BA (Hons) Commercial Photography

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

Programme Specification

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, graduates, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Whilst every endeavour has been made to provide the course described in the Programme Specification, the University reserves the right to make such changes as may be appropriate for reasons of operational efficiency or due to circumstances beyond its control. Any changes are made in accordance with the University's academic standards and quality procedures.

This document is available in alternative formats on request.

ARTS UNIVERSITY 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 they pass the course.

Further detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching and learning methods of each unit may be found within this Handbook and the online Unit Information, which is available on your course blog.

Key Course Information	
Final Award	BA (Hons)
Course Title	Commercial Photography
Award Titles	BA (Hons) Commercial Photography BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Advertising) BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Fashion) BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Documentary/Editorial)
Teaching institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Awarding Institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Offered in the School of:	Art Design and Architecture
Professional accreditation	Creative Skillset
Length of course / mode of study	3 years full-time
Level of final award (in FHEQ)	Level 6
Subject benchmark statements	Art and Design Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies
UCAS code	W644
Language of study	English
External Examiner for course	Linda Marchant Nottingham Trent University
Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact external examiners directly.	
Date of Validation	2012
Date of most recent review	2017
Date programme specification written/revised	September 2017

Course Description

The course aims to provide a wide range of undergraduate students with the opportunity to develop a specialist career in photography, by nurturing technically proficient and professionally astute photography students as they mature into critically aware creative decision makers.

By providing a strong technical foundation and encouraging creative maturity and conceptual awareness, the course provides you with the practical, critical and analytical ability to comprehend, yet challenge, conventional commercial output. Therefore, equipping you with the ability to not only successfully respond to the wishes of clients, but also through the development of your own 'visual voice', offer alternative solutions to those already accepted within the creative industries.

We celebrate how cultural diversity and a broad range of interests contribute to an enhanced group dynamic and can provide an enriched experience through embracing difference, leading to the establishment of an open and balanced view of contemporary society.

The course provides you with the opportunity to take greater responsibility for your critical development through locating and articulating your practice within contemporary discourses. The focused research integral to this process allows you the opportunity for further study at postgraduate level, either at AUB or elsewhere.

Graduates of the course aspire to setting the creative agenda of contemporary commercial photography through determining rather than pursuing visual and conceptual trends, and exhibiting their ability to adapt and change within the ever-shifting zeitgeist of the creative industries and popular culture. You may become a fashion, advertising, portrait or editorial/documentary photographer, or use the experiences gained on your course to help you to find employment elsewhere within the creative industries (Picture Editor, Studio Manager, Art Director, Production Manager, Set Designer, etc.). However, we expect you to be inspired by those who have previously graduated from this course, continuing to enhance its strong reputation, making your mark as a BA (Hons) Commercial Photography graduate from the Arts University Bournemouth.

Course Aims

1. To develop and refine your technical and creative potential within photography.

2. To enhance your understanding of the creative industries and the roles within them by expanding your professional knowledge and identifying your individual career potential.

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

4. To develop your abilities in visual communication and photographic presentation.

Course Outcomes

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

1. Apply creative photographic ability, evidencing professional levels of ability, independent thought and understanding during the production of work.

2. Apply professional understanding when identifying career opportunities, and placing own work within the creative/photographic industries.

3. Apply a critical and theoretical understanding of photography within historical and contemporary contexts, offering opportunities to study at Masters Level.

4. Show evidence of effective problem solving, research, communication and presentation skills through applying creative and conceptually considered solutions to professionally focused briefs.

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)

AUB Regulatory Framework and Undergraduate Assessment Regulations

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 you '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 your developing maturity, as a student, and supports your individual learning towards your aims and goals.

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.

The methods employed will, wherever possible, induct students in the disciplines required of a creative practitioner in commercial photography along with transferable skills (managing self, professional skills and team working), and value and credit any relevant previous experience. A key method will be the promotion of work-related learning, including work placements; visits to the workshops or studios of relevant

practitioners or organisations; guest lectures or workshops led by visiting practitioners and ‘live’ or simulated project briefs. Learning and career planning will be consolidated through the encouragement of skills in personal planning, reflection and development.

Teaching is directed at supporting individual engagement in learning although there will be opportunities for students to work in teams to enable them to learn the value of peer co-operation. Also, it is anticipated that due to the vocational and professional orientation of the course, and to enable students to benefit from the range of resources and disciplines within the University, opportunities will exist for students to collaborate in teams with peers in, for example, make-up, textiles, fashion or model-making. It is also envisaged that live project work may benefit from the collaboration of students from all levels of the course.

The study time allocated to each unit in the course incorporates a balance of teaching support and learning. The progressive promotion of student–centred learning reflects the anticipated maturity of students and allows them to direct their learning towards individual goals. For example, the teaching in Level 4 is directed at providing students with the knowledge, concepts and skills necessary to take increasing responsibility for the management of their own learning as they progress through to Level 5. Level 6 of the course allows the student to confirm their particular creative concerns and to extend the scope and depth of their enquiry, taking the major responsibility for their study. Teaching support reflects these expectations, as mature learners, through tutorial support that complements the autonomous nature of their study.

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

Guidance and counselling to help students in realising their learning potential will be provided continuously throughout each academic year.

There may also be occasions where digital delivery is appropriate. Where this is the case, this might include on-line lectures, seminars, presentations, and one to one tutorials. It is important that you engage with on-line course delivery in the same way that you would if you were on campus.

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, we will inform you of what you are expected to learn; what you have to submit; how your work will be assessed; and the deadline for presenting your work for assessment. This is made available through Unit Information, which is on your course blog.

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

The final mark for each unit will be recorded on your formal record of achievement (transcript). With the exception of the pass/fail unit, 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 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 5 and 6 using two different algorithms, which are detailed in the HE Student Regulations. If the two algorithms produce different results, you will be awarded the higher class of degree.

If you have 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 your 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 you leave the course early, having successfully completed one or two levels. If you successfully complete a level of the course, you will automatically be entitled to progress to the next level.

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

For the award of a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), you 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 you leave the University following successful completion of the second year of your course.

For the award of a BA (Hons) you 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 your course.

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

Course Content

Level 4

Level 4 of the course provides you with the creative and practical skills that you will build upon during your degree. It introduces you to a variety of traditional and digital photographic techniques and processes through the units *Principles and Practices* and *Digital Imaging and Production,* giving you a strong technical foundation in location and studio lighting, analogue and digital capture and digital post-production techniques.

Photographic themes and theories are addressed during the unit *Historical and Theoretical Studies in Photography*. Photography projects and written assignments are used to reinforce learning and enable you to exercise your developing knowledge and practical skills in the unit *Creative Photographic Practice,* where additional workshops will also introduce you to moving image. During these units guest lectures by visiting photographers and industry professionals will be given to underpin your holistic knowledge of contemporary commercial photographic practice.

Level 5

Level 5 of the course builds upon the skills and knowledge gained during Level 4 and provides opportunities for you to develop your (photographic) genre specific interests.

You are encouraged to reflect on your particular professional interests and to take responsibility for your learning in your choice of topics for project work (negotiated between you and your tutor/s via Learning Agreements) through the unit *Creativity and Context* and culminating in the unit *Photographic Futures*. Projects for these units are designed to develop your creative, research and conceptual skills combined with commercial and professional awareness and understanding. Where possible opportunities for live projects or competition work are accommodated, thereby extending your understanding of the professional demands of photography.

During this level you will continue to develop your digital skills and promotional awareness through the unit *Professional Futures;* this unit will provide you with the opportunity to market yourself as a photographer via the web, while developing your own branding. Your industry understanding will be consolidated towards the end of the unit when you undertake a period of work experience in the form of a placement, which will be overseen by the unit leader (negotiated between you and your tutor/s). This draws together your achievements on the course so far and gives you live opportunities to apply your learning in the workplace. The timing of the *Professional Futures* unit is such that, potentially, you are able to extend your placement beyond the formal end of the unit to the conclusion of the summer holiday period. In these circumstances, arrangements for your end of level assessment in June can be negotiated.

The unit *Critical Analyses* provides an overview of some of the approaches used in the analysis of commercial photography, together with the development of research and written communication skills, allowing for a more intellectual engagement with photographic practice, and preparing you for the major written assignment at Level 6.

During Level 5 you will be offered an opportunity to consider the three named awards. Work that you will undertake in *Photographic Futures* may help inform your decisions. Although there is no obligation for you to opt for a named award, the choices around the following awards will be informed by academic counselling during the *Photographic Futures* unit and consolidated in the *Specialist Practice* unit and then pursued in the *Major Project* at Level 6:

BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Advertising)
BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Fashion)
BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Documentary/Editorial)

Level 6

Level 6 of the course builds on the platform of skills and knowledge gained during Levels 4 and 5. Level 6 adopts an extremely focused approach to your career ambitions, developing specific creative and conceptual skills in order to gain a more complex understanding of the particular discourse with which you 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, while offering the opportunity to extend their critical engagement and academic interests. Gaining a BA (Hons) 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 three years of extensive investigation, graduates will possess all the attributes necessary to feel confident as they seek employment within 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 students' professional understanding and it is expected that your Level 6 Learning Agreement will reflect your chosen specialism and award title. Two major units, *Specialist Practice* and *Major Project,* provide the opportunity for two bodies of work that will essentially become your professional portfolio and the content relates directly to the named award title. The unit *Research Paper,* for which a critically informed analysis of a subject related topic will be produced, will help to inform your practical work, while supporting your aspirations for future study at post-graduate level.

<u>Specialism</u>

During the Course you will be supported and encouraged to specialise within your photographic practice. To gain an understanding of the key specialisms that you may wish to consider (those that are linked to our 'Named Awards- see below), you will be given guidance through content in lectures and workshops, which will be supported through the specialist input given during our regular Guest Speaker Programme. The Guest Speaker Programme will include professionals from key areas of commercial practice, including:

- Photographers (fashion, advertising, portrait, documentary/editorial etc.).

- Picture Editors (fashion and editorial).
- Art Buyers and Art Directors (advertising).
- Stylists (fashion).
- Agents
- Photo Agency Representatives.

Additionally, the specialisms already existing within the Course Team will be consolidated through specialist Visiting Tutors (working photographers).

At Level 5 you will be encouraged to try working within different genres, therefore allowing you to make an informed choice of specialism through both your choice of 'Named Award' (*Photographic Futures)* and type of placement or 'Live' project during *Professional Futures.*

During the final term of Level 5 and then throughout Level 6, you will be supported through tutorials and seminars designed to help you establish your 'creative team', therefore allowing you to work within a recognised industry structure. This support will include cross course networking events, allowing you to find your creative partners, and the potential for mutually beneficial collaborations.

Named Awards

Increasingly, a number of students are arriving on the course with interests in pursuing particular disciplines within Commercial Photography. To meet this interest, we offer the opportunity to graduate with one of several named specialisms in addition to the award of Commercial Photography. During the last term of Level 5 you will be required, via a process of academic counselling, to discuss your intentions to pursue one of these named awards. Our aim is to ensure that your chosen award name is appropriate and achievable. Each of these named award specialisms can be undertaken in the Level 5 *Photographic Futures* (40 credits) unit and at Level 6 in the *Specialist Practice* (40 credits) and *Major Project* (60 credits) units. Please note these units must be passed to gain a named award.

Named Awards available:

BA (Hons) Commercial Photography
BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Advertising)
BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Fashion)
BA (Hons) Commercial Photography (Documentary/Editorial)

Course Units

Unit code	Unit Title	Credit Weighting
Level 4		
CPH460	Principles and Practices	40
CPH464	Digital Imaging and Production	20
CPH462	Creative Photographic Practice	40
CPH463	Historical and Theoretical Studies in Photography	20
Level 5		
CPH560	Creativity & Context	20
CPH561	Critical Analyses	20
CPH562	Photographic Futures	40
CPH565	Professional Futures	40
Level 6		
CPH660	Specialist Practice	40
CPH661	Research Paper	20
CPH662	Major Project	60

Course Diagram

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

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**									
	CPH560 Creativity and Context (weeks 1-10) (20 credits)										**CPH562 Photographic Futures (weeks 11-30)** (40 credits)																			
	CPH561 Critical Analyses (weeks 1-12) (20 credits)										**CPH565 Professional Futures (weeks 13-30)** (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**							
	CPH660 Specialist Practice (weeks 1-12) (40 credits)										**CPH662 Major Project (weeks 13-30)** (60 credits)																			
	CPH661 Research Paper (weeks 1-15) (20 credits)																													

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