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. To widen access to education in the study and application of illustration at undergraduate level through open and flexible learning
2. To ensure students gain the technical skills in illustration, drawing and image-making to form a solid foundation for further development
3. To develop students' creative and visual vocabulary through the exploration of a range of material and conceptual approaches grounded in an investigation into historical and contemporary illustration practices
4. To open up a range of opportunities expanding across disciplines for students to develop their own personal illustration practice through individually driven research and experimentation
5. To develop students' critical understanding of the diverse and shifting social, historical, cultural and environmental contexts globally in which expanded illustration and image-making practices emerge from and with which they are in constant dialogue
6. To provide a learning environment through practice, research and rigorous experimentation in which the student has the intellectual and artistic potential to challenge and change their view of the world and its structures
7. To foster high level ethical and professional standards
8. To develop autonomous learners with the intellectual, practical and conceptual skills to push the boundaries of contemporary illustration practice and to transfer their diverse learning into future employment, further research, collaborative practices or life-long learning

## 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 / or are unable to complete the full BA (Hons) award may be considered for an exit award of a CertHE, DipHE or BA.

## 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

CertHE Illustration  
DipHE Illustration  
BA Illustration  
BA (Hons) Illustration

### 3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

#### Programme Structure - LEVEL 4

<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable ?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Illustration 1.1: Introducing Illustration (IL41IIN)	40	N/A	N/A	NO	N/A
Illustration 1.2: Visual Histories (IL42VHS)	40			NO	
Illustration 1.3: Materials & Contexts (IL43MAC)	40			NO	

**Intended learning outcomes at Level 4 are listed below:**

Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 4	
3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>KU1</b> Applying illustration processes and methods to explore ideas and visual language to generate initial outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>
<p><b>KU2</b> The fundamental principles of illustration as a visual, technical, communication, and contextual practice</p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> is carried out digitally with students providing links to their online</p>

<p><b>KU3</b> The theories, histories, ideas, debates, and practices related to illustration</p>	<p>learning logs, images and videos of work and a written or video reflective evaluation</p>
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3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>CS1</b> To begin to identify and apply knowledge from diverse sources and cultures to your illustration practice.</p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p> <p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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</p>

<p><b>CS2 To explore ways of working that combine creative, practical, and research skills relevant to your illustration practice.</b></p>	<p>produced and recorded in the form of a learning log/online blog and portfolio presentation, including a personal framework.</p> <p><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p>
<p><b>CS3 To use reflective skills to explore a personal perspective on contemporary illustration practices, debates, and your own practice.</b></p>	<p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

<p><b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>PPS1 Deliver outcomes in response to relevant opportunities.</b></p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>

<p><b>PPS2 Engage in the creation and development of your personal and professional identity and practice.</b></p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p>
<p><b>PPS3 Use materials, technologies, processes, and techniques to generate ideas and outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

<p align="center"><b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>KTS1 Organise and start to manage creative projects and practice</b></p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>

<p><b>KTS2 Apply skills in the development and delivery of outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p>
<p><b>KTS3 Communicate outcomes and ideas, using appropriate means for an audience</b></p>	<p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

**Exit Award at Stage 1 (HE4) CertHE Illustration**

<b>Programme Structure - LEVEL 5</b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable ?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Illustration 2.1: Visual Languages (IL51VLS)	40	N/A	N/A	NO	N/A
Illustration 2.2: Global Perspectives (IL52GPS)	40			NO	
Illustration 2.3: Self-Directed Project (IL53SDP)	40			NO	

**Intended learning outcomes at Level 5 are listed below:**

<b>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 5</b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p><b>KU4 Applying illustration processes and methods to explore increasingly meaningful use of ideas and visual language to generate finished outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>
<p><b>KU5 The technical, experimental, observational, and contextual aspects of illustration broadly relevant to your developing practice.</b></p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> is carried out digitally with students providing links to their online</p>

<p><b>KU6</b> The theories, histories, ideas, debates, and practices that inform your developing illustration practice</p>	<p>learning logs, images and videos of work and a written or video reflective evaluation</p>
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<p><b>3B. Cognitive skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>CS4</b> To identify, test, and apply knowledge from a range of sources and cultures to your creative practice</p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p> <p><b>Skills Hub</b> to facilitate all discipline specific skills learning for the application of relevant skills</p>

<p><b>CS5 To establish ways of working that combine creative, practical, and research skills relevant to your emerging illustration practice.</b></p>	<p>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><b>CS6 To use reflective and analytical skills to explore a personal perspective on contemporary illustration practices, debates, and your own creative practice.</b></p>	<p><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

<p><b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>PPS4 Identify and deliver outcomes in response to relevant opportunities.</b></p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>

<p><b>PPS5 Identify and engage in the creation and development of your personal and professional identity and practice.</b></p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p>
<p><b>PPS6 Identify and use materials, technologies, processes, and techniques to generate self-initiated ideas and outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

<p><b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>KTS4 Organise and manage your own creative projects and practice.</b></p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>

<p><b>KTS5 Apply skills in the development, delivery, and evaluation of individual and/or collaborative outcomes.</b></p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p>
<p><b>KTS6 Communicate outcomes and ideas, using appropriate means to a range of audiences</b></p>	<p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

## Exit Award at Stage 2 (HE5) DipHE Illustration

<b>Programme Structure - LEVEL 6</b>					
<b>Compulsory modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Optional modules</b>	<b>Credit points</b>	<b>Is module compensatable ?</b>	<b>Semester runs in</b>
Illustration 3.1: Practice and Research (IL61PAR)	40	N/A	N/A	NO	N/A
Illustration 3.2: External Projects (IL62EPS)	40			NO	
Illustration 3.3: Major Project (IL63MPT)	40			NO	

**Intended learning outcomes at Level 6 are listed below:**

<b>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6</b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p><b>KU7</b> Applying relevant illustration processes and methods to independently use ideas and visual language to generate highly finished outcomes for an audience</p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>
<p><b>KU8</b> The technical, experimental, observational and contextual aspects of illustration relevant to your individual illustration practice</p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

<p><b>KU9</b> The contemporary theories, histories, ideas, debates, and practices specifically relevant to your individual illustration practice</p>	
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3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods
<p><b>CS7</b> To independently identify, test, and apply relevant knowledge from diverse sources and cultures to your creative practice.</p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>
<p><b>CS8</b> To sustain ways of working that combine creative, practical, and research skills relevant to your individual illustration practice.</p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure</p>

<p><b>CS9 To use reflective, analytical and critical skills to explore a personal perspective on contemporary illustration practices, debates, and your own creative practice.</b></p>	<p>learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>
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<p><b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>PPS7 Independently identify and sustain the delivery of outcomes in response to relevant opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p> <p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>PPS8</b> Independently engage in the creation and development of your personal and professional identity and practice.</p>	<p><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p> <p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>
<p><b>PPS9</b> Independently identify and use materials, technologies, processes, and techniques to generate self-initiated ideas and outcomes</p>	

<p><b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b></p>	
<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p><b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b></p>
<p><b>KTS7</b> Independently organise and manage your own creative projects and practice</p>	<p><b>Course materials</b> 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><b>Activities</b> such as exercises, research tasks, lectures, seminars, online workshops, forums, digital creative arts studio space and assignments.</p> <p><b>Contextual information</b> is provided within the course materials, online library as written and video content and links to other digital material.</p> <p><b>Critical reviews</b>, either written or audio visual, where students connect practice with research.</p>

<p><b>KTS8 Apply relevant skills in the negotiation, development, delivery, and evaluation of self-directed and/or collaborative outcomes</b></p>	<p><b>Skills Hub</b> 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><b>1 - 1 tutorials or written formative feedback</b>, to reinforce individual understanding and ensure learning is in line with learning outcomes.</p> <p><b>Group tutorials</b> to evaluate and support the development of knowledge and understanding.</p>
<p><b>KTS9 Effectively communicate outcomes and ideas, using appropriate means to a range of identified audiences</b></p>	<p><b>Summative assessment</b> 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>

**Exit Award at Stage 3 (HE6) BA Illustration**  
**Exit Award at Stage 3 (HE6) BA Hons Illustration**

#### **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**

Illustration is a practice-based course that encompasses a wide variety of illustrative, drawn and image-making frameworks for students to examine and experiment with as part of their creative journey. The course offers students a variety of relevant visual contexts and through regular tutor support builds these into the learning structure, with a view towards both specialist understanding of illustration and a broader engagement with the visual arts. The course engages students with ideas in the wider world and applies this to a creative practice with illustration at its core.

Students begin the course by gaining a historical and material understanding of the discipline, and develops this through an expanded examination of contemporary methods and techniques of illustration in an increasingly globalised cultural context. The three stages of study provide a framework for pacing the content, affording students regular points of contact with their tutor to guide their learning and assist in their personal creative interests.

The illustration degree is designed for students who wish to fulfil their ambitions for a diverse practical and critical engagement with visual making and thinking and understand how their unique creative voice situates itself within both contemporary illustration practice and the wider cultural world.

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 you will be at an appropriate level of study to succeed.

#### **Course Structure**

The BA (Hons) Illustration course offers an accessible, flexible, and well-supported course of study through which you can develop your creative voice within a specialist understanding of the discipline.

The course is designed to give you the widest possible span of creative investigation while retaining a strong core structure to underpin your skills and exploration of illustration. As you progress through the stages, you will develop and refine your study choices as the span of coursework content broadens and deepens.

### **Stage 1:**

Stage 1 supports your creative development by examining how to generate and visualise ideas, use research to reflect upon your own work and inform creative approaches. At the end of the first stage, you will have begun to apply these skills to identify your own personal voice and to develop the content and meaning of your illustrative work.

- Unit 1: *Introducing Illustration* will develop your understanding of the basic visual language of illustration, creative strategies and way of documenting your working process. You will explore mark-making and drawing, composition, visual hierarchies and colour theory, and undertake visual research and idea development through a number of engaging exercises.
- Advancing into Unit 2: *Visual Histories*, you will develop an appreciation of the historical and contemporary contexts of illustration contexts (e.g. Victorian, American 20th century, technical, instructional and children's illustration) and survey contemporary areas of practice (e.g. digital drawing, editorial and commercial illustration, graphic novels, animation and concept art).
- The final unit of stage 1, *Materials and Contexts*, considers how to produce artwork for a range of physical formats and visual outcomes (e.g. posters, leaflets, magazine and newspaper illustration, book covers, comics and fanzines).

### **Stage 2:**

Stage 2 supports you to develop your practical skills, contextual and creative understanding of illustration, and enables you to start to locate your practice in a professional context by undertaking client-led projects and define your own creative voice and visual language within your work.

- Unit 1: *Visual Languages*, supports your understanding of how illustration methods and techniques can be applied to contemporary areas of practice such as editorial (e.g. print & web publishing contexts such as newspaper, magazine and book illustration) and commercial, scientific and technical contexts (e.g. product packaging, fashion, medical, educational, archaeological and botanical).
- Advancing into Unit 2: *Global Perspectives*, you will develop an understanding of current representational and interpretative image-making practice both domestically (e.g. in the use of metaphor, symbolism, abstraction, satire and pastiche, diagrammatic and informational illustration) and internationally (e.g. Japanese 'manga', Native American 'Formlines', 'Afrofuturism', Asian, Indian and European

image-making). You will also consider current personal and social visual concerns (e.g. representation of LGBTQI+ communities and issues around race, sexuality, identity, diversity and neurodiversity) and expanded and specialist visual contexts (e.g. self-publishing, activism, street art and non-paper applications)

- The final unit of stage 1, *Self-directed Project* supports you to apply your understanding and skills in either a client led or personal project to create an original body of work.

### **Stage 3:**

Stage 3 supports you to build on your stage 2 studies and synthesize your creative practice and research interests across self-directed bodies of work and critical thinking assignments. The units provide a framework that enables you to foster an increasingly autonomous and professional approach to your studies.

- Unit 1: *Practice and Research* will introduce you to this Stage of study by supporting you to initiate and articulate your emerging creative practice, develop relevant skills and research methods, and refine your fluency in critical thinking. The unit requires the production of a body of work comprising a series of projects or larger piece of work outlining what you are interested in making together with a supporting critical thinking element in the form of an essay or presentation
- Advancing into Unit 2: *External Projects* requires a self-directed project together with a supporting critical thinking element in the form of a case study, business plan, evaluation, written essay or visual presentation.
- The final unit of stage 3, *Major Project* requires the completion of a body of work together with a supporting critical thinking element reflecting on and evaluating your body of work in the form of a written essay or visual presentation.

## 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, lectures, 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 set points in your course by academic staff, through a mix of:

- **Feedback reports** offered as written or verbal formats.
- **Tutorials** as 1-2-1 online sessions.
- **Synchronous group activities** offered as live events with supporting forums.
- **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 feedback reports, tutorials, and group activities may differ from course to course.

Students should expect 6 hours of tuition per 40 credit unit. 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 is an open access provider of courses; this means that evidence of prior qualifications to study OCA courses is not required to enrol at Stage 1 (HE4). 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.

As part of some course units at undergraduate level, students are required to use specified applications in addition to those referred to above. For example; Photoshop image editing software for photography course units; Final Cut Pro or similar for moving image course units; scorewriter programme Sibelius or Dorico for music course units; vector graphics software Adobe Illustrator for visual communications and graphic design course units.

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](mailto:learnersupport@oca.ac.uk).

#### 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 Evaluation

Survey which gathers feedback and opinions on individual unit 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

Learning Outcomes reviewed and updated by OCA Directorate and Quality Team to reflect feedback from the curriculum review panels which took place between 2022-2024

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Programme Outcomes													
Stage	Unit / Module	KU1	KU2	KU3	CS1	CS2	CS3	PPS1	PPS2	PPS3	KTS1	KTS2	KTS3
1	Illustration 1.1: Introducing Illustration	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	
	Illustration 1.2: Visual Histories	✓	✓			✓	✓				✓		
	Illustration 1.3: Materials & Contexts	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Programme Outcomes													
Stage	Unit / Module	KU4	KU5	KU6	CS4	CS5	CS6	PPS4	PPS5	PPS6	KTS4	KTS5	KTS6
2	Illustration 2.1: Visual Languages	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	
	Illustration 2.2: Global Perspectives		✓				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
	Illustration 2.3: Self-Directed Project	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	

Programme Outcomes													
Stage	Unit / Module	KU7	KU8	KU9	CS7	CS8	CS9	PPS7	PPS8	PPS9	KTS7	KTS8	KTS9
3	Illustration 3.1 Practice and Research	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
	Illustration 3.2 External Projects		✓	✓				✓	✓		✓		✓
	Illustration 3.3: Major Project	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓