

THE ARTS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT BOURNEMOUTH

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

The Programme Specification provides a summary of the main features of the **BA (Hons) Commercial Photography** course, and the learning outcomes that a 'typical' student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she passes the course.

Further detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching and learning methods of each unit may be found in your Course Handbook.

Key Course Information

Final Award	BA Honours
Course Title	Commercial Photography
Teaching institution	The Arts University College at Bournemouth
Awarding Institution	The Arts University College at Bournemouth
Professional accreditation	None
Length of course / mode of study	1 year full-time
Level of final award (in FHEQ)	Level 6
Subject benchmark statement(s)	Art and Design Communication, media, film and cultural studies
UCAS code	W642
Language of study	English
Date of Validation	2005
Date of most recent review	2010
Date programme specification written/revised	Revised September 2010

Course Philosophy

Our ethos is to support and encourage technically proficient and professionally astute photography students to develop and reflect on their practice as they mature as autonomous creative decision makers, aspiring to set the creative agenda of contemporary commercial photography. The vision is to nurture graduates who have the potential to determine rather than pursue market trends. We seek to engender a liberating rather than a prescriptive approach to learning within which students can develop innovative solutions to issues in the contemporary commercial marketplace. We celebrate how cultural diversity and a broad range of interests contribute to an enhanced group dynamic and can provide an enriched experience through the establishment of a mature position in contemporary practice. We expect our students to be prepared for what lays before them, striving to make their mark as the new talent in a sophisticated and creative environment.

Course Aims

The course aims to:

- To develop an autonomous command of creative, intellectual and practical abilities.
- To focus professional knowledge and career potential.

- To promote personal development by undertaking academic and creative research which could lead to further study at postgraduate level.

The overriding aim of the course is to produce autonomous creative professional photographers who can innovate within the industry at the highest level. Graduates will attain a level of autonomy needed for contemporary professional practice in situations requiring decision-making in complex and unpredictable circumstances. The course will allow students to confirm their particular creative concerns, extend the scope and depth of their enquiry and their ability to respond to challenging photographic opportunities. The course adopts a student-centred approach that fosters the ability to critically reflect on and contextualise their work without shifting the commercial focus of their learning. By encouraging creative maturity and conceptual awareness of industry practices the Level 6 will provide graduates with the critical and analytical skills required to challenge conventional commercial output. Therefore they will not only successfully respond to the wishes of clients, but through the development of their own 'visual voice', be able to offer alternatives to those who already work within the photographic marketplace.

The course will offer the commercially focussed student the opportunity to take greater responsibility for their career development by being able to locate and articulate their practice within contemporary discourse. Graduates from BA (Hons) Commercial Photography will be able to define clearly the working contexts for their practice with due consideration to markets, key practitioners and the current critical debates that inform production and consumption. For example; genre practices within commercial photography such as fashion, portraiture, still-life, and documentary, are subject to changes in aesthetic taste and working methodologies, and vary from one commercial context to another. In addition, students will have a grasp of the fundamental and current critical positions affecting their area of specialism, for example the impact of third-wave feminism and media criticism on fashion practice, as well as of the critical discourse surrounding the notions of consumption and the 'commercial'.

The professionally focussed research integral to the ethos of the course also offers the opportunity for further study at postgraduate study. This is particularly evident through the units (*Extended*) *Major Project*, (*Extended*) *Investigative Study* and *Promotion and Evaluation*. These units not only allow students the opportunity to produce practical work at an appropriate level but also to engage in a piece of extended writing that frames the individual's key areas of concern, while also allowing them to reflect on their studies. In recent years a significant number of students from the course have successfully progressed to Post Graduate study, and have continued to refine their practice and academic interests.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. apply creative and professional skills related to photography and the visual communications and photographic industries.
2. show evidence of effective problem solving, research, communication and presentation skills.
3. apply a critical and theoretical understanding of photography both within a historical and contemporary context.
4. apply a critical and analytical understanding of photographic practice.
5. have the ability to place own work in a commercial context and identify defined career objectives within the creative/photographic industries.
6. have the ability to locate their own work in an academic context and to identify appropriate opportunities for study at postgraduate level.
7. apply successful creative solutions to commercially focused outcomes.
8. work independently and apply knowledge, skills and understanding appropriately.

Reference Points

UK Quality Code for higher education, including:

- Subject Benchmark Statement: Art and Design; Communication, media, film and cultural studies
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- QAA Code of Practice

AUCB Undergraduate Curriculum Framework

University College Learning and Teaching Strategy

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and Teaching Strategies

The course outcomes will be met by deploying a wide variety of teaching and learning methods including workshop projects, studio projects, lectures, seminars, group critiques, guided reading and tutorials.

The methods employed will, whenever possible, lead the student into the disciplines required of a creative practitioner and promote the transferable skills of self-management and self-reliance.

The course is structured progressively to provide increased opportunities for autonomous learning.

The progressive promotion of student-centred learning reflects maturity as a student and allows learning towards individual goals.

Teaching is directed at supporting individual engagement in learning although there will be opportunities to work in teams to enable learning of the value of peer cooperation.

The integration of theory and practice is promoted and reinforced through a team teaching approach. Lectures, seminars and tutorials may be delivered by team members, as appropriate, in the creative environment of the studio.

Level 6 of the BA (Hons) Commercial Photography allows the student to confirm their particular creative concerns and to extend the scope and depth of their enquiry.

In Level 6 students must take the major responsibility for their study. Teaching support reflects the expectations upon them as mature learners through tutorial support that complements the autonomous nature of your study.

Negotiated Learning Agreements are the principle means of defining learning goals and monitoring progress and achievements. Level 6 studies provide the opportunity for the student to extend their interests and abilities and demonstrate their capacity for sustained independent and professional work.

Assessment

Each unit is assessed separately, and the assessment forms part of the unit. Assessment both provides a measure of your achievement, and also gives you regular feedback on how your learning is developing.

For every unit of your course you will be provided with a Unit Handbook, which will state what you are expected to learn within the unit; the work that you have to submit; and how it will be assessed. The Unit Handbook will also give the deadline for presenting your work for assessment.

You will receive a final mark for each unit in the form of a percentage, which will be recorded on your formal record of achievement (transcript). The HE Grading Matrix will help you to understand the marking process, and this can be found as an Appendix to this Handbook.

On successful completion of your Honours degree course, you will be awarded a degree classification based on your unit marks. The final classification is determined using all unit marks at Levels 6. For further information on progression, awards and classifications, please visit <http://intranet.aucb.ac.uk/academicregulations>

Course Structure

All students are registered for the award of BA (Hons).

For the award of a BA (Hons) you must have achieved a minimum of 120 credits at Level 6 (Honours level). This qualification will be awarded upon successful completion of your course.

A BA without Honours may be awarded if you have achieved a minimum of 60 credits at Level 6.

Course Content

The Level 6 BA (Hons) Commercial Photography builds on the platform of industry comparable standards set by the FdA Commercial Photography course. The Level 6 adopts an extremely focused approach to individual student's career ambitions, developing student's specific creative and conceptual skills in order to gain a more complex understanding of the particular discourse with which they wish to be professionally engaged.

Graduates are capable of advancing and challenging accepted ways of working within the industry, allowing them the opportunity to reach their creative potential. Critical and theoretical research will have informed their commercial practice. Gaining a BA award in this discipline equips graduates to compete at the highest level of professional practice as well as providing a platform for potential post-graduate study. After 3 years of extensive investigation (including the 2 years of Level 4 and 5 study), graduates will possess all the attributes necessary to define the future of contemporary commercial photographic practice. This is evidenced through and articulated by an accomplished and developed commercial portfolio and the critical skills with which to locate this work within an ever more complex visual culture.

The unit structure enhances the delivery and professional integrity of the course by enabling appropriate specialists to deliver units of study. The units in Level 6 are the culmination of your professional understanding of your specialism. Two major units, *Specialist Practice* and *Extended Major Project/Major Project** provide the opportunity for a body of work that will make up your degree portfolio. There is also a written unit, *Investigative Study/Extended Investigative Study** for which you will produce a critically informed analysis of a subject related topic.

* denotes an option where individual students can decide if they wish to take a more practical or theoretical route through their Level 6 studies.

The unit *Promotion and Evaluation* will give you the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to critically evaluate arguments and assumptions and to apply methods and techniques that are appropriate to this advanced level of the discipline. You will have qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:

- The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
- Decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; and
- The learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature (i.e. postgraduate study).

Course Units

Level 6 Option 1

Specialist Practice	PPH610	30 credits
Promotion and Evaluation	PPH611	15 credits
Extended Major Project	PPH603	60 credits
Investigative Study	PPH600	15 credits

Level 6 Option 2

Specialist Practice	PPH610	30 credits
Promotion and Evaluation	PPH611	15 credits
Major Project	PPH602	45 credits
Extended Investigative Study	PPH601	30 credits

Level 6 study options

The University College offers two options of study at Level 6:

Option 1

An Extended Major Project of 60 credits and an Investigative Study weighted 15 credits (4000 words^{*})

Option 2

A Major Project of 45 credits, and an Extended Investigative Study of 30 credits (8000 words^{*}).

If you are following Option 1, you are expected to spend approximately 600 hours on your Extended Major Project and 150 hours on your Investigative Study. Your creative practice is therefore the focus of the year, and you should ensure that you develop a Learning Agreement which reflects the scope of project which is required.

If you are following Option 2, you are expected to spend approximately 450 hours on your Major Project and 300 hours on your Extended Investigative Study. Obviously this is a more balanced pattern of study, and you should ensure that your proposed area of research will provide the necessary breadth and depth to sustain a coherent academic argument which demonstrates critical analysis and understanding.

The different options are designed to permit a degree of flexibility in how you demonstrate Honours level outcomes in your discipline. However, both offer the opportunity to work at an advanced level within the discipline, and to show your appreciation of the context of your work. The outcomes below apply to the composite 75 credits; you should ensure that your two projects enable you to achieve these, as well as the specific unit outcomes.

Outcomes for project work at Level 6:

- Demonstrate the ability rigorously to apply specialist knowledge, understanding and creativity
- Demonstrate an enhanced level of discipline and ability in time-management and organisation.
- Demonstrate your awareness of the ethical, social and cultural issues appropriate to the concept of a responsible professional practitioner
- Demonstrate an awareness of the principles of sustainability, especially as they pertain to the discipline
- Demonstrate independent judgement in analysis and investigation and the ability to draw together ideas within a particular area of study
- Demonstrate the ability to plan, research, formulate and deliver sophisticated work which interprets, analyses and re-presents ideas to a specific audience
- Demonstrate the ability to reference appropriate historical, cultural, critical and contextual concepts through your work
- Demonstrate advanced visual communication skills
- Demonstrate advanced written communication skills
- Demonstrate advanced problem-solving, and an ability to apply knowledge to new situations
- Identify and adopt research methodologies appropriate to your research, and be able to evaluate the integrity of sources
- Demonstrate professional autonomy in the development of your ideas, and their realisation

^{*} Please note that all word counts should be considered as a norm, but +/- 10% is acceptable.

Course Diagram:

This schematic diagram shows the proposed start/end dates for each unit with assessment periods. Further information on the structure of each unit will be included in unit handbooks.

Level 6 option 1

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	31
Induction week	PPH610 Specialist Practice (30 credits)										PPH603 Extended Major Project (60 credits)																Assessments	Show preparation	HE Show	HE Exam Boards	
	PPH600 Investigative Study (15 credits)										PPH611 Promotion and Evaluation (15 credits)																				

Level 6 option 2

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	31
Induction week	PPH610 Specialist Practice (30 credits)										PPH602 Major Project (45 credits)																Assessments	Show preparation	HE Show	HE Exam Boards	
	PPH601 Extended Investigative Study (30 credits)														PPH611 Promotion and Evaluation (15 credits)																

Resources

University College Resources:

Library

The course is supported by a Subject Librarian who liaises closely with the team to ensure that the Library resources are relevant and meet student and staff research needs. The Subject Librarian can offer advice on research skills, as well as individual support for students in the use of Library resources

The Library holds an excellent range of specialist learning materials including journals, books, CDs, DVDs, newspapers. It has subscriptions to a wide range of specialist electronic resources focusing on art, design, media and performance, including 37,000 e-books and 3,000 e-journals.

Colour and black and white photocopying facilities are available as well as viewing rooms for watching DVDs, videos and off air recordings from television. Students have access to iMacs and PCs and the Library is wi-fi enabled. The open plan design and high quality resources make the Library a popular space for work and study. The Library scores consistently high in both the in-house and national student surveys which are carried out annually.

Information technology

The University College provides a comprehensive range of IT resources, utilising Apple Macintosh, Windows Personal Computers and specialist resources for its art, design, media and performance disciplines. The University College uses Industry standard software from Microsoft, Adobe, Macromedia, Apple, Quark and leading software suppliers, and is continually investing in its technology and resources.

IT resources are also available to you via the Library, plus through a number of bookable IT suites and dedicated base room provision. To enable access to learning resources, wireless internet access is also available.

The ITCS section (Information Technology and Communication Services) provides a helpdesk facility for IT enquiries and fault notification. The Helpdesk is open from 8.30am until 5pm from Monday to Friday Email: itcshelpdesk@aucb.ac.uk

Museum of Design in Plastic (MoDiP)

MoDiP is a registered museum of 20th and 21st century design and popular culture with a focus on plastics. Its collection is unique within the UK and has been developed to support teaching and learning at the Arts University College at Bournemouth.

There are many ways in which MoDiP can play a part in your studies:

- as a source of inspiration – large numbers of items may be viewed, handled and explored in depth, drawn, photographed and filmed
- as the focus of a brief for products and projects relating to course work
- as an exhibition venue – your work can be displayed in relation to the collections and exhibitions and events may be mounted in the museum space

The Museum is in a purpose built space within the Library, designed with wheelchair access in mind, and has the same opening hours as the rest of the University College for the viewing of exhibitions. Objects not on display can be borrowed and taken to the studio. To see what is available, go to the [Plastics Network](http://www.plasticsnetwork.org) website (www.plasticsnetwork.org).

The Gallery

The gallery is a major resource for contemporary visual art at the Arts University College at Bournemouth and has received regional and national recognition. There are regular gallery events,

including collections on loan from galleries and museums, as well as individual exhibitions by some of today's leading artists, photographers, designers and critical writers.

It also functions as a learning resource and is integrated into the teaching, learning, and research practice undertaken at the University College.

text + work is the ethos which underpins the exhibition programme at the Arts University College at Bournemouth. The **text + work** concept promotes and provides a forum for challenging dialogue between innovative contemporary art, design, and media practice and its theoretical context.

There are **text + work** gallery events, critical texts, shared and networked exhibitions and a **text + work** website.

Student Support

Academic Guidance

Academic staff are responsible for providing you with feedback on your work and your general academic progress, and for providing academic support and guidance through the course. This is provided through "critiques" and written feedback, as well as guidance on practical work and informal discussion about your concerns. These sessions may be individual or, in the case of collaborative work, in small groups.

Academic tutorials are scheduled to allow you to discuss in depth matters relating to creative or theoretical work, or the course in general. You will be entitled to at least one formal recorded academic tutorial per term with a nominated member of the course team.

Support and advice is also provided on an informal basis throughout the course, through discussions between staff and students.

Career Education, Information and Guidance

You will be prepared for employment, and given the opportunity to learn about the various career options available to you, through a wide range of projects which may include live briefs or external competitions. Academic staff remain very familiar with the discipline, and will often still work in the field, and are also able to advise on specific opportunities.

The Careers Service within the University College offers impartial, confidential advice, support and guidance, to help you explore and develop your career ideas and manage your future career successfully. The Service offers individual career guidance interviews, as well as advice on job seeking strategies, CVs and interview skills, self-employment / freelancing, and further study opportunities.

The Senior Careers Adviser holds regular lunchtime lectures, which cover a range of popular careers topics, including Postgraduate study and funding, Career planning, Networking and self-marketing, and Teaching as a career. Full details and dates of forthcoming lectures are available on the Careers intranet pages and on the Student Services notice boards.

The Careers Service also offers specialist events, working in partnership with local employers, AUCB alumni, and external agencies to bring together a range of art, design, media and performance expertise.

Learning Support

Support for students with disabilities (including dyslexia)

The Arts University College at Bournemouth is firmly committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all students and positively welcomes applications from people with disabilities and/or additional needs. Throughout all aspects of University College life, we actively encourage and support the participation of students with disabilities. We aim to support disabled students by offering needs assessments and support plans which enable you to achieve your personal goals.

The Learning Support team provides academic support for students with specific learning difficulties including dyslexia. We ask all new Home students to complete a 'Quicksan' screening programme when they join the University College. This screening is designed to check your learning style (the way you learn best) and whether you might have signs of dyslexia. If appropriate, you will be referred to an educational psychologist for a full assessment.

Students with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia are able to access individual tutorials aimed at improving your independent study skills, and are supported in applying for the Disabled Students' Allowance, which can provide specialist equipment and, if appropriate, personal support. The Senior Disability Officer and Wellbeing Officer provide ongoing support and advice for students with all other types of disability, including mental health difficulties, physical disabilities, medical conditions and sensory impairments.

Support for students for whom English is a second language

If English is not your first language you will be invited to complete a brief written exercise during the initial weeks of your course, so that your current academic language skills can be assessed. Our English for Academic Purposes (EAP) tutor, who is part of the Learning Support team, will review the exercise and contact you if your work indicates that you would benefit from additional support. The EAP tutor will work with you to draw up an Individual Learning Plan, which will set out a structured approach to developing your independent academic and study skills. This may include helping you to develop strategies for interpreting assignment briefs, working on the structure of your written work, or developing your proof-reading skills, for example. The plan will be reviewed each term and will be shared with your course tutor so that they are aware of the work you are doing to improve your study skills. If necessary, the EAP tutor will refer you to a local language school so that you can improve your generic English language levels.

Pastoral support and guidance

Support and advice on non-academic matters is provided through trained and qualified professional staff within Student Services. We have a team of professionally qualified male and female counsellors, with appointments available during weekdays and evenings. Students accessing the service are offered various levels of support ranging from regular weekly sessions, occasional support or just a "one off" consultation. In most cases, you can expect to be seen for a session within two days of making initial contact with the service. If the situation is very urgent and you are very emotionally distressed, we also have a crisis support service and you will be seen by one of our counsellors almost immediately.

Pastoral support is also available from the AUCB Chaplaincy. The Chaplaincy at the Arts University College at Bournemouth is shared with Bournemouth University and is an inclusive Chaplaincy, which welcomes people of all faiths and none. The Quiet Room and the Islamic Prayer Room are in regular use by staff and students, and meetings with ministers of any faith can be arranged.

Advice and support with practical issues such as funding, accommodation or childcare is available from the Student Advice, Funds and Accommodation Office within Student Services.

Methods for Evaluating and Improving the Quality and Standards of Teaching and Learning

The course is subject to the University College's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 5 years. This process ensures that the course engages with the national Subject Benchmarks and references the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.

In addition all courses undertake an Annual Course Review which takes account of relevant information such as:

- External Examiners' Reports
- Key statistics including data on application, retention and achievement
- Results of the National Student Survey
- Results of the in-house Student Perception Survey
- Feedback from Student Representatives
- Feedback from relevant employer groups, including the course Industry Liaison Group

All courses develop an action plan arising out of this exercise which is monitored by the Course and Faculty Boards of Study.

Staff development priorities for the course team as a whole are identified through the Annual Course Review process, and for individuals through the Staff Performance Review process.

Indicators of Quality and Standards

The Arts University College at Bournemouth was granted taught degree awarding powers by the Privy Council in 2008 following an intensive period of scrutiny by experienced academics from across the higher education sector.

The University College was audited by the QAA in May 2011 and received a judgement of 'Confidence' in the management of the academic standards of its awards, and its management of the quality of learning opportunities. This is the best available outcome, and confirms that our quality assurance mechanisms are robust, meaning that we can have full confidence in the standard of course outcomes, and the quality of the educational experience we deliver.

Please note that this specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course.

More detailed information is available in the following documents:

- Online course information
- Unit Handbooks
- HE Student Regulations – <http://intranet.aucb.ac.uk/academicregulations>
- AUCB Student Guide