ual: central saint martins

MA CULTURE, CRITICISM AND CURATION

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APPROVED

MA Culture, Criticism and Curation

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	Central Saint Martins
School	C School
Programme	CSM Curation (L037)
Course AOS Code	CSMMACCCF01
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Full Time
Method	None
Duration of Course	1 year
Teaching Weeks	45 weeks
Valid From	2025/26
Collaboration	N/A
UAL Subject Classification	Curation and Culture
PSRB	N/A
Work placement offered	N/A
Course Entry Requirements	The standard entry requirements for this course are as follows: • An honours degree in a humanities, social science or art and design subject • **Or** an equivalent EU/international qualification.

	AP(E)L – Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning Exceptionally, applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by: • Related academic or work experience • The quality of the personal statement • A strong academic or other professional reference **Or** a combination of these factors. Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case. **English language requirements** IELTS level 7.0 or above, with at least 6.0 in reading, writing, listening and speaking (please check our main English language requirements webpage).
Selection Criteria	We select applicants according to potential and current ability in the following areas: • Capacity for independence in learning • Motivation to develop research skills • Interest in developing collaborative or cooperative practices • Interest in cultural & curatorial studies, and affinity to the field's critical discourse • Interest in developing creative, critical and/or experimental approaches to writing and to curatorial work • Preparedness to support others in the learning community.

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)	60
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)	120
Master of Arts	180

Scheduled Learning Split by Level	
Level 7	18%
Total Scheduled Learning Split	**18%**

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Facilitate the study, exploration, critique and understanding of historical and contemporary culture through curatorial practice, research and writing.
Aim	Promote student-driven learning, whereby urgent and current issues can be examined and understood through experimental curatorial / cultural / creative forms.
Aim	Provide students with hands-on experience in partnership with professional and social organisations, and assist in developing toolkits of curatorial and critical methodologies with an emphasis on collaboration and team work.
Aim	Offer a platform for the cultivation of community-engaged and change-making practices while highlighting and interrogating ethical considerations and complexities of this work.
Aim	Engage with critical self-reflection in the process of defining their professional identity, while developing social and cultural awareness.
Outcome	Ability to act independently within / without a variety of institutions (cultural and otherwise) to promote social justice and positive change.
Outcome	Capacity to think in interrelations, between and across a diversity of cultures and disciplines.
Outcome	Ability to develop, frame and follow rigorous academic research, communicating and presenting it in innovative ways and/or using a variety of media.
Outcome	Ability to initiate, plan, manage, produce and evaluate curatorial / cultural projects, and an ability to assess, understand and participate in contemporary discourses around culture, criticism, and curation.
Outcome	Awareness and sensitivity to the needs and voices of others, and responsibility in relation to representation across cultural contexts.
Outcome	Contribute and participate effectively and responsibly in groups via team building, team leadership and teamwork.

	Distinctive Features
1	**Unique approach to curating**: the Course's allegiance to culture means that it perceives curation as a practice that can engage and operate within a multitude of institutions or contexts, across the arts and cultural sectors and between different disciplines.
2	**Social and political awareness**: the Course engages critically with the changing and challenging social, political and economic circumstances in which culture operates. The Course encourages the development of agency through writing and curatorial work.
3	**Commitment to student development**: the Course supports students to define their own areas interest and to develop their professional identity and positioning within the arts and cultural sectors. This is achieved through engaging in individual research and collaborative curatorial practice.
4	**Partnering**: the Course has strong links with external partners as well as the Central Saint Martins Museum & Study Collection and the University's Archives and Special Collections Centre, providing students access to specialist knowledge and organisations, integral to studying culture and curating.
5	**Collaboration**: the Course's activities are centred around collaborative assignments and projects and prioritise teamwork and skills in co-operation. We resist the perception that creative work is done in isolation, by individuals.
6	**Interdisciplinarity**: we encourage students to think in between cultures, disciplines and in between theory and practice. Students engage with skills and tools to conduct practice-based research and research-led practice. The Course acknowledges and offers an opportunity for interdisciplinary, inter-cultural and experimental forms of knowledge production.
7	**Focus on process**: taking a processual approach means giving attention and time to learning, collaboration, research, experimentation and dialogue. We think this helps students build sustainable and life-long curatorial practices suited for a time when cultural production needs to be rethought.
8	**Digital technologies**: the Course is committed to developing students' knowledge around digital technologies and their roles within contemporary cultural, critical, and curatorial practice.

Course Detail

MA Culture, Criticism and Curation is a course directed towards critical thinking, research, and practice in the fields of culture, curation, art, design, and creative production. To equip practitioners with tools that will enable them to actively find their way through a variety of institutional and cultural situations, the Course offers an overview of cultural history and curatorial theory alongside opportunities to acquire skills in research, writing, curating and production.

On this Course we address the present moment and pressing questions faced by cultural producers, policy makers, curators, artists, and researchers. Approached through interdisciplinary and intercultural enquiry, you will learn to engage with the in-between places where new knowledge is developed via an integration of theory and practice. Throughout the Course, we explore with you the ways in which culture, criticism and curation can contribute to change.

The curator is positioned as a figure able to act intentionally, bring in agency and make change across a variety of contexts. Curating makes meaning and contributes new, critical perspectives on existing scenarios. The Course asks you to think reflectively – with others – about the forms that art and culture take, identify where and how hegemonies develop, keep hold and challenge them.

The Course prioritises interrelations between people as well as ideas and objects, and will help you develop your capacity to collaborate and to work across different networks of practitioners, organisations, and audiences.

We encourage you to test and engage with emerging digital technologies to undertake research, experiment with forms, and collaborate equitably.

We engage actively with the evolving fields of cultural, critical and curatorial work, and seek to equip you to work professionally in institutional contexts as well as to renegotiate traditionally defined roles. The Course works with you to develop research-led, experimental, creative and critical curatorial practices to enable you to engage with and make an impact in changing situations, in professional work or through further study.

Course Units

MA CCC promotes a community of practice which is central to students' development. The Course offers a space for you to develop independent research and practice and a framework for student-led learning. In our vision, theory and practice work hand in hand within curatorial work, and we explore the different relationships between these two modes of knowledge production.

Culture is studied through lectures, seminars, tutorial groups and reading groups. The curriculum is responsive to changing interests and priorities. Often interdisciplinary, the Course encourages an integrated approach to critical, practical, peer-to-peer, group and independent work. Events at programme, college and university level encourage students to engage with a wider culture of research and innovation and connect with others using curatorial thinking and the practice you are developing.

The main independent work over the 45 weeks of study includes a Dissertation and a group curatorial project. The Dissertation helps you deepen your knowledge in an area of your choice. The group project offers an opportunity to develop your curatorial practice in partnership with an external organisation.

Students learn to engage with and develop both group and individual practices.

Projects and professional partnerships

Working collaboratively with organisations – small and large, independent, and well-established – offers students significant professional experience within the curriculum, leading to work that is supported to be experimental and ambitious. Previous examples of external partnerships include The Guardian, vFd Dalston, Flat Time House, NEoN Festival, David Roberts Art Foundation, South London Gallery, Institute of Digital Fashion, Tate Exchange, Liverpool Biennial, Centre for Investigative Journalism, The Common Room and the Institute of Psychoanalysis. The Course has two ongoing collaborative projects, Project Credit (https://project.credit/) and UQ Journal (https://uqjournal.net/).

Student Journey:

Unit 1: Curatorial Playground

Unit 1 is the entry point to the Course and is a composed of a series of intensive workshops, seminars and discussions that set the base for curatorial thought – that is, thought that emphasises the interrelations between disciplines, cultures and knowledges. You will learn how to respond to a brief and this will help you find your creative and critical entry points into the course. Key themes of the Unit are experimentation, inter-cultural exchange and conversation within the cohort.

Unit 2: The Collaborative Unit

This Unit addresses the theme of collaboration through co-operation with other Masters' courses in the college. By working co-operatively with fellow students from parallel and contrasting courses, you will experience at first hand the value of cross-disciplinary thinking and problem-solving that is central to developing a curatorial practice.

Unit 3: Curatorial Positions

Through group work, individual research and an archive/collection-based curatorial project proposal, this Unit helps you to develop a sense of your position: in relation to your subject interests and practice area, in terms of social identities and institutional spaces. The collaborative research and learning element of the Unit helps you establish a basis of knowledge around different definitions of culture, the relationship between culture and technology and the ethics of representation, collection and preservation.

Unit 4: Curatorial Incubation

This Unit spans the summer months and is dedicated to deepening your research on your Dissertation and extending your curatorial practice by beginning a group project in collaboration with a partner organisation. It is based mostly on independent learning with support via online classes, synchronous and asynchronous. It is an essential period of independent work and student-directed study that you undertake both as an individual and in small groups.

Unit 5: Curatorial Responsibility

Unit 5's theme of Curatorial Responsibility signals the ethical, practical and conceptual components of a well-developed curatorial practice. Your work during this unit will be dedicated to coming to define your practice through your work and the ways it sits in relation to others — your peers, your communities, your collaborators, your readers and audiences. The Unit will prompt you to reflect on your professional development and position yourself in relation to your chosen career pathway.

Important note concerning academic progression through your course:

If you are required to retake a unit you will need to cease further study on the course until you have passed the unit concerned. Once you have successfully passed this unit, you will be able to proceed onto the next unit. Retaking a unit might require you to take time out of study, which could affect other things such as student loans or the visa status for international students.

CSM Academic Support is delivered by a team of academics and practitioners working alongside your course to help you progress and achieve your maximum potential as a student. Academic Support can help you to develop your skills in different areas, including critical thinking, research and writing, time management, presentations and working independently and collaboratively. These may be offered as part of your timetabled classes or as bookable tutorials and workshops.

Mode of study

The course is offered in full-time mode which runs for 45 weeks over 12 months. You will be expected to commit 40 hours per week to study, which includes teaching time and independent study.

Credit and award requirements

The course is credit-rated at 180 credits.

On successfully completing the course, you will gain a Master of Arts (MA degree).

Under the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, an MA is Level 7. All units must be passed in order to achieve the MA but the classification of the award is derived from the mark for the final unit only.

If you are unable to continue on the course, a Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) will normally be offered following the successful completion of 60 credits, or a Postgraduate Diploma (PG Dip) following the successful completion of 120 credits.

Learning and Teaching Methods

The following teaching and learning methods are employed to support the integrated achievement of the course outcomes. These will be delivered in a combination of on-site and online:

- Inductions, Unit and project briefings
- Tutorials (individual and group)
- Lectures, seminars and workshops
- Peer learning
- Facilitated projects with external partners
- Working in groups
- Peer group support
- Visiting Practitioner and alumni mentor input
- Visits
- Use of the library and other College facilities as a critical resource
- Student-led presentations
- Independent research
- Developing and testing appropriate forms of presentation
- Oral and written presentations
- Reflection and self-evaluation
- Critical reviews (Crits)

Assessment Methods

The following assessment methods are employed to support the integrated achievement of the course outcomes:

Formative assessment

- Individual and group projects
- Presentations
- Written work, communicated in various forms

Summative assessment

- Dissertation
- Group projects
- Presentations
- Critical self-evaluations (reflective reports) and project dossiers

Reference Points

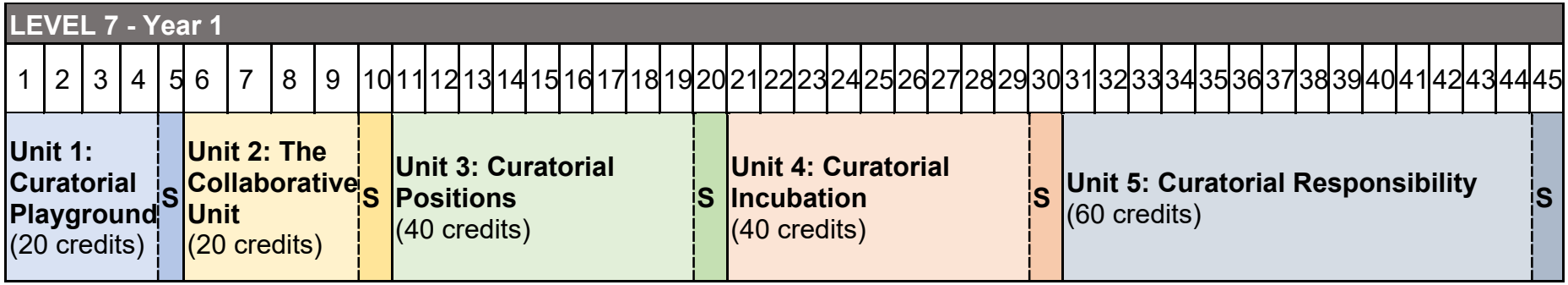
- FHEQ Level Descriptors (Level 7)
- UAL 2015-2022 Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy
- Internal and External Review
- QAA's Art and Design Benchmark Statement (2008, 2016)
- UAL Creative Attributes Framework
- HEA Embedding Equality and Diversity in the Curriculum
- UAL Anti-Racism Action Plan
- UAL Climate Action Plan
- UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- UAL Framework for Embedding the Principles for Climate, Racial and Social Justice

Course Diagram

MA Culture, Criticism and Curation – PLEASE NOTE DUE TO VACATION DATES, SPECIFIC DELIVERY WEEKS MAY CHANGE.

S=summative assessment

Please note this is a January start course.



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