Part 1: Programme Specification

MA in Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture

PART ONE: PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma in Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture Postgraduate Certificate in Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	University of Westminster, Regent site
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Dr Peter Ride
Course URL:	westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/visual-culture/postgraduate-courses/full-time/p09fpmgc-ma-museums-galleries-and-contemporary-culture
Mode and length of study:	Full-time or Part-time
University of Westminster course code:	
JACS code:	
UCAS code:	045882
QAA subject benchmarking group:	
Professional body accreditation:	
Date of course validation/review:	March 2011
Date of programme specification:	March 2011

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Applicants are normally required to have a good first degree or equivalent in a relevant subject. Students whose first language is not English must have an IELTS certificate with a score of 6.5 in each area, or be able to demonstrate an equivalent level. Applicants will also be required to give two academic references and to attend an interview (for applicants resident in the UK) or submit a 1500 word essay (for applicants resident overseas).

Accredited Prior Learning
The University operates a system of awarding credit for prior learning, either accredited (APCL) or experiential (APEL), which may contribute up to a maximum of 50% of the credits required for an award. If students think their prior experiential learning (e.g. work experience) or accredited learning (e.g. other study they may

have undertaken) may qualify them for accreditation and thereby exemption from one or more modules they should consult the Admissions Regulations, published in the University Academic Regulations westminster.ac.uk/study/current-students/resources/academic-regulations and contact the Course Leader.

AIMS OF THE COURSE

Introduction
MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture examines how museums, galleries and other cultural organisations are developing to meet the needs of the 21st century. The MA has been designed for students who wish to work as curators, arts organisers, museum professionals and other cultural managers and who want to know in particular how these institutions face contemporary issues.

The MA looks at the changing face of cultural provision and it has a two-sided approach. One approach is to look at well-established institutions like museums and galleries: examining how they face change and as a result develop innovative practices in relation to their collections, exhibitions and audiences. The other is to consider more varied cultural organisations such as agencies, artists-run-initiatives, museum-sector businesses, festivals and networks. Many of these are seen as having emerged in response to contemporary pressures and opportunities in the cultural sector. The course is designed to give students the opportunity to deal with contemporary debates about culture through the working practices of cultural institutions and by reflecting upon the changing context in which they operate.

The course is grounded in a Visual Culture perspective that argues that culture is not static and that institutions and organisations play a crucial role in reflecting how contemporary society values, engages with and understands culture, from heritage to the arts. At the same time institutions and organisations play an important role in housing, funding, collecting, disseminating and interpreting cultural activities and products – they are a focal point for the consumption of culture. The MA also addresses the historical and theoretical debates on the significance of cultural institutions, in particular those written from the perspective of the museum and gallery sector itself, addressing how it relates and contributes to contemporary culture.

The MA has a strong vocational emphasis. It has been developed through partnership with major cultural organisations in London and professionals from a wide range of professional contexts. The fundamental approach of the course has been to structure teaching around the experience of professionals - using case studies that examine practice in museums and galleries. Students on the MA will be able to examine key issues and themes in museums, galleries and the cultural sector, and explore how these are dealt with not just in theory, but also on a day-to-day basis by leading institutions. The course demonstrates that it is the 'practices' in Museums and Galleries - the skills and activities of archivists, researchers, curators, programmers, and the web team - that actively produces our understanding of contemporary culture.

Students are encouraged to have a close involvement with institutions through

internships and work placements and projects. The course is also designed to facilitate students who are currently in professional employment or working with cultural institutions. Therefore, wherever possible students are encouraged to focus their learning on their own professional work and may base projects on their own work place.

Aims
MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture aims to:

- Examine the changing role of museums, galleries, and other cultural institutions and organisations through historical and theoretical debates and examples of contemporary professional practice.
- Integrate teaching with an involvement in the professional workplace in order to give students an understanding of vocational issues, contexts, practices and concerns.
- Assist students in gaining professional knowledge of institutions through internships, work placements and projects.

EMPLOYMENT AND FURTHER STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.

The MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture is intended to provide students with sophisticated critical skills and a widely applicable knowledge base. This enables further study at MPhil or PhD levels, but is also particularly relevant to a range of professions in the creative and cultural industries, especially heritage and museum work and cultural policy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. They are threshold statements of achievement and are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

Knowledge and Understanding
On successful completion of the course, students will be expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate a wide knowledge of critical and theoretical concepts and debates, relating to museums, galleries and contemporary culture
- Examine critically different ways that museum and gallery professionals respond to institutional policy, public interest and industry standards.
- Identify and evaluate critically the relevant approaches that cultural institutions and organizations take to working with the public
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the issues and policies around the use of online resources by cultural institutions
- Examine critically objects and images as evidence of collection and curatorial display practices
- Analyse ways that narratives are used in exhibition and display
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the issues and theories around objects, artefacts and items within collections and collecting policies

Specific Skills

On successful completion of the course, students will be expected to be able to:

- Undertake academic research using University and specialist external libraries and institutional archives and the Internet
- Identify and critically employ relevant methodologies for their research
- Demonstrate practical research skills using exhibitions and specific site visits

Key Transferable skills

On successful completion of the course, students will be expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced skills of argument, synthesis, research and presentation
- Demonstrate interpersonal and the ability to work with other people
- Demonstrate competence in planning and execution of essays, presentations and other kinds of work

Learning Outcomes matrix

Knowledge and Understanding	SMGC701 Art, Museums & Contemporary Culture	SMGC705 Museum Narratives	SMGC704 Collecting Today	SMGC703 Online Museums	SMGC706/7/8 Professional Work Project	1VIS7A5 Representing World Cultures	1VIS7A8 Work Placement	SMGC710 London Museums	1VIS7B1 Inclusive practice	SMGC700 Dissertation	SMGC714 Current Issues
Demonstrate a wide knowledge of critical and theoretical concepts and debates, relating to museums, galleries and contemporary culture	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Examine critically different ways that museum and gallery professionals respond to institutional policy, public interest and industry standards	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Identify and evaluate critically the relevant approaches that cultural institutions and organizations take to working with the public	X							X	X		
Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the issues and policies around the use of online resources by cultural institutions				X							
Examine critically objects and images as evidence of collection and curatorial display practices	X		X					X	X		
Analyse ways that narratives are used in exhibition and display		X						X	X		
Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the issues and theories around objects, artefacts and items within collections and collecting policies	X		X					X	X		
Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the theories around professional reflection in the workplace and the use of experience for learning					X						
Specific Skills											
Undertake academic research using University and specialist external libraries and institutional archives and the Internet	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Identify and employ critically relevant methodologies for their research	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Demonstrate practical research skills using exhibitions and specific site visits	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Key Transferable skills											
Demonstrate advanced skills of argument, synthesis, research and presentation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Demonstrate interpersonal and the ability to work with other people	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Demonstrate competence in planning and execution of essays, presentations and other kinds of work	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS

- *Teaching*:

Modules are generally taught via seminars and are focussed on student-centred learning. Module sessions typically involve presentations or case studies, reading of specific texts and class discussion. Modules may also involve online learning, online discussion and guided independent study. Modules may be structured as weekly sessions taught across a semester, or taught in burst mode, depending upon the subject. Descriptions for each module will be found in the Module Pro formas in the Course Handbook, with suggested reading. Further details, and specific reading for each seminar class will be provided by seminar tutors.

- *Site visits and learning in the workplace:*

As well as seminars and tutorials, teaching will also involve the use of London's cultural institutions as a resource. Teaching on some of the modules will take place in these other cultural institutions, and involve staff of those institutions and involve participation in professional activities or demonstrations in the workplace. Students are also encouraged to visit particular museums or galleries, archives, events etc. outside class time, and may be given some specific direction as to particular visits that would be relevant to each module.

- *Work placement, projects and work integrated learning:*

Learning may also include self-reflexive analysis of professional work, through work placements or professional projects. In the latter, the student undertakes a substantial exercise that enables them to research, analyse and conduct a professional activity in a workplace, and through development and execution of the activity they achieve measurable knowledge and understanding.

- *Personal tutors:*

Further to this, each student will be assigned a personal tutor from among the staff with whom they will have at least one timetabled session in the first semester. For this session the student may be asked to submit a non-assessed reflective log on their research and a short reflective piece on a seminar, conference or other relevant event that they have attended. Your personal tutors will also assist you in setting out a personal development plan (see 3.4).

- *Guided Independent Study:*

In addition to the usual 10 teaching weeks per semester each module includes approx. 2 weeks of independent work enabling you to consolidate your learning.

- *Assessment:*

Assessment methods deployed on the course vary, and include coursework in the form of essays, case studies, oral presentations, a 10,000-12,000-word dissertation and (for the Project module) a substantial project report and a critical analysis.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

Requirements for award of The MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture

Module requirements
Note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

Core and option modules to the value of 180 credits must be passed as follows:

CORE MODULES to the value of 80 credits:

Code	Module Title	Credit Value
SMGC700	Dissertation [S3]	40
SMGC714	Current Issues in Museums and Galleries [S1&2]	40

OPTION MODULES to the value of 100 credits selected from the following:

Code	Module Title	Credit Value	
SMGC701	Art Museums and Contemporary Culture [S1]	20	S1= Semester 1
SMGC703	Online Museums and Galleries [S1]	20	
SMGC704	Collecting Today: [S2]	20	S2= Semester 2
SMGC705	Museum Narratives [S1]	20	S3= Semester 3
SMGC706 /707/708	Professional Work Project [S1,2,3] (a multi-module made up of three modules)	60	
SMGC710	London Museums: The Museum as Public Space [S1]	20	
SMGC711	Exhibiting Photography [S2]	20	
SMGC712	Curating Contemporary Art [S1]	20	
SMGC713	Education, Learning and Events [S2]	20	
1VIS7A5	Representing World Cultures [S2]	20	
1VIS7A8	Work Placement [S2]	20	
SENL700	Research and Archives [S1 & 2]	20	

NB students taking SMGC706/SMGC707/SMGC708 Professional Work Project (1, 2 or 3) cannot also take 1VIS7A8 Work Placement.

Module pathway for Full Time students

Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer
Current Issues in Museums and Galleries [core] SMGC714	Current Issues in Museums and Galleries [core] SMGC714	Dissertation SVIS7A1 [core]
Professional Work Project SMGC706	Professional Work Project SMGC707	Professional Work Project SMGC708
Museum Narratives SMGC705	Collecting Today SMGC704	
Curating Contemporary Art SMGC712	Exhibiting Photography SMGC711	
Online Museums and Galleries SMGC703	Work Placement 1VIS7A8	
London Museums SMGC710	Education, Learning and Events SMGC713	
Art, Museums and Contemporary Culture SMGC701	Representing World Cultures 1VIS7A5	
Research and Archives (part 1) SENL700	Research and Archives (part 2) SENL700	

Module pathway for Part Time students

Year 1		Year 2		
S1	**S2**	**S1**	**S2**	**Summer**
Current Issues in Museums and Galleries [core] SMGC714	Current Issues in Museums and Galleries [core] SMGC714	1 option module from: • Online Museums and Galleries SMGC703 • Museum Narratives SMGC705 • Curating Contemporary Art SMGC712 • Research and Archives (part 1) SENL700 • London Museums SMGC710 • Art, Museums and Contemporary Culture SMGC701	1 Option module from: • Collecting today SMGC704 • Representing World Cultures 1VIS7A5 • Exhibiting Photography SMGC711 • Work Placement 1VIS7A8 • Research and Archives (part 2) SENL700 • Education, Learning and Events SMGC713	Dissertation SVIS7A1 [core]
1 option module from: • Art, Museums and Contemporary Culture SMGC701 • Online Museums and Galleries SMGC703 • Museum Narratives SMGC705 • Curating Contemporary Art SMGC712 • Research and Archives (part 1) SENL700 • London Museums SMGC710	1 Option module from: • Collecting today SMGC704 • Representing World Cultures 1VIS7A5 • Exhibiting Photography SMGC711 • Work Placement 1VIS7A8 • Research and Archives (part 2) SENL700 • Education, Learning and Events SMGC713	1 option module from: • Professional Work Project 1 SMGC706 • Online Museums and Galleries SMGC703 • Museum Narratives SMGC705 • Curating Contemporary Art SMGC712 • Research and Archives (part 1) SENL700 • London Museums SMGC710 • Art, Museums and Contemporary Culture SMGC701	1 Option module from: • Professional Work Project 2 SMGC707 • Collecting today SMGC704 • Representing World Cultures 1VIS7A5 • Exhibiting Photography SMGC711 • Work Placement 1VIS7A8 • Research and Archives (part 2) SENL700 • Education, Learning and Events SMGC713	• Professional Work Project 3 SMGC708

Academic regulations
The MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster. The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 18: Modular Framework for Postgraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current Handbook of Academic Regulations, which is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Award
To qualify for the award of MA Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture, a student must have:

- obtained a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7 (this may include a maximum of 30 credits at Level 6 where validated as part of the award);
- attempted modules worth no more than 240 credits; and
  Note: A first attempt of any module will count as an attempt, and a re-attempt of any module that a student has failed will count as a further, separate attempt. Re-assessment following referral at the first sit will not count as a further separate attempt.
- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Masters Degree with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across modules at Level 7.
- a Masters Degree with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules at Level 7.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Upon arrival, an orientation programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Faculty Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at their Faculty. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books).

Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

 The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students.

Student Affairs provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The Student Affairs Hub is located at 101 New Cavendish Street, Cavendish House (1st Floor), with an additional office located at the Harrow Campus.

westminster.ac.uk/study/new-students/when-you-arrive

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University. http://www.uwsu.com/

KEY REFERENCE POINTS FOR THE COURSE

Internal
Primary internal reference points for teaching, learning and assessment policies on the MA are the University Handbook of Academic Regulations, the Quality Assurance Handbook, and the Guide to Higher Education and Career Management Skills produced by the Educational Initiative Centre (EIC).

The course is designed to enhance and extend the resources offered by research in visual, cultural, and critical studies going on within the University, as well as by the kinds of trans-disciplinary work across the areas of literary, visual and historical studies that is among the research and teaching strengths of the Faculty. It is situated within the suite of Cultural, Critical and Literary Studies MAs hosted by the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, and makes use of the wide range of cognate research interests and forms of expertise that exist across the various disciplines and staff members involved in the delivery of this programme.

The course structure meets the requirements of the modular frameworks and the academic regulations of the University, as well as of the Site Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy. At the same time, it is designed to take account of both the University Policies on skills development and employability and one of the key themes in the University strategic plan - creative and cultural industries - providing advanced theoretical and critical work relevant to these areas.

External
The primary external reference point for the academic infrastructure of the course is the Quality Assurance Agency (qaa.ac.uk); in particular, the Code of Practice for the assurance of quality and standards, the Framework of Higher Education

Qualifications (FHEQ), and the details of programme specifications. For credit level descriptors (specifically 'M' level descriptors), the reference point is the South England Consortium for Credit Accumulation and Transfer (seec-office.org.uk). Reference may also be made to the materials provided by various subject centres of the Higher Education Academy (heacademy.ac.uk), in particular Art, Design and Media; English; and History, Classics and Archaeology.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

Course Management
The Course is hosted in the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, one of the Departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities on the Regent Site, and modules are offered from a number of different disciplines and subject areas, both from within the Department and across the Faculty as a whole. The Course is directly managed by a Course Leader within the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, and will be overseen by a Programme Director with responsibility for the management and co-ordination of the Cultural, Critical and Literary Studies MAs suite as a whole. Each module on the course also has a designated Module Leader responsible for the administration and monitoring of its design and delivery.

The course teaching team consists of staff from the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies which is based within the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. Key members of the course team meet regularly each year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of the course. Staff in each Department that is involved in the course undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by colleagues leading to staff development through course attendance and/or research and scholarly activity. Staff teaching on the course also attend events organised by Academic Standards and the Teaching and Learning Groups around current teaching, learning and assessment issues.

The MA course intersects with, and draws upon, the institutional resources provided by the wider set of events and research initiatives co-ordinated by staff within the Faculty, as well as the research seminar series hosted by the Department of English, Linguistics and Cultural Studies, and the various events and collaborative ventures organised under the umbrella of the Westminster-Smithsonian Colloquium.

Course approval, monitoring and review
The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in March 2011 The Panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other Universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic Course Review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure that it is running effectively and that issues that might affect the student experience have been addressed appropriately. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and

achievement and the reports from External Examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the Faculty action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement
Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the
Course Committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback Questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey, which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with review panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from course committees is part of the Faculty quality assurance evidence base.

For more information about this course: westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/visual-culture/postgraduate-courses/full-time/p09fpmgc-ma-museums-galleries-and-contemporary-culture