CORPORATE AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Part 1: Basic Data	
Awarding Institution	University of the West of England
Teaching Institution	University of the West of England
Delivery Location	UWE, Bower Ashton
Faculty responsible for programme	Arts, Creative Industries and Education
Department responsible for programme	Art and Design
Modular Scheme Title	MA /MFA Curating
Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links	
Highest Award Title	MA or MFA
Default Award Title	
Fall-back Award Title	
Interim Award Titles	PG Cert. Curating, PG Dip. Curating
UWE Progression Route	N/A
Mode(s) of Delivery	FT (for 2014 then PT also available from 2015)

Codes	**UCAS:**	**JACS:**
	ISIS2: PA W90L12: PT W90L12 (MA) **ISIS2:** PA W90L12: PT W90M12 (MFA)	**HESA:**

Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements	
CAP Approval Date	30 May 2013
Valid from	January 2014
Valid until Date	January 2020
Version	*1.1*

Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme

Broad aims:

This programme aims to:

- To equip students with the skills and expertise to be able to work in a curatorial role.
- To equip students with specific curatorial skills valued by the contemporary curatorial sector.
- To equip students with practice-based knowledge and experience.
- To provide students with a professional mentoring opportunity.
- To provide students with an excellent knowledge of both the historical and contemporary contexts for a wide range of curatorial practices.
- To equip students with the skills necessary to undertake sustained, independent, innovative and interdisciplinary research.
- To produce a new generation of curators who are equipped to work in creative and flexible ways.

Specfic aims:

This programme aims to:

- To equip students with the skills and expertise to be able to work in a curatorial role identified and delivered in a curriculum designed in close consultation with partner organisations.
- To equip students with specific curatorial skills valued by the contemporary curatorial sector by offering a mix of practical work experience and in depth engagement with ideas and theories pertinent to contemporary curating.
- To provide a structure that offers a clear preparation for and pathway towards a career in curating through mentoring agreements with industry partners.
- To equip students with the ability to develop innovative techniques for engaging audiences with contemporary curatorial practice.
- To provide a creative and ambitious pedagogic structure that enables students from a wide range of undergraduate and professional backgrounds to develop and extend their curatorial skills and working methodologies.
- To support and promote the development of live and collaborative work through a range of Faculty, external and student led projects.

Special Features

The programme has been designed in consultation with Bristol based partner organisations: the Arnolfini, Spike Island, M-Shed, Bristol Museums and Galleries, Encounters Film Festival and the Watershed Media Centre. These are renowned and well-established cultural institutions and organisations with strong and diverse experience in curating.

It offers preparation for careers in curating across a wide range of contexts. Students will be supported to gain awareness and experience of the contexts and developments of different practices in curating, and those of particular institutions.

The mentoring element of the course is distinctive from other curatorial Masters programmes which offer fixed term work placements in museums or galleries. This programme offers students mentoring by curatorial professionals throughout their course of study. This feature will allow them to obtain curatorial experience by learning both inside and outside of the formal curriculum,

Part 2: Educational Aims of the Programme

and will produce graduates with skills and understanding suitable for entry level posts in museums, art galleries, festival organizations and the broader cultural industries. Full-time students will be partnered with a specific organization at admission to the programme, part-time students may nominate their own external body with which to work.

The MA course is practical and production-based: students will conceive of, research, plan, implement and deliver a series of projects, which will introduce and develop key understandings and frameworks, practices and skills. The MFA pathway will appeal to students from overseas, where an MFA may be a terminal degree which is required for those wanting to teach at HE level. For the first year we will only be offering the course full-time in order to ensure the experience for the partner organizations is as collaborative and mutually beneficial as possible (partners preferred to have students over one year, with a clear project delivered at the end of that time). Both MA and MFA will be available part-time over 24 months from 2015.

The course will be assessed in terms of verbal presentations, exhibitions/displays, writing for different audiences, project management and group projects. Teaching will include lectures, seminars, practical workshops and study visits to sites of curatorial interest.

Programme requirements for the purposes of the Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR)

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

The award route provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

A. Knowledge and Understanding (subject specific)

A knowledge and understanding of:

1. the history of programming, curating, collection and display in contexts such as museums, exhibitions, cinema and festivals, visual and performing arts, libraries and archives, debates about this history and in-depth knowledge of a specific institution's history.
2. the contemporary context for curating, programming, collections and display, including the key policies, practices and ethos of a specific institution and current ideas, theories and arguments relating these practices.
3. existing studies of audience in this field, and key methods for studying and monitoring audiences, as well policy and legislation relating to audiences, key aspects of contemporary marketing, theories relating to audience engagement, participation, interaction and address.
4. appropriate research methods for both the study and practice of curating
5. the processes and methods by which events, exhibitions, festivals and programmes are devised, executed and evaluated.
6. the role and potential of new technological, social and cultural developments in shaping the direction of curatorial practices.

B. Intellectual Skills (generic)

1. Critically assess, evaluate, contextualise and compare different practices, situating them in relation to one another and to historical precedents.
2. Identify and review relevant texts and resources.
3. Evaluate and differentiate philosophical and intellectual positions and arguments in the field.
4. Problem-solving in relation to practical constraints, collaborative working, and the planning and

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

execution of projects.
5. Analyse and develop frameworks for understanding and responding to dynamic, changing situations and contexts for practice.

C. Subject/Professional/Practical Skills (subject specific)

1. Research, develop and present curating projects that demonstrate acquisition of appropriate skills and a creative, inventive or distinctive approach, together with an understanding of audience and institutional context.
2. Work effectively in collaborative team environments, sharing good practice to formulate novel solutions to problems.
3. Demonstrate through clear, fluent writing and verbal presentation, how subject knowledge and understanding has informed the approach, development and formulation of projects.
4. Recognise and use professional, specialist protocols and conventions associated with curating, to solve complex problems as they arise.
5. Ability to recognize and negotiate the different perspectives and interests of groups, including different kinds of audiences, funding bodies, curators, artists and makers, educators and policy makers.

D. Transferable Skills and other attributes (generic)

1. Analyse, synthesise and communicate complex ideas in accessible form and be able to translate ideas from one form or practice to another.
2. Engage confidently in debate and discussion with colleagues but also different interest groups, clients and potential employers or funders, and negotiate and network effectively.
3. Increased autonomy and self-motivation with regard to academic study and professional practice, and improved ability to organise, self-direct and sustain the management of projects.
4. Ability to research topics of interest, making use of a wide range of academic and non-academic resources across a range of disciplines.
5. Manage time and work effectively within given, agreed or self-developed limits.

Learning Outcomes:	UAAA86-30-M Curatorial Histories	UAAA37-30- Developing Practice & Audiences	UAAAS8-30-M Professional Practice Curating	UAAAS9-30-M Curating & Project Management	UAAASA Final Project: Curating (MA) UAAASB-60-M Final Project Curating (MFA)				
A) Knowledge and understanding of:									
the history of programming, curating, collection and display in contexts such as museums, exhibitions, cinema and festivals, arguments about this history and in-depth knowledge of a specific institution's history.	x	X	x		x				
the contemporary context for curating,	x	X		x	x				

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
programming, collections and display, including the key policies, practices and ethos of a specific institution and current ideas, theories and arguments relating these practices.												
existing studies of audience in this field, and key methods for studying and monitoring audiences, as well as policy and legislation relating to audiences, key aspects of contemporary marketing, theories relating to audience engagement, participation, interaction and address.		X	x	x	x							
appropriate research methods for both the study and practice of curating	x	X	x	x	x							
the processes and methods by which events, exhibitions, festivals and programmes are devised, executed and evaluated.	x	X	x		x							
the role and potential of new technological, social and cultural developments in shaping the direction of curatorial practices.	x	X	x		x							
(B) Intellectual Skills												
Critically assess, evaluate, contextualise and compare different practices, situating them in relation to one another and to historical precedents.	x	x	x	x	x							
Identify and review relevant texts and resources.	x	x	x	x	x							
Evaluate and differentiate philosophical and intellectual positions and arguments in the field.	x	x	x	x								
Problem-solving in relation to practical constraints, collaborative working, and the planning and execution of projects.			x	x	x							
Analyse and develop frameworks for understanding and responding to dynamic, changing situations and contexts for practice.			x	x	x							
(C) Subject/Professional/Practical Skills												
Research, develop and present curating projects that demonstrate acquisition of appropriate skills and a creative, inventive or distinctive approach,together with an understanding of audience and institutional context.		x	x	x	x							

Part 3: Learning Outcomes of the Programme

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4	5
Work effectively in collaborative team environments, sharing good practice to formulate novel solutions to problems.		x	x	x	x
Demonstrate through clear, fluent writing and verbal presentation, how subject knowledge and understanding has informed the approach, development and formulation of projects	x	x	x	x	x
Recognise and use professional, specialist protocols and conventions associated with curating, to solve complex problems as they arise.		x	x	x	x
Ability to recognize and negotiate the different perspectives and interests of groups, including different kinds of audiences, funding bodies, curators, artists and makers, educators and policy makers.	x	x	x		x

(D) Transferable skills and other attributes

Learning Outcome	1	2	3	4	5
Analyse, synthesise and communicate complex ideas in accessible form and be able to translate ideas from one form or practice to another.	x	x	x	x	x
Engage confidently in debate and discussion with colleagues but also different interest groups, clients and potential employers or funders, and negotiate and network effectively.	x	x	x	x	x
Increased autonomy and self-motivation with regard to academic study and professional practice, and improved ability to organise, self-direct and sustain the management of projects.	x	x	x	x	x
Ability to research topics of interest, making use of a wide range of academic and non-academic resources across a range of disciplines.	x	x	x	x	x

Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

Teaching and learning strategies to enable learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

Scheduled learning includes lectures, seminars, tutorials, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes and workshops; fieldwork; external visits; work based learning; supervised time in studio/workshop. Scheduled sessions may vary slightly depending on the students' own project choices.

Independent learning includes hours engaged with essential reading, case study preparation,

assignment preparation and completion etc.

Work-based learning: will include a practice placement in the form of a mentored presence in a specific Bristol based partner organisation.

Teaching and Learning
Students will experience a wide range of teaching and learning methods designed to establish understanding and knowledge of the subject and to stimulate evaluation and critique.
Methods used include:

- a range of project briefs that require a diverse range of activities in response;

- an emphasis on group tutorial activity;

- collaborative learning and group projects;

- direct contact with the profession through the distinctive mentoring feature with partner arts organisations and visiting practitioners.

On the MA/MFA Curating programme, teaching is a mix of scheduled, independent and work and project-based learning.

Description of any Distinctive Features

The course has been designed in close collaboration with partners who will participate in the recruitment of the students, the setting of briefs, and delivery of the programme. Staff from these partners may deliver specialist knowledge via master-classes, guest lectures, seminars and workshops, and give feedback on performance. In addition, they will act as personal mentors to individual students throughout the course. By being 'embedded' in the partner institutions at key points in the course and observing their internal practices, students will gain unique insight and experience into aspects of contemporary curating in one of a wide range of cultural fields (such as fine art, film, digital media, libraries and archives, heritage, crafts, live performance, visual and performing arts).

The most distinctive features of this MA/MFA are:

- It has been designed to make use of Bristol's reputation as a city-region with a strong and distinctive cultural identity.

- It has been designed to complement a strong portfolio of practice-based Masters programmes in the Faculty.

- It has been designed in close consultation with the Bristol partner organisations which will designate mentors for students and aim to embed the student in the organization, enabling them to produce real world projects.

- It is the first MFA to be offered at the University of the West of England, with the intention of encouraging overseas students (particularly those from North America where an MFA is a terminal degree) and enabling students to play to their strength in theory or practice. The final module is either *Final Project: Curating (MA)* or *Final Project: Curating (MFA)*. For the *Final*

Part 4: Student Learning and Student Support

Project: Curating (MA) the assessment is based on a curatorial project (60%) and a 4000-6000 word evaluative document (40%). For the *Final Project: Curating (MFA)* the assessment is based on a curatorial project (40%) and a 8000-10,000 word dissertation (60%). The brief for the MFA route is different to the MA route, with a stronger academic/theoretical emphasis (in line with other MFAs of this sort in the UK and North America).

Part 5: Assessment (MA)

Assessment Strategy
Assessment strategy to enable the learning outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated:

Assessment
Assessment strategies within the programme reflect the philosophy of the Department of Creative Industries, that assessment is part of the learning process.
Formative and summative assessments are designed to support the monitoring of progress by both tutors and students and provide an opportunity for students to reflect on their achievements. Assessment methods include:

- group and individual visual and verbal presentations;

- project briefs, planning and illustrated evaluative documents and research reports (including personal project proposals, evidence of critical evaluations).

Submission types include 'portfolios' of work to allow for appropriate submissions according to chosen field of curatorial practice and alternatives to written submissions are permitted to support both students with particular learning disabilities but also to be commensurate with the needs of their field. Feedback at regular points throughout the programme provide students with a clear understanding of their progress.

Approved to University Regulations and Procedures

Assessment Map

The programme encompasses a range of **assessment methods** including; project portfolio, blog, oral presentation, student team presentations, exhibition display and extended essay. These are detailed in the following assessment map:

Assessment Map for MA Curating

		Type of Assessment*									
		Unseen Written Exam	Open Book Written Exam	In-class Written Test	Practical Exam	Practical Skills Assessment	Oral assessment and/or presentation	Written Assignment	Report / Project	Dissertation	Portfolio
Compulsory Modules (Semester 1)	UAAA86-30-M Curatorial Histories						A (20)				A (80)
	UAAAS7-30-M						A (40)				A (60)

Part 5: Assessment (MA)

	Developing Practice & Audiences										
Compulsory Modules (Semester 2)	UAAAS8-30-M Professional Practice: Curating								A (100)	
	UAAAS9-30-M Curating & Project Management					A (20)		A (80)		
Compulsory Modules (Semester 3)	UAAASA-60-M Final Project: Curating (MA)					A (40)		A (60)		
	UAAASB-60-M Final Project Curating (MFA)						A (40)	A (60)		

*Assessment should be shown in terms of either Written Exams, Practical exams, or Coursework as indicated by the colour coding above.

Part 6: Programme Structure

This structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical **full time student**, including:
level and credit requirements
interim award requirements
module diet, including compulsory and optional modules

ENTRY		Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules	Interim Awards
	Year 1	UAAA86-30-M **Curatorial Histories** UAAAS7-30-M **Developing Practice & Audiences** (semester 1)	None	

UAAAS8-30-M **Professional Practice: Curating** UAAAS9-30-M **Curating & Project Management** (semester 2)			PG Cert Curating (60)
UAAASA-60-M **Final Project: Curating (MA)** OR UAAASB-60-M **Final Project: Curating (MFA)** (semester 3)			PG Dip Curating (120) MA Curating (180) MFA Curating (180)

Part time: This course is only available full-time in 2014 but will be available also as part-time from 2015.

The following structure diagram demonstrates the student journey from Entry through to Graduation for a typical **part time student.**

ENTRY

		Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules	Interim Awards
	Year 1	UAAA86-30-M **Curatorial Histories** (semester 1)	None	
		UAAAS7-30-M **Developing Practice & Audiences** (semester 2)		
		UAAAS8-30-M **Professional Practice: Curating** (semester 3)		PG Cert Curating

		Compulsory Modules	Optional Modules	Interim Awards
	Year 2	UAAAS9-30-M **Curating & Project Management** (semester 4)		PG Dip Curating

	UAAASA-60-M **Final Project: Curating (MA)**		MA Curating
	OR		
	UAAASB-60-M **Final Project: Curating (MFA)** (semesters 5 & 6)		MFA Curating

Part 7: Entry Requirements
The University's Standard Entry Requirements apply with the following additions/exceptions*:   *A second class degree in an appropriate discipline together with an interview. Applicants with a good honours degree in a related discipline and/or with relevant work experience will also be considered.

Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks
Subject benchmarks: There are no QAA subject benchmark statements for Curating at M level but it is grounded in the defining principles of Art and Design benchmark statement (particularly creativity, aesthetic sensibility, intellectual and critical enquiry, team working, variety of research modes and personal reflective learning). Curriculum content, development and progression and teaching and learning approaches within this programme are in line with QAA subject benchmark recommendations for Art and Design. These include the breadth and depth of knowledge being offered, the coherence of the programme's structure, and the use of a wide range of teaching and learning models and assessment practices.   **University strategies and policies:**   The university strategy guiding developments at faculty level can be found here - http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/aboutus/visionandmission/strategy.aspx   In autumn 2012 UWE's senior management reviewed the university's 2020 strategy and outlined a number of new themes. These were practice, place, partnership and performance. The MA/MFA Curating very closely mirrors these strategic priorities: • *Practice:* UWE's core pedagogic and curricula offering puts an emphasis on 'preparing students for practice, professions and performance'. The MA/MFA Curating is built upon preparing students for a career in curating through practice led modules, time spent in partner institutions and in depth research in their chosen area of curating.   • *Place:* UWE recognizes the value of 'Bristol as a city-region with a distinctive brand and identity'. UWE's industry partners for this course are all Bristol based institutions with international reputations. Students will be mentored by staff from these partner organisations throughout their time on the course.   • *Partnership:* UWE understands 'the need to work with selected partners' and 'to develop a strategy for the wider city-region'. MA/MFA Curating's unique selling point is its partnership

element which is formally built in to the course. Whereas other courses offer work placement at selected museums or galleries we have formal agreements with partners to deliver targeted and continual mentoring to allow the student to build up a sophisticated understanding of their host organisation.

- *Performance:* UWE wants to improve its performance by being decisive about 'identity, offer and expectations'. The MA/MFA Curating has an offer that is distinctive from other courses in the region and nationally and is distinctive within UWE as the first MFA to be offered at the university.

S*taff research and professional expertise:*

The course builds on both Dr Matthew Partington's and Michelle Henning's research, employment and teaching experiences. Partington studied for a Masters Degree in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, worked as a gallery curator for four years and has held a role as a Visiting Fellow in the Research Department of the V&A Museum since 1998. He has written extensively on oral history and the applied arts and has played an active role in the development of gallery spaces for staff and student work at the Bower Ashton Campus. He recently co-edited *Oral History in the Visual Arts*, a volume of 20 essays (published by Berg in 2013).

Henning has over twenty years of teaching experience in this field and the broader fields of Cultural and Media Studies and Art and Design. Her 2006 book, *Museums, Media and Cultural Theory* is a key text on masters courses in Curating and Museum Studies courses around the world and her museological and curatorial expertise has also led to involvement in BLIMA (Bristol Live Independent Music Archive) and to her organising the AHRC funded *Rethinking Archives* workshop (2008-9) in collaboration with Arnolfini, bringing together well-known artists, researchers and curators to bridge archival theory and practice. She is currently editing a book, *Museum Media* to be published as part of Blackwells' prestigious *International Handbook of Museum Studies.*

What methods have been used in the development of this programme to evaluate and improve the quality and standards of learning? This could include consideration of stakeholder feedback from, for example current students, graduates and employers.

Henning and Partington have consulted closely with partner institutions in the development of the curriculum and the overall aims and ethos of the programme. Partner organizations endorsed the broad aims of the course and all emphasized the need for both pragmatic experience and high level conceptual and theoretical knowledge of the field. Some organizations are particularly keen to see curators develop an understanding of audiences and marketing, which is an area that existing curatorial courses sometimes neglect.

In addition, several partners emphasized the importance of flexibility and a broad understanding across diverse fields, but at the same time the importance of students being able to develop highly specialized knowledge of their own distinctive field (for example, in contemporary art). Quality and standards will be maintained by continued monitoring and consultation with the different partners as the programme develops and more students and partners are involved.

Partners circulated their own papers and books related to curating to us, and the intention is that this fruitful exchange of ideas and philosophies will continue as the course develops. In addition, staff are actively involved in their own practice and knowledge exchange activities with partnerships across a broad range of commercial and non-commercial organisations within the media and the creative

Part 8: Reference Points and Benchmarks
industries, and have consulted both with these and with existing students and alumni in the development of the course.

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 he/she 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 individual modules can be found in module specifications, available on the University's website.