

## Programme specification

*(Notes on how to complete this template are provide in Annexe 3)*

### 1. Overview/ factual information

<b>Programme/award title(s)</b>	BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) BA Design (Top-up)
<b>Teaching Institution</b>	New College Durham (NCD)
<b>Awarding Institution</b>	The Open University (OU)
<b>Date of first OU validation</b>	2017
<b>Date of latest OU (re)validation</b>	-
<b>Next revalidation</b>	2023
<b>Credit points for the award</b>	120
<b>UCAS Code</b>	-
<b>HECoS Code</b>	-
<b>LDCS Code (FE Colleges)</b>	-
<b>Programme start date and cycle of starts if appropriate.</b>	September 2023
<b>Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)</b>	QAA Subject Benchmark Statement Art and Design (QAA, 2019)
<b>Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes. For apprenticeships, the standard or framework against which it will be delivered.</b>	-
<b>Professional/statutory recognition</b>	None
<b>For apprenticeships fully or partially integrated Assessment.</b>	N/A
<b>Mode(s) of Study (PT, FT, DL, Mix of DL &amp; Face-to-Face) Apprenticeship</b>	FT
<b>Duration of the programme for each mode of study</b>	1 Year
<b>Dual accreditation (if applicable)</b>	N/A

**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

BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) responds to the professional realities of contemporary design, preparing students to engage creatively within a range of professional situations. The course provides learning opportunities that support students to independently enhance the necessary work-related skills and expertise for a successful future within their chosen design specialism where visual communication and responding to a creative brief is key, e.g., graphic design, design for the web, illustration, design for social media, advertising.

The aims of the award are to:

- Encourage development of innovative and professional design-based outcomes in a supportive work-related learning environment where visual communication is key.
- Engage in academic activities and negotiated design-based projects, underpinned by personalised learning and individual focus, developing the skills and knowledge to undertake effective research for brief-based outcomes.
- Promote engagement in industry focused design-based work, supporting enhancement of professional skills relevant to employment or freelance opportunities in design-based disciplines within the creative industries.

The award is designed to provide learning opportunities that support design students aiming to become professional creative practitioners within the wider Creative & Cultural Skills sector. It does so through curriculum content directly matched to the knowledge and skills that research in the sector has identified as essential for creative practitioners and looks at filling digital/creative software skills gaps sought by the Creative and Cultural Skills sector. The programme provides modules that support student progression by promoting capacity for personalised learning within activities that mirror the blurred boundaries that exist across the creative industries between traditional specialisms.

Through design-based learning activities the course seeks to engage the academic curiosity of students, stimulate their intellectual capacities, and promote creativity and exploration within the creative industries, supporting the enhancement of employability/self-employment skills. The curriculum reflects contemporary issues supporting personal and professional development. While students obtaining the degree are prepared and equipped to make a full contribution to the creative sector, level 6 is also designed to encourage progression to postgraduate level study providing an academic bridge allowing fluent transfer from level 6 to level 7 studies.

Design students work to their strengths within a defined design-related context that builds on skills previously developed, e.g., this could include, but not limited to, graphic design, design for the web, interiors, fashion/textiles, illustration, design for social media, advertising, animation and motion graphics, app design, packaging, and anywhere else where visual communication and is key. Design students are free to develop creative materials that document progress by whatever forms of media are appropriate to their practice, e.g., through collected notations, traditional sketchbook, digital sketchbook, or social media pages. Importantly, developmental material needs to be created in a format that informs tutorial and seminar discussion to underpin outcomes created for summative assessment and support progression goals.

## 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)

BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) sits alongside BA (Hons) Visual Arts (Top-up) as creative level 6 provision and progression routes from FdA Graphic Design and FdA Visual Arts. A BA Design exit award is available for students not achieving the 60 credit Final Major Project module and that have achieved the Professional Context and Research Study modules. The art and design department also offer FE BTEC courses at level 1 to level 3 in Art and Design and level 2 and level 3 in Graphic Design.

BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) shares its programme structure with BA (Hons) Visual Arts (Top-up) in terms of delivery dates, module weightings, and assessment requirements – indicative content including studio activities, discussion themes, and the media used by students differs between courses. Contextualisation of student outcomes befits the nature of the chosen programme and drives course specific conversation within studio activities including academic tutorials and seminars. Each programme is contextualised within the scope of specialisms falling under each course title. In general, BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) is predominantly focussed on digital skills. This is a

broad definition and does not consider the blurring of creative boundaries and the interchangeable methodologies of practitioners, determined by the requirements of bespoke project or live client briefs and a student's conceptual thinking.

There is scope for students from both BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) and BA (Hons) Visual Arts (Top-up) to work collaboratively, engage in critical debate and share seminar-based learning activities, where appropriate, to support development of the skills required for progression into employment, self-employment, or further study.

### Full Time Course Structure - Attendance 2 Days per week

Semester 1	Semester 2
<b>Professional Context</b> (20 Credits)	
<b>Research Study</b> (40 Credits)	<b>Final Major Project</b> (60 Credits)

This programme requires a minimum attendance of 2 days per week across the 30-week academic year, beginning in September and ending in May. Students are encouraged to attend College, outside of timetabled contact with tutors, by utilising self-directed learning within studio spaces or computer rooms to progress module tasks independently across the working week. The programme is designed to support students from diverse backgrounds and aims to ease students into level 6 through induction activities while giving increased independence to students across all modules.

2.3 For Foundation Degrees, please list where the 60-credit work-related learning takes place. For apprenticeships an articulation of how the work based learning and academic content are organised with the award.

Not applicable.

### 2.4 List of all exit awards

**BA (Hons) Design (Top-up)** – achievement of 120 credits.

**BA Design (Top-up)** – achievement of 60 credits attained within modules Professional Context (20 credits) and Research Study (40 credits).

### 3. Programme structure and learning outcomes

*(The structure for any part-time delivery should be presented separately in this section.)*

<b><u>Programme Structure - LEVEL 6</u></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>
Professional Context	20	No optional modules		Yes	1+2
Research Study	40			No	1
Final Major Project	60			No	2

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

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
A1 – Plan and implement a design-based exhibition within negotiated parameters to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of requirements for public display.	A1 – Design students consider an area of creative focus and write a project proposal as a self-managed Final Major Project that leads to the public display of work in exhibition. Proposal development is initially supported by tutors through collective discussion of potential ideas

<b><u>Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6</u></b>	
<b>3A. Knowledge and understanding</b>	
<p>Module assessment component pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 2, Exhibition.</li> </ul>	<p>during seminars and tutorials, completed independently within studio and self-directed time. This requires personal objectives that are achievable within the over-arching module learning outcomes, negotiated, and submitted to tutors as a learning contract. Students are expected to focus on generating ideas for visual outcomes that allow capacity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of creative developmental processes. Display content for exhibition is required to meet standards pertinent to display in any public space.</p> <p>Academic tutorials, seminars, and critique sessions support students in creating their intended module outcome(s), as linked to set objectives determined by students. Students are encouraged to map their intended objectives evidenced within a learning plan to ensure progress is maintained, and targets met. It is important that the negotiated assignment incorporates capacity for the development of intellectual maturity, instills a level of curiosity, personal innovation and risk taking. Summative assessment of this learning outcome is evidenced within exhibition.</p>
<p>A2 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aesthetics and creative concepts appropriate to industry requirements and the needs of a brief, as evidenced by final outcome(s) in a chosen design discipline.</p>	<p>A2 – Design students are required to engage with contemporary creative practice by visiting galleries and museums, reading magazines and online journals / websites, and exploring relevant social media sources online to support acquisition of knowledge relevant to current creative trends that will inform a module final outcome(s). Self-directed study is</p>

**Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6**

**3A. Knowledge and understanding**

Module assessment components pertinent to this programme outcome:

Professional Context:

- Component 1, Portfolio.

Research Study:

- Component 2, Visual Response.

Final Major Project:

- Component 1, Final Outcome(s).

underpinned by academic tutorials, seminar, and critique sessions supporting student development with reference to knowledge and understanding of aesthetics and creative concepts. Mutual creative dialogue maintains a student’s trajectory towards developing definitive outcomes appropriate to industry requirements. These learning and teaching methodologies provide opportunity for formative assessment of student progress with critical feedback providing focus leading to a definitive final outcome(s).

Design students are encouraged to develop their creative exploration and practical skills using college facilities, spending a significant amount of time developing assignment work outside of tutor contact. This is required to fulfil either bespoke self-initiated or client focussed briefs and develop independent learning / work skills required for employment or self-employment. Learning via self-initiated activities provides focus for module final outcome(s), as dictated by the student.

Assessment of learning and teaching associated to module/module component final outcome(s) is summative. Module final outcome(s) are personalised by the student as negotiated within academic tutorials with module tutor(s) to fulfil independently conceived module aims, as determined through student/tutor discussion.

**Learning Outcomes – LEVEL 6**

**3A. Knowledge and understanding**

A3 - Critically appraise a chosen theme within the creative industries, demonstrating knowledge and understanding of relevant design theory, confirmed through academic writing and conventions in a design-based context.

Module assessment component pertinent to this programme outcome:

Research Study:

- Component 1, Research Journal Article.

A3 - Structured studio activities introduce students to the development of an art and design orientated theme for research focus, developing research methodologies, preparing for academic writing, supported by structured academic tutorials in studio sessions. Students conduct relevant investigations to promote critical discussion and analysis of secondary research and developmental ideas. Students are encouraged to establish a contemporary theme that supports the contextualizing their own creative practice including capacity for critical debate, evidenced formatively within academic tutorials and seminar presentations.

Design students apply relevant art and design research methodologies to their project, appraise appropriate literature, and critique the effectiveness of their research, demonstrating knowledge acquisition and understanding of design theory pertinent to their chosen theme. Academic conventions pertinent to essay writing are adhered to, including conformity to Harvard referencing, as demonstrated within tutorials and the final written essay. Seminar discussions allow the wider student group to explore ideas, share best practice, and engage in debate with reference to diverse individual themes examined by each student. This learning outcome will form part of the summative assessment of the research study essay.

<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>B1 - Analyse literal or abstract visual/literary research independently, making sound judgements that support writing a research study in a negotiated academic and creative context with a design-based focus.</p> <p>Module assessment component pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Research Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1, Research Journal Article.</li> </ul>	<p>B1 - Design students independently engage in investigative activities pertinent to developing a bespoke research focus within a negotiated academic context that is initially discussed in tutorial via a written proposal put forward by students. Self-directed learning drives the research and is supported by tutorials and seminar sessions. Academic tutorials offer students the opportunity to discuss research findings, examine observations, and justify judgements. The ability of students to pursue, analyse, and competently utilise literal or abstract visual/literary research is monitored by tutors during the development of essay academic writing. Appropriate support mechanisms are put in place, as necessary, to ensure the trajectory towards summative assessment is maintained, e.g., with support sessions with support staff where available.</p> <p>Self-initiated student research, both inside and outside of the studio, could include use of gallery and museum visits, library visits, books, magazines, journals, video, social media, and other online resources used independently to support a basis on which to develop a confident analysis and argument for discussion. Summative assessment of the research study essay will confirm the extent to which a student has researched appropriately within an academic context.</p>

<b>3B. Cognitive skills</b>	
<p>B2 - Demonstrate intellectual flexibility as a reflexive and reflective practitioner, justifying creative methods and concepts in a defined design-based professional context.</p> <p>Module assessment component pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 3, Video Presentation.</li> </ul>	<p>B2 – Academic tutorials, seminars, and critique sessions offer opportunity for students to gain developmental feedback from tutors and peers prior to final presentation. Critical analysis is promoted so that students can demonstrate intellectual flexibility as reflexive and reflective practitioners. Seminar presentations provide a developmental basis that allow students develop confidence in justifying creative methods and conceptual content in a defined professional context. Summative assessment of this learning outcome is met within the final presentation of the Final Major Project.</p>
<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>C1 - Act autonomously with limited supervision or direction, demonstrating independent learning skills within agreed parameters.</p> <p>Module assessment components pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Research Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 2, Visual Response.</li> </ul> <p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1, Final Outcome(s).</li> </ul>	<p>C1 – Design students are required to demonstrate that they can act autonomously in preparation for entering the creative industries where support and supervision is likely to be reduced. Design students independently determine the techniques and processes explored in the production of self-initiated research &amp; developmental aspects of their project(s). Students autonomously determine and develop the traditional or digital skills required for the purpose of generating visual outcomes. Students validate and exemplify their ability to work with reduced supervision via the final outcome(s) submitted for summative assessment.</p>

<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 2, Exhibition.</li> <li>• Component 3, Video Presentation.</li> </ul>	
<p>C2 - Exhibit skill within defined design contexts, adhering to the technical proficiencies and dynamic requirements of the creative industries, to create practical/professional outcomes.</p> <p>Module assessment components pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Professional Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1, Portfolio.</li> </ul> <p>Research Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 2, Visual Response.</li> </ul> <p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1, Final Outcome(s).</li> </ul>	<p>C2 – Design students focus on generating practical and professionally credible final outcomes in line with their future career pathway. To achieve this learning outcome students are required to illustrate confidence in pursuing a chosen specialist pathway by following the creative process to take their project to conclusion via studio session activities and self-directed learning by adhering to the technical proficiencies and dynamic requirements of the creative industries. Discussion of physical examples of creative work developed for tutorial, seminar, and critique activities, with tutors and peers, leads towards the summative assessment of the module final outcome(s).</p> <p>Academic tutorials provide feedback on all aspects of student progress and opportunity to discuss their personal and professional development within studio sessions. Students are required to attend tutorials with prepared discussion points to support the development of their personalised projects, and in this respect the work presented by the student will drive any conversation. Academic tutorials provide an opportunity for students to develop professional and reflective skills with reference to presenting and discussing ideas. Students are required to formally document tutorial and seminar-based feedback by taking responsibility for, and supporting, their own learning.</p>

<b>3C. Practical and professional skills</b>	
<p>C3 - Function in complex and unpredictable contexts in conjunction with peers, applying creative techniques and processes that showcase selected outcomes in exhibition, physical or digital.</p> <p>Module assessment component pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 2, Exhibition.</li> </ul>	<p>C3 - Design students have opportunity to engage in teamwork, negotiating with peers and tutors to determine presentation methods and the citing of works in exhibition. Expectations at level 6 are likely to require complex and unpredictable professional contexts. The selection and application of innovative, experimental, and creative techniques will be driven by the individual student or project needs, evidenced through final display within the exhibition component for summative assessment.</p>
<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<b>Learning outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods</b>
<p>D1 - Manage own learning and professional development, utilising communication methods, visual or written, to support employability or freelance skills for progression into the creative industries.</p> <p>Module assessment components pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Professional Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1, Portfolio.</li> </ul> <p>Research Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1, Research Journal Article.</li> </ul>	<p>D1 - Action planning by students should be conducted with the aim of clearly identifying and demonstrating how project intensions will be managed and met. Key milestones within module parameters, student and tutor initiated, should be adhered to, to maintain focus on personalised goals. Academic tutorials will record student progression through the module on a formative basis. This will assess management of learning, student engagement in tutor directed sessions, and monitoring progress in the development of their own learning.</p> <p>Creative skills should be advanced in line with the intensions of a self-initiated brief, visual/written developments are appraised during academic tutorials, seminar presentations with peers, and critiques.</p>

<b>3D. Key/transferable skills</b>	
<p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Component 3, Video Presentation.</li> </ul>	<p>Design students should illustrate that they are actively seeking to acquire new knowledge and creative skills to support progression into a defined design-based discipline, supporting career entry or further study. Summative assessment of this learning outcome will be evidenced through negotiated parameters.</p>
<p>D2 - Use software applications appropriate to professional contexts or submission requirements to support development of transferable IT skills.</p> <p>Module assessment components pertinent to this programme outcome:</p> <p>Professional Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Component 1, Portfolio.</li> </ul> <p>Research Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Component 1, Research Journal Article.</li> </ul> <p>Final Major Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Component 3, Video Presentation.</li> </ul>	<p>D2 - Design students are encouraged to advance their creative IT skills to fulfil the requirements of summative assessment submission procedures. Creative IT skills are critical transferrable skills within all facets of the creative industries. As such, students are required to gain sufficient aptitude in relevant software to ensure work-based skills meet industry expectations, regardless of chosen discipline. There is no formal teaching of creative software at level 6, students are expected to have acquired relevant skills at level 5. Students falling short of IT expectations are required to use additional time to up-skill through use of online tutorial resources in self-directed study. Tutor support places focus on aesthetics, concept development and creative decision making during formal tutorial sessions.</p> <p>The development of creative projects may require use of digital cameras, word processing software, screen capturing tools, design layout software, and photo-editing software, to highlight basic/general expectations of learning within this module. Ad-hoc tutor and technician support is available to students not experienced in generating creative digital submissions for summative assessment.</p>

#### 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
- **Additional considerations for apprenticeships:**
  - how the delivery of the academic award fits in with the wider apprenticeship
  - the integration of the 'on the job' and 'off the job' training
  - how the academic award fits within the assessment of the apprenticeship

Distinctive features of BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) are underpinned by the course aims and objectives indicated in section 2.1. Modules promote practical opportunities for students to engage in the following distinctive features within modules:

- Gain module credit for engagement in real work, e.g., freelance
- Participate in a work placement to support progression into employment
- Collaborate with peers specialising in varied creative disciplines to promote the cross pollination of ideas
- Work collaboratively with international peers via the Businet business network in multidisciplinary projects with live business clients to promote enterprise
- Establish the foundations for self-employment or freelance activity through online and social media focused marketing to build a sustainable practice
- Develop an individualised creative portfolio by personalising module content to meet bespoke employment or progression goals
- Utilise transferable digital skills to create a designed and professionally printed course content

The course places focus upon the opportunity for students to engage in, and gain credit for, the development of industry-based work. Students can negotiate their learning focus within course modules by defining a pathway in a chosen design discipline. Students can incorporate live client work conducted on a freelance or agency basis within their module outcomes if these are appropriate to negotiated project outcomes in modules Professional Context and Final Major Project.

This course is designed to meet the creative and intellectual needs of students from design disciplines, and as required by national and international creative sectors. Students progressing to the level from varied creative specialisms or experience, including internal and external/UK and international students, promotes cross-collaboration. Potential exists for students to engage first hand in the blurring of traditional boundaries between creative disciplines and to gain an increased awareness of engaging in business across traditional borders through entrepreneurial practice.

BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) allows students opportunity to use modules as a means of generating an independently conceived final portfolio of creative work, essential for

differentiating their work between peers. The course offers students the opportunity to gain 120 credits from predominantly independently conceived and negotiated practical projects. Independently generated creative and theoretical activities guarantee a personalised experience in a chosen design discipline, to support further progression into employment, self-employment, or further study.

Employability skills are embedded across the course. Within module Professional Context students engage in work related learning experiences that place emphasis on development of employability skills including independent working and teamwork, developing working relationships, communication skills (writing, visual, verbal), IT skills, presentation skills, time management, initiative, planning, and managing the design process to support the bridge between education and employment or self-employment. Research Study develops research and writing skills, analysis and synthesis, critical thinking skills, and practical design skills leading to a professionally designed visual outcome that requires student engagement with professional printers to promote networking and the development of industry-based IT skills. Final Major Project advances all employability skills entwined within the facets of the design process that meet negotiated objectives to ensure a personalised learning experience that maintains focus on the development of employability skills.

Professional design skills are developed across the programme and opportunities exist for students to incorporate live projects or competition-based work into self-initiated module Final Major Project. This could incorporate simulated projects or independently generated freelance experience with organisations such as charities or small businesses that require support with design work. Such activities demonstrate initiative and forward thinking and is highly encouraged and commended within the course if this is written into an independently conceived brief within the module. The course team ensure that the incorporation of any live work into Final Major Project meets course-learning outcomes and has the potential for creativity, innovation, and professional exploration as per course aims. This ensures such activities support the development of a meaningful design portfolio of creative evidence supporting progression into employment or further study.

While external work placement does not need to form any part of this programme, as a formal requirement, the course team highly encourage design students to engage in such activities to enhance their portfolios and develop work-based skills needed for progression. Work related skills are developed across the course from initial tutor led activities within module Professional Context through to Final Major Project where potential exists for students to explore in-depth live design projects or competitions, should students wish to pursue this rather than a simulated approach.

##### 5. Support for students and their learning.

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how student learning is supported in the work place)*

There are support mechanisms to provide both academic and pastoral support for students. Quantitative and qualitative evidence is used to gauge the effectiveness and increased utilisation of these services, evidenced particularly in the responses from student questionnaires, and ASC service student feedback and evaluation processes. Additional learning support is available to students who have learning difficulties and or disabilities.

### **Student Induction**

All students joining the course will undertake an induction programme at their point of entry. The aims of the induction are:

- To provide students with full details of the BA (Hons) Design (Top-up) degree course, including its aims and objectives, modules, skills associated with their studies, its assessment strategy, and its approach to learning
- To induct students to the learning resources available to them whilst on the course, such as the virtual learning environment (VLE) (student intranet and Teams) and Library
- To allow students the opportunity to identify issues which need to be resolved
- To enable students to meet the tutors involved in delivering the course
- To meet and interact with fellow students
- To introduce students to the code of conduct and regulations of the College
- To make students aware of the relevant systems and structures available to support them, including the Advice, Support Careers Services (ASC), Personal Learning Coach, and the Student Union.

### **Overview of Support Arrangements**

Support needs are addressed with students on an individual basis during diagnostic activities taking place within induction and module Professional Context. Those students who are new to the college, and not previously known to the course team, are encouraged to engage with additional support via Personal Learning Coach (PLC) and Academic Support Tutor to ensure fluid transition into level 6 study.

- **Internal Students (Progressing from FdA Level 5)**  
Designated personal tutor and 1-1 tutorials.  
Optional Personal Learning Coach (PLC) Support / continued support for those previously using PLC's.  
Access to Academic Support Tutor.
- **International Students (Progressing from an overseas institution)**  
Designated personal tutor and 1-1 tutorials.  
Support from International Office.  
Personal Learning Coach (PLC) Support encouraged.  
Access to Academic Support Tutor encouraged.
- **External UK Students (Progressing from a UK institution)**  
Designated personal tutor and 1-1 tutorials.  
Personal Learning Coach (PLC) Support encouraged.  
Access to Academic Support Tutor encouraged.

### **Personal Tutor System**

A comprehensive personal tutor system is in place to make sure that students have a direct personal contact with an individual member of the course team to discuss academic and personal matters relevant to their learning. All students are allocated a personal tutor when first registering to the course. It is intended wherever possible a student will have the same personal tutor for the length of their course. The personal tutor will be responsible for the induction programme to ensure students are comfortable with the course. At the induction the personal tutor will meet students to ascertain any learning or support needs and thereafter will meet with individual students on a regular basis to monitor progress and discuss any issues arising.

### **Academic Support**

In addition to support from their personal tutor each student will receive academic support from their module tutors. Support is given to students via tutorials at set intervals during the academic year and there is likely to be opportunity within some studio sessions for additional support. Further support is available within critique-based activities where both tutor and peers can give constructive advice as to the progress and development of visual based assignment work.

Students have access to a dedicated academic support tutor. This post has been acknowledged by QAA assessors as being an invaluable resource enabling students who do not come from an academic background to achieve at a higher education level.

### **Pastoral Support**

The college is committed to providing a high quality, confidential and impartial information, and advice and guidance service. This is provided by the comprehensive Advice, Support Careers (ASC) Service. All students receive induction on the ASC service at the start of their course. The ASC service is designed to provide effective and timely information, advice and guidance on funding and welfare, career planning and provides access to confidential personal counselling support. The ASC service offers appointments and a 'drop-in' service. ASC information is also available to download from the college website, intranet or to pick up from the dedicated ASC area, foyer of the Neville Building and the Sports Block. The Student Development Co-ordinator, based in the Students' Union, also helps with social and health related issues.

The PLC service does not have any specific criteria for referral, and any student who may benefit from such support can access the service. Students can be referred by their tutor, lecturer, and external advisor, such as ASC or by themselves. This personalised referral system helps in identifying new students as well as continuing communication with progressing students.

There is a dedicated page on the college internet and intranet. The service is also advertised via the college television system, allowing students in communal areas of college to become aware of the provision.

### **Career Guidance**

Students have access to a comprehensive range of relevant up to date resources on learning and work via on-line ASC services and as hard copy which is available at the ASC facility. The ASC staff also provides on-course support via class-based sessions on Careers Education, including careers management and finding employment both in

the UK and abroad. Prospective and actual students are provided with detailed access to careers and funding services for general enquires.

For specific careers-based information related to design the course team will be the first point of contact for advice and guidance due to the specialist nature of employment-based opportunities within the creative sector. Career guidance will be provided on a continuous basis throughout the duration of the course.

### **Support with Coursework**

Students are supported in their preparation for assessments by their module tutor and where relevant other academic staff within the course team. Students have access to additional academic support particular to assessment tasks from an independent Academic Support Tutor. The tutor offers specific study skills advice and guidance, on for example, Academic Writing, Assignment/Essay Planning and Structuring, The Harvard System (for references & bibliographies), Open Athens & Online Information Retrieval, Literature Searching, Presentation Skills, Reading Efficiently, Report Writing, Revision and Examination Skills. Electronic advice and guidance booklets are available on the student intranet to download.

To protect students against unfair competition the college may need to ensure that the students are not submitting assessments which have been copied or plagiarised or which are not substantially the student's own work. The college uses the software Turnitin to enable staff and students to check work for originality. Students can upload their assignments prior to submission for marking and get a report confirming their references. This can be extremely effective in ensuring against plagiarism and providing a student and staff member with the confidence that the work is original.

Module specific material is provided on the Teams VLE; this information is reviewed and updated annually to coincide with the nature and specific requirements of assignments being delivered each year. Documents include planners, course handbook, module handbooks, PowerPoint presentations, and assignment briefs.

Self-directed study is an important aspect within the course that will enable students the opportunity to develop their assignments when resources are not available outside of the college campus. Students will have access studio spaces, Apple Mac computers, and the department print room and on booking basis. This is to enable students to build on their practical skills independently to support individualised learning at level 6.

### **6. Criteria for admission**

*(For apprenticeships this should include details of how the criteria will be used with employers who will be recruiting apprentices.)*

The College admissions policy encourages access to higher education through an equal opportunity regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, or age, to ensure those with protected characteristics are safeguarded.

### **Standard Entry criteria**

- All applicants should hold a level 5 qualification at course commencement (HND / FdA / international equivalent 120 ECTS Credits) in a creative discipline.
- All applicants interviewed with an art and design portfolio. This should clearly demonstrate design skills that support entry to design-based practice.
- Evidence of digital literacy within the portfolio, to meet the needs of level 6.
- To have or be working towards Level 2 or equivalent in English Language (or a minimum 5.5 IELTS in each band for international applicants).

**Non-standard entry criteria:**

- Evidence of appropriate creative experience or employment within the creative industries.
- All applicants interviewed with an art and design portfolio. This should clearly demonstrate design skills that support entry to design-based practice.
- Evidence of digital literacy within portfolio, to meet the needs of level 6.
- To have or be working towards Level 2 or equivalent in English Language (or a minimum 5.5 IELTS in each band for international applicants).

To gain entry to the programme a student must satisfy the standard or non-standard entry requirements for the programme. Candidates with non-standard entry applications will be considered based on relevant work experience and attainment of skills, which demonstrate an ability to study at this level. Given the wide experience of potential applicants to this programme, applications for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) are welcomed in accordance with Academic Regulations. However, these must be discussed as part of the admissions process as once a student is registered to a programme RPL may not be considered for approval.

**Admissions Process**

Once an application has been received it is recorded and acknowledged by the college admissions team. The course team then views the application.

The process for interview is as follows:

- Applications welcomed through UCAS and NCD Application Form.
- All applicants interviewed with an art and design portfolio. Interview discussion alongside the review of the portfolio content presented will establish if the applicant has suitable design skills to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- Acceptance or rejection via UCAS and NCD application process following portfolio review.

Entry to the course is at the discretion of the course team and based upon applicants meeting standard or non-standard entry criteria and portfolio review that illustrates an ability to meet level 6 course learning outcomes.

<http://www.newcollegedurham.ac.uk/apply/apply-online/>

## 7. Language of study

The programme is conducted using English language.

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

Not applicable.

9. For apprenticeships in England End Point Assessment (EPA).  
*(Summary of the approved assessment plan and how the academic award fits within this and the EPA)*

Not applicable.

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

Student feedback on experiences of teaching and learning is captured within course team meetings via student reps, student rep attendance at student forums (departmental and cross college), student surveys, student completion of written module evaluations, and as appropriate within 1-1 tutorials during discussion. Student feedback supports internal quality systems include teaching yearly observations, learning walks by Heads of School/Curriculum Managers, course team meetings, completion of in year course reviews that lead to annual report, and implementation of quality enhancement plan to address set actions throughout the academic year.

**Student Voice**

The contribution of the student voice is a critical quality element at the college. It is focussed around strengthening teaching and learning and responsiveness to individual need; strengthening student participation and representation; and creating a culture of student involvement, all of which ensures that the 'student voice' is at the centre of the curriculum.

Full use is made of student feedback to plan, manage and improve the provision and to enable the college to respond to the needs of its students. Student forums at college and school level, as well as course level operate very effectively and are well attended by student representatives. These mechanisms enable student representatives to raise any issues concerning their peers and to work with college staff to further explore these issues, to establish underlying causes of concern and to implement actions for

improvement, as well as to consider responses to formal student surveys. Transparent arrangements are in place for the feedback of improvement activities to students and the communication of action plans to staff and students, ensuring ownership of improvement strategies at the appropriate level. An anonymous student comments and suggestions e-mail address is accessible via the Student Intranet. This ensures that students are able to have their opinions heard and acted upon to facilitate improvements in their provision from outside formal forum meeting arrangements, where appropriate. Additionally, an HE Student Forum page on NCD intranet allows student representatives to add questions or comments where key college staff can respond. The site is visible to all students so they can see answers to questions, and access Student Forum minutes and other relevant documentation.

Nominated student-representatives are invited to participate in staff-student committee meetings on a termly basis, with outcomes and actions from these meetings informing the annual evaluation and review process as well as informing immediate action to resolve pressing student issues, where applicable.

Cross-college student surveys are operated both on-entry to the course (to capture perceptions of student induction and admissions procedures) and on-course (to capture perceptions of quality of teaching and learning, assessment, student support and resources programme management). These surveys mirror the questions included in the National Student Survey (NSS). As well as being highly informative about the issues facing students studying in higher education at the college, they help familiarise students with the expectations of the NSS in which they participate in the final year of their programmes. Responses to start of programme and on-programme student surveys are considered by HE Academic Standards and Quality Board, a sub-committee of Academic Board, and responses received along with associated action plans generated are ratified at this committee prior to subsequent presentation to Quality, Curriculum and Students Committee (a sub-committee to the Board of Governors).

Following the analysis of formal student survey responses, course teams meet to consider areas of concern raised by students and to generate actions to resolve these issues, where applicable. Survey responses are further interrogated at course review meetings resulting in modifications to programme delivery, assessment and/or student support arrangements, where applicable, and informing the production of the annual course report and self-assessment of programme operation.

Module evaluations are also conducted to enable teams to scrutinise student perceptions at a subject level and to establish specific areas of satisfaction and concern for students. An analysis of module evaluation outcomes is considered at staff-student committee meetings and forms a critical component of the course evaluation and review and subsequent annual course report.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

The college has a Performance Management Framework to monitor course performance on a regular basis. Course teams normally meet monthly and are guided to discuss agenda items relevant to key operational aspects at relevant times of year. They meet three times a year in the capacity of Course Curriculum Review Meetings to evaluate past delivery and performance of the course and make modifications to the curriculum where relevant. Curriculum Managers meet with the Head of School and the

Quality Manager four times a year at an HE Quality Review to discuss course management and performance with respect to: reporting identified issues and good practice; student retention; strategies implemented to support students identified 'at risk'; and communication with external examiners, employers, and other stakeholders.

#### 10. Changes made to the programme since last (re)validation

Teaching staff updated to reflect employment changes within the art and design department, pertinent to inclusion of Kelly Howe and Clare Dickenson.

Assessment strategy, assessment methods, their relative weightings and mapping to module learning outcomes updated for Final Major Project Component 3: Video Presentation, introduced during Covid pandemic to replace a traditionally assessed face-to-face presentation component.

## Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

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

Level	Study module/unit	Programme outcomes										
		A1	A2	A3	B1	B2	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	
6	<b>Professional Context</b> Creative Portfolio: 100%		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<b>Research Study</b> Component 1: Research Journal Article (Essay, 2000 words, +/-10%) - 50%			✓	✓		✓				✓	✓
	<b>Research Study</b> Component 2: Creative Visual Response - 50%		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	
	<b>Final Major Project</b> Component 1: Creative Portfolio - 50%		✓				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	<b>Final Major Project</b> Component 2: Exhibition - 25%	✓					✓	✓		✓	✓	
	<b>Final Major Project</b> Component 3: Video Presentation (10 minutes) - 25%		✓				✓	✓			✓	✓

