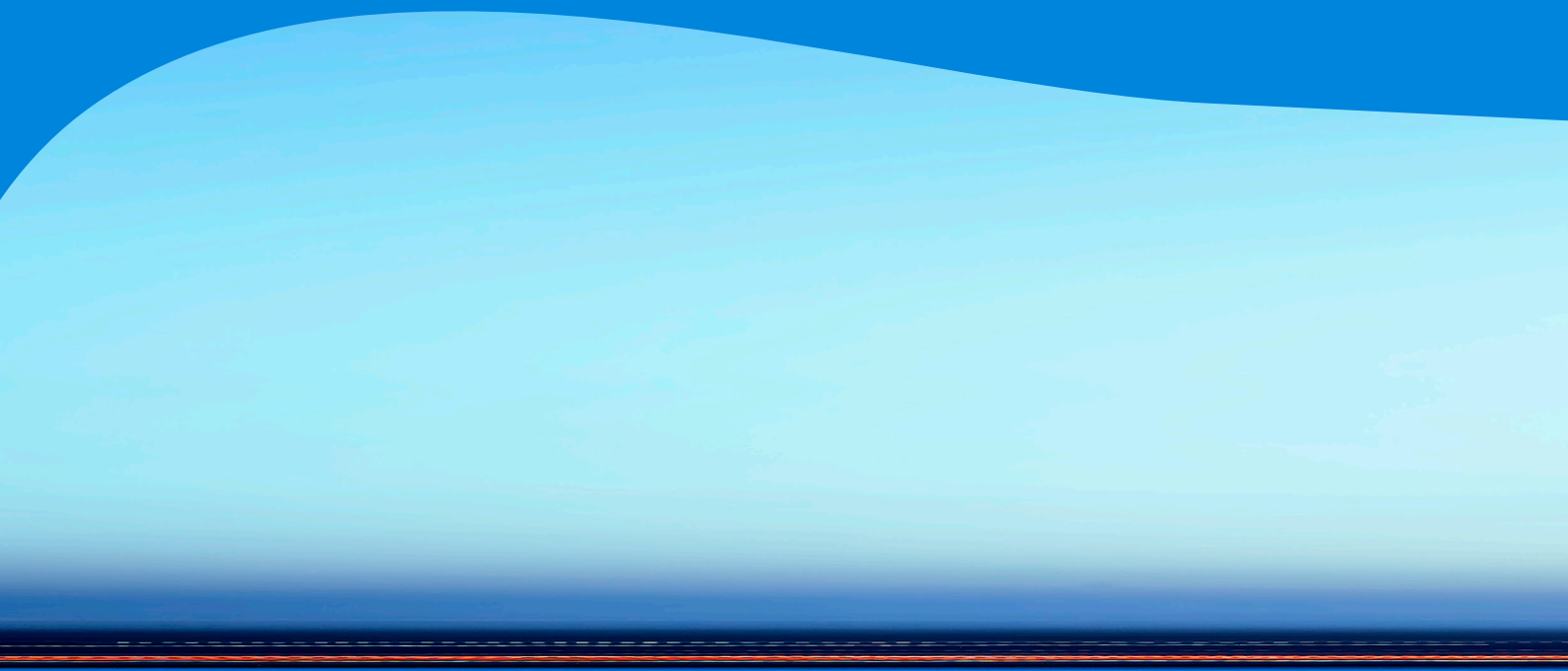
Course Specification

BA (HONS) PHOTOGRAPHY



Arts University Bournemouth

About the Course Handbook

This Handbook provides you with basic information about your course. Through the approved course specification, it provides you with the aims and outcomes of your course and outlines the content and how this will be delivered.

The course is subject to a rigorous process of quality assurance and enhancement. This may result in changes to individual units as the course develops, to ensure that the relevance and quality of the course is upheld. You will be consulted by a member of the course team before any changes are made.

Information in this Handbook should be used in conjunction with the HE Assessment Regulations. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of the regulations that apply to your course and you should refer to the regulations throughout your studies. If you have any questions, you should speak to your Programme Leader, or member of the course team. The Assessment Regulations can be located on the Induction section of Canvas, or https://aub.ac.uk/regulations

Important information about key policies which apply to your academic studies is available on the Induction section of Canvas. Please view this material on the Induction section of Canvas.

If you would like a copy of this Handbook in an alternative format, please contact equalities@aub.ac.uk.

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

COURSE SPECIFICATION

The Course Specification provides a summary of the main features of the **BA (Hons) Photography** course and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate in order to pass the course.

Further detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching and learning methods of each unit may be found in the Unit Descriptors, which forms part of the Course Handbook.

Key Course Information	
Final Award	BA (Hons)
Course Title	Photography
Award Title	BA (Hons) Photography
Teaching institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Awarding Institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Offered in the School of	Arts and Communication
Professional accreditation	None
Length of course / mode of study	3 years full-time
Level of final award (in FHEQ)	Level 6
Subject benchmark statement	Art and Design
UCAS code	W640
Language of study	English
External Examiner for course:	Ryan Moule
Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact external examiners directly	
Date of Validation	Mar 1999
Date of most recent review	July 2024
Date course specification written/revised	August 2024

Course Description

The BA (Hons) Photography course at Arts University Bournemouth offers a rigorous and expansive education in photography, designed to foster creative excellence and professional development. This program is built on a foundation that recognises and nurtures the individual aspirations of each student, encouraging a journey that goes beyond traditional boundaries to explore new, often unpredictable, and challenging possibilities in photographic practice.

At the core of our course is a conceptually driven curriculum that actively responds to the expanded field of contemporary photography, enhanced by the rapid technological advances shaping the medium. Our approach is deeply rooted in the belief that photographers must not only master technical skills but also develop a robust understanding of the cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts that influence visual culture. To this end, students engage in experimental practices, supported by rigorous research methods and theoretical discourses.

From the onset, students are encouraged to define their artistic voice, gradually shaping their practice through experiential learning, with an emphasis on craft, traditional and emerging

technologies. Each unit is designed to allow for personal response, enabling students to produce diverse and rich outcomes that reflect their unique perspectives and skills.

The program promotes the integration of history, theory and practice through a dynamic blend of lectures, workshops, and collaborative projects. Students are prepared to become skilled, confident and autonomous practitioners who value inclusivity and cultural diversity. Our teaching strategy includes significant emphasis on craft, ensuring that students gain practical experience in creating work that meets professional standards.

As students progress, they are expected to take increasing responsibility for their learning, culminating in the development of a professional portfolio that demonstrates their ability to apply comprehensive research, analytical rigor, and technical proficiency. This portfolio serves as the cornerstone of their transition into the creative industries or further postgraduate study.

Graduates of our program are distinguished by their creativity and ability to think critically - traits that will be primary currencies in their professional endeavours. They possess a profound capability to influence and innovate within the creative industries, equipped with the knowledge and skills to adapt and excel in an ever-changing artistic landscape. Our alumni network spans a wide range of careers, evidencing the versatility and relevance of our educational approach.

In summary, the BA (Hons) Photography at Arts University Bournemouth is committed to providing an educational experience that not only prepares students for the demands of the professional world but also instils a lifelong passion for photography as powerful forms of communication, documentation and creative expression.

Distinctive features of the course

Expanded Photographic Practice:
The course encourages an expansive approach to photography, where students explore and integrate various mediums and techniques within and beyond traditional photography. Students are encouraged to push creative boundaries and develop unique artistic identities, enhancing their versatility and adaptability within the creative industries.

New Technologies:
The course integrates new and emerging technologies in photography, preparing students to lead in the adoption of innovative techniques and processes across the evolving, technology-driven worlds of creative practice and beyond.

Professional Production Facilities:
The course offers unparalleled access to professional production facilities on campus, for printing, mounting, and framing, enabling students to produce exhibition-ready work of the highest standard. This ensures that students develop a hands-on understanding of, and proficiency in, the complete production process from creation to presentation, enhancing their professional readiness and employability.

Exhibition Opportunities and Community Engagement:
The curriculum emphasises real-world exhibition opportunities combined with collaboration and community engagement, preparing students for group exhibitions and public presentations. These opportunities not only enhance students' professional abilities and public engagement skills, but also contribute positively to the community, enriching the learning experience and fostering significant network connections.

Major Project Collaborative Elements: At Level 6, the Major Projects unit will have a co-launch and formative event with BA Commercial Photography, enabling students to share conceptual development, technical approached and feedback.

Course Industry Patron Scheme: All courses at AUB are connected formally with an Industry Patron, an industry practitioner or business that acts as a critical friend to the course and course team. Many courses work with several industry partners, but the more formal Industry Patron connection offers the opportunity to collaborate and maintain close relations with industry / business. This is a unique concept that ensures AUB courses are industry relevant and maintain current practices while providing further opportunities for students to engage with industry practitioners.

AUB Strategic vision

The BA (Hons) Photography fits with the university's strategic vision in several ways:

Innovation: The course responds to emerging trends and macro shifts in the creative sectors, ensuring our graduates are well-prepared to enter and evolve within the rapidly changing photographic landscape.

Collaboration: By fostering collaborations across disciplines within the university, we facilitate a culture of shared knowledge and creativity that reflects the multidisciplinary nature of the creative industries.

Internationalisation: Our course's appeal to international students supports the university's strategy of diversification and global engagement, preparing graduates to operate successfully in an increasingly global market.

Optional Placement Year

The optional Placement Year offers students the opportunity to:

- Get under the skin of an **industry or an organisation** to assist with making better-informed decisions about future career prospects
- Undertake a placement, which ensures students can take **personal responsibility** for tasks, duties, and projects within a real-world work setting.
- **Develop and recognise their own work ethic and powers of critical reflection**.
- Build **high-level transferable skills** and enhance professional competencies in the workplace.

The Placement Year will be recognised on the degree transcript. As students remain registered at the university for the duration of the Placement Year, they will retain access to all university support services. Students will be allocated a Placement Tutor who will maintain regular remote contact with them.

These placements often lead to permanent roles upon graduation. easing the transition from education to employment.

Course Aims

1. Inspire and support the exploration of creativity in an experimental and risk-taking manner, fostering innovative thinking and original outcomes.

2. Develop and apply a comprehensive range of specialist technical and professional skills across various photographic practices.

3. Enhance understanding of the medium of photography in both historical and contemporary contexts, promoting a deep appreciation of its cultural, social, and ethical dimensions.

4. Cultivate analytical skills, awareness, and judgment, to enable students to evaluate and critically engage with diverse photographic contexts.

5. Foster autonomy and professionalism in practice, encouraging students to undertake self-directed projects and make informed, responsible decisions.

6. Promote advanced problem-solving skills, encouraging students to apply new knowledge creatively and effectively in professional settings.

7. Instil in students an awareness of ethical, sustainable, social, and cultural issues, integrating the principles of sustainable development and global citizenship into photographic practices.

8. Prepare students for professional practice and postgraduate study, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and ethical grounding necessary for success in their careers and further education.

Course Outcomes

1. Demonstrate creative exploration and risk-taking in developing innovative photographic works.

2. Apply specialist technical and professional skills to produce high-quality photographic outcomes.

3. Present a nuanced exploration of historical and contemporary photographic practices and their cultural, social, and ethical implications.

4. Evaluate photographic work critically, demonstrating informed awareness, sound judgment and analytical abilities.

5. Operate with autonomy and professionalism in managing and executing photographic projects.

6. Utilise advanced problem-solving skills to address complex challenges in the field of photography and in broader visual culture.

7. Integrate ethical, sustainable, and culturally sensitive approaches into photographic practice, actively reflecting upon the impact of these decisions.

8. Prepare for professional practice and advanced studies, demonstrating readiness to contribute meaningfully to the photographic community and beyond.

Reference Points

UK Quality Code for higher education, including:

- Subject Benchmark Statement: Art and Design
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- AUB LTAF and Undergraduate Assessment Regulations

Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Strategies

The course is designed to deliver an outstanding academic experience through a blend of learning, teaching, and assessment strategies. This approach is rooted in a philosophy of experiential learning that emphasises deep engagement with both theoretical and practical

aspects of photography, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and professionalism among students.

Learning Strategies:
Our learning strategies are student-centred, promoting autonomy and self-direction, yet structured to provide substantial guidance and support. These strategies are crafted to help students develop a personal and professional photographic practice:

- **Interactive Workshops** (Active Learning): Practical skills are honed through hands-on sessions, enabling students to engage with real-world equipment and technologies.

- **Group Critiques and Peer Reviews** (Collaborative Learning): These sessions cultivate a constructive feedback culture, essential for artistic development.

- **Industry Engagement** (Professional Learning): Guest lecturers and industry visits connect students with professionals, offering insights into current practices.

- **Project-Based Learning** (Problem-Based Learning): Assignments are designed to integrate theoretical learning with practical application, encouraging innovative problem-solving.

Teaching Strategies:
Teaching is delivered via a dynamic mix of methods that ensure comprehensive exposure to both theoretical and practical aspects of photography:

- **Lectures and Seminars** (Information Delivery): These sessions provide foundational knowledge and foster understanding of complex concepts.

- **Technical Demonstrations** (Skills Acquisition): Specialised workshops facilitate mastery of contemporary photographic techniques.

- **Collaborative Projects** and Workshops (Team-Based Learning): Students work in groups to produce works, mirroring professional collaborative environments.

- **Independent Project Work** (Self-Directed Learning): Encourages students to apply their learned skills and theoretical knowledge in the development of personal projects. This fosters creativity, critical thinking, and the ability to work independently, preparing them for professional practice or further study.

Assessment Strategy:
Assessment within the course is continuous and varied, designed to accurately measure, and support the learning outcomes for each unit:

- **Portfolio Assessments** (Authentic Assessment): Portfolios allow students to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their skills and conceptual development.

- **Live Projects and Exhibitions**: These assess students' ability to integrate and apply their learning in a professional context.

- **Reflective Journals and Essays** (Reflective Learning): Critical thinking and reflection through written work or alternative methods of submission encourages deep engagement with contextual material and fosters an ability to communicate and articulate technical and conceptual understanding.

- **Formative Feedback** (Diagnostic Assessment): Regular constructive feedback helps students refine their techniques and ideas throughout their studies.

These methods are interlinked, with each element designed to support and enhance the others, ensuring a holistic and robust educational experience. By employing LTAF-aligned strategies, we aim to cultivate graduates who are not only technically adept but also thoughtful, innovative, and well-prepared for diverse careers in photography and related fields.

The teaching and learning methods for AUB course units have been selected as the most appropriate for the successful delivery of the syllabus, and appropriate achievement of the aims of the unit. All units involve student contact time and independent study, which come together to indicate the total study hours requirement for the unit.

The student contact hours information provided in unit descriptors might, on occasion, be subject to some minor variation; for example, in response to student feedback, or to take advantage of unanticipated learning opportunities that would enhance the student learning experience. No changes will be made that would be to the detriment of the unit experience, or which would disadvantage student learning.

Some teaching may be delivered online when appropriate and will count as student contact hours.

Student Engagement

Student engagement is integral to the educational philosophy at Arts University Bournemouth, particularly within the BA (Hons) Photography course. Engagement is vital because it transforms students from passive listeners to active participants in their learning journeys. This engagement takes several forms:

- **Collaborative Learning:** Students frequently work in groups to discuss, critique, and develop projects. This collaboration mirrors professional creative environments and encourages a deeper understanding through diverse perspectives.

- **Co-design of Learning:** We empower students to co-design their learning pathways, particularly in units that allow them to choose project themes or focus areas. This approach makes their learning more personalised and directly aligned with their career aspirations and creative passions.

- **Shared Learning Experiences:** By facilitating shared learning experiences through workshops, group critiques, and peer reviews, students gain insights not only from faculty but also from their peers. This environment fosters a community of practice that enhances the educational experience and prepares students for the collaborative nature of the creative industries.

- **Active Participation:** Through active participation in industry projects, live briefs, and placements, students apply their learning to real-world scenarios, enhancing their practical skills and professional readiness.

- **Feedback and Reflection:** Regular feedback sessions and reflective practices are embedded throughout the course to encourage continuous personal and professional development. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning, seek feedback, and use it to improve their practice.

By engaging deeply with their education, students not only acquire knowledge and skills pertinent to their field but also develop critical soft skills like communication, teamwork, and adaptability, which are essential in today’s dynamic professional landscapes. This holistic approach to student engagement ensures that graduates are well-prepared to enter and excel in the creative industries or in further academic study.

Assessment

Each unit is assessed separately, and the assessment forms part of the unit. Assessment provides students with regular feedback on how their learning and achievements are developing.

For every unit of a course, we will inform students of what they are expected to learn; what they must submit; how their work will be assessed; and the deadline for presenting work for assessment.

A minimum of one unit at Level 4 will be assessed on a pass/fail basis, with written feedback but no numerical grade. All other units will be given a percentage mark.

Students will receive a final mark for each unit in the form of a percentage, which will be recorded on a formal record of achievement (transcript). Each component of assessment is graded using a notched marking scale, whereby only certain marks are used within each grade. The only marks available within any ten-point band are *2, *5 and *8 (e.g. 62, 65, 68). These marks correspond to a low, mid, and high level of achievement within each grade band.

All learning outcomes must be passed to successfully complete the unit.

On successful completion of an Honours degree course, students will be awarded a degree classification based on their unit marks. The final classification is determined using all unit marks at Levels 5 and 6.

If a student has joined Level 6 through either the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) route or having completed a Foundation Degree (FdA), the final classification is determined using only unit marks at Level 6.

For further information on assessment, progression, awards, and classifications, please visit https://aub.ac.uk/regulations

Course Structure

All students are registered for the award of BA (Hons); however, exit awards are available if a student leaves the course early, having successfully completed one or two levels. If students successfully complete a level of the course, they will automatically be entitled to progress to the next level.

For the award of a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE), students must have achieved a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4. This qualification may be awarded if a student leaves the University following successful completion of the first year of the course.

For the award of a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), students must have achieved a minimum of 240 credits of which a minimum of 120 must be at Level 5. This qualification may be awarded if a student leaves the University following successful completion of the second year of the course.

For the award of a BA (Hons) a student must have achieved a minimum of 360 credits of which a minimum of 240 must be at Level 5 or above, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 6. This qualification will be awarded upon successful completion of the course.

A BA without Honours may be awarded if a student achieves 300 credits, at least 180 of which are at Level 5 or above, and at least 60 of which are at Level 6.

Core Values and Skills

In developing courses, the University aims to create a curriculum that reflects its values and ethos. It should prepare students not only for future career success, but also empower them with the knowledge, skills, and passion to have a positive impact on the world and be agents for change. AUB has drawn from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (https://sdgs.un.org/goals) which have informed our values of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion as well as our Graduate Attributes.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

"We are better for our diversity. We are enriched by the depth of respect we have for each other and the strength of our relationships with our people, our places, and the planet. Through our commitment to working with those who are different to us, or challenge us, we grow stronger together, creating new synergies, global connections, and sustainable futures." (AUB Strategy 2030)

As an organisation we have moral, social and legal obligations to fulfil in terms of EDI, and in doing so our commitment is to put EDI at the heart of every area of activity. It is not covered as a separate, stand-alone section, rather it forms an integral part of the curriculum, throughout your study here.

Graduate Attributes (GA)

Over recent years, there has been an increasing pace of change, technological, social, environmental. This has been further impacted by the world-wide pandemic effecting significant change in the global economy and the employment market.

In this context, the University has recognised the importance of developing AUB graduates who have the attributes to build their careers, adapting to different circumstances and embracing changes. A suite of attributes has been defined that we feel are particularly appropriate to the creative courses that we deliver and to our core values. During your course, both curricular and extra-curricular activities will give students the opportunity to prepare for their working careers.

The course will introduce students to topics which are integrated with the curriculum at every stage of learning. This will allow them to structure their career development journey through levels 4-6 of the degree course and consider the following stages: Self Awareness, Opportunity Awareness, Decision Making and Transitioning into Work. These align to the AUB Career Readiness stages: Explore, Focus, Engage and Achieve.

In practice, this means that each unit of the course, at each Level, will include elements of career development and these will be shown explicitly in unit descriptors and outline syllabuses. Whilst students engage with these as they go through each unit, they will come together in the final unit at each Level. Such an approach is fundamental to degree studies and is designed to support students in the steps they take after graduation.

Students will also have the option, between Level 5 (Year 2) and Level 6 (Year 3) of undertaking an extended period of work experience. The course team will be able to discuss this at the appropriate time.

Maintaining Health and Wellbeing

Throughout the course students are encouraged to reflect on their own health and wellbeing, learning how to build beneficial work strategies and study habits and to manage their professional activities in a way which safeguards their mental and physical health.

Course staff have designed the course to promote health and well-being, as far as is reasonably possible. Therefore, it is vital students maintain constructive communication with their colleagues and their staff throughout their time on this course.

Course Content

The BA (Hons) Photography course at Arts University Bournemouth is structured over three academic levels, each designed to progressively develop students' technical skills, creative capacities, and theoretical understanding, equipping them for professional practice or postgraduate study.

The course also includes collaboration with the BA Commercial Photography program in Level 5 and Level 6. In Level 5, there is a co-curated careers-focused event, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of their future industry together. In Level 6, there is a crossover with a formative feedback event for the Major Project, enabling students to share conceptual development, technical approaches, and receive feedback.

Level 4: Foundations and Exploration
At Level 4, students engage in a series of technical workshops that build foundational skills crucial for professional photographic practice. These include studio techniques, lighting, both analogue and digital processing, and printing. Fundamental concepts and critical issues in both historical and contemporary photographic practices are introduced. This level emphasises collaborative and individual work, encouraging students to explore diverse photographic media.

Level 5: Specialisation and Professional Orientation
Progressing to Level 5, students delve deeper into complex creative and theoretical challenges. The curriculum at this stage encourages students to begin developing their individual practice. This level integrates professional studies to enhance students' understanding of potential audiences and the various contexts their work might inhabit. It serves as a bridge to more autonomous project work, fostering a robust engagement with the field's cultural, ethical, and technological dimensions.

Level 6: Refinement and Professional Practice
In the final year, Level 6, students are expected to synthesise their learning to develop and refine an independent practice that anticipates professional engagement or further academic pursuit. This level consolidates students' abilities to make informed, critical choices about their careers, emphasising the alignment of personal creative expression with professional opportunities.

Each level of the course is carefully designed to support the students' journey from foundational skill acquisition to professional expertise, aligning with AUB's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and global engagement within the creative industries. The course structure not only responds to the evolving landscape of contemporary photography but also prepares graduates to be thoughtful, inventive, and responsible contributors to the visual arts and beyond.

Specialist resources:

- **Central Media Store** – specialist photographic equipment for studio and location, still and moving image, sound, projection, and display of work. Cameras include every format from 35mm to 10x8, through digital Sony A7, Nikon Z8, medium format encompassing Hasselblad, Fuji GFX, Phase One IQ3.
- **Photography Hub** - primary workspace for students, adjacent to primary teaching space for course (central room), supports a wide range of learning and teaching activities.

- **Photographic Studios** - Broncolor studios and Profoto studios, complete with Capture software.
- **Colour Darkrooms** – with individual bays
- **Chromira 30inch RA4 digital printer**
- **Autopan RA4 colour paper processor** - colour paper < 30 inches wide
- **Black and White darkrooms** - dry area
- **Ilford 2150 paper processor** - resin coated BW prints < 50cm wide
- **Black and White darkrooms** - wet area
- **Heat press** - for fibre-based prints
- **Automated film processing** - colour and black and white negatives up to 4x5 inch negatives.
- **Hand tank processing area** - up to 10x8 inch negatives.
- **Print Bureau** - A0 printer and proofer and mounting facility
- **Digital Suite** – Apple Mac computers, Adobe Creative Suite, Eizo monitors, colour managed workflow, film scanning and printing
- **Technical Support** - 1x Senior Technician Demonstrator, 5x Technician Demonstrators, 1x Technician Demonstrator.
- **Bindery** – support for bookmaking
- **3D Workshop** – including course specific specialist frame making equipment, spray room, wood shop and metal shop**.**
- **Innovation Studio** - featuring state-of-the-art digital and physical manufacturing technologies, including 3D printing, 3D machining, 2D cutting and engraving, materials library, VR suite, body scanner, UV printing, textile printing.

Course Units

Unit code	Unit Title	Credit
PHO401	Process, Materials and Histories	40
PHO402	Still Moving	40
PHO403	Strategies	40
PHO501	Realism and Representation	40
PHO502	Practice and Research	40
PHO503	Professional Enquiry	40
PHO604	Major Project I: Research and Development	20
PHO605	Dissertation	20
PHO606	Major Project II: Execution and Production	60
PHO607	Professional Practice	20

Course Diagram

This diagram shows the proposed start/end dates for each unit and shows teaching weeks only; holiday periods are not included.

	Level 4																											
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Autumn Term										**Spring Term**										**Summer Term**									
Induction Week	**PHO404: Processes, Materials and Contexts** Weeks 1-10 (40 Credits) Pass/Fail Unit										**PHO405: Strategies and Production** Weeks 11-20 (40 Credits)										**PHO406: Explorative Practice** Weeks 21-30 (40 Credits)								

	Level 5																											
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Autumn Term										**Spring Term**										**Summer Term**									
	PHO501 Realism and Representation **Weeks 1-10** (40 credits)										**PHO502 Practice and Research** **Weeks 11- 26** (40 credits)																			
											PHO503 Professional Enquiry **Weeks 11- 29** (40 credits)																			

	Level 6																											
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Autumn Term										**Spring Term**												**Summer Term**							
	PHO604 Major Project I: Research and Development (weeks 1-10) (20 credits)											**PHO606 Major Project II: Execution and Presentation (weeks 12-27)** (60 Credits)																	
	PHO605 Dissertation (weeks 1-11) (20 credits)											**PHO607 Professional Practice (weeks 12-28)** (20 credits)																	

Image: Alex Groom | BA (Hons) Photography