



## Programme Specification

Please note that this specification is subject to change, in line with the national guidance on the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 1. General information

<b>Awarding institution:</b>	Royal College of Art
<b>Programme title:</b>	MA Print
<b>Award:</b>	Masters
<b>Qualification framework level:</b>	Level 7
<b>School/Department or equivalent:</b>	School of Arts and Humanities
<b>Programme duration:</b>	2-years
<b>Total UK credits:</b>	240 credits
<b>Mode of study:</b>	Full time
<b>Date valid from/to:</b>	2020-21

### 2. Programme Philosophy

The programme positions Print as an expanded field. Students work from a range of positions some working through print, making prints directly and others working with print and found images, using archives, paper-based and virtual, collage, drawing and all forms of print both digital and haptic. Whether using installations, publications, billboards, we want students eager to engage with the rich cultural legacies of printed matter. We aim to develop the potential of each student in ways appropriate to their concerns and consciously select an extremely diverse group of students to creatively expand the field.

Seminars, visiting artists, publishing projects and the wider environment of the School and College, help provide a critical framework to question the artist's relation to the histories and practices of craft and technology, mechanical and digital (re)production. As the demand increases for all Fine Art practices to be replicated and transmitted digitally, the difference between hard copy and screen-based images grows ever more complex. We encourage students to explore how shifts in the registers of different media affect our lives and ways of communicating, placing debates within the program in a state of dynamic flux.

Print staff are all practicing artists working in a wide range of media who share a fascination with the centrality of print to contemporary culture and artistic practice. Students also have access to a wide range of highly skilled technical staff and teaching and learning resources.

In the School of Arts and Humanities our approach to teaching is premised on an understanding that artists, makers, writers, curators, critics and historians today are neither constrained by their discipline, the medium they use nor by a sense of what content their work should address. Practitioners in the Arts & Humanities are valued for their contribution to culture and the broader economy because they test and reflect upon the way in which we try to engage with our rapidly changing world; exploit the possibilities of new technologies while also engaging with the value of traditional approaches; they enact new philosophical positions as well as reflecting upon how our

thinking has led us to where we are, and they often adopt stances informed significantly by the past to antagonise our assumptions about society.

We also conceive of the Arts & Humanities as a range of subjects that are accessible to collaboration with other fields and disciplines; subjects that celebrate the deployment of diverse methods of research and production that are invented, borrowed and even stolen. At the Royal College of Art, we enjoy an environment that is supportive of the varied research enquiries that the Arts & Humanities can enable. We support customary methods and processes whilst enabling others that we cannot even anticipate. We are committed to examining and researching both the means by which enquiries in the Arts & Humanities emerge – the rich array of positions, techniques, methods and materials used by practitioners to develop their research – as well as the subjects, ideas and issues that are successfully articulated, with a view to understanding a broader cultural, societal and economic impact.

Teaching in the school is organised around programmes that provide specific material and historical co-ordinates as points of reference from which students are encouraged to consider the development of their own work. Regardless of their programme of study, students interact across the broad area of the Arts & Humanities and are also encouraged to engage with other areas of the College.

Research in the School of Arts & Humanities often leads staff and students to less immediately cognate fields of the Arts & Humanities as well as the sciences, and the school works with a range of significant partners such as the V&A and Imperial College to further its ambitions in this regard.

We therefore view all our programmes in the School of Arts & Humanities as useful pedagogical structures, in that they focus specific areas of activity within an ever-expanding field. The programmes enable directed study within an environment that is ambitious not to proliferate and perpetuate what we know but to generate new practices and insights.

### **3. Educational Aims and Outcomes of the Programme**

#### **Programme Aims**

The MA Print programme aims:

- to develop the creative potential of each student.
- to provide a learning environment which privileges experimentation and self-reflexivity supporting students to develop challenging and ambitious artwork tackling self-identified concerns.
- to advance the practise and understanding of different forms and combinations of print-media within an artistic context and by doing so to redefine ideas of print
- to place the histories of print within a critical and historical context, enabling students to identify their own areas of interest and the practical and research potential of the wider field,
- to help students establish a dialogue between theory and practice enabling them to confidently contextualise their thinking.
- to equip students with professional skills and experiences enabling them to write, document and speak about their work.
- to enrich the students' experience by facilitating participation and involvement in the postgraduate culture of the School of Arts & Humanities

#### **What will I be expected to achieve?**

On completion of the MA students should be able to:

- Operate as independent practitioners with an ability to produce artworks which deal with complex ideas and /or processes both systematically and creatively;
- Critically evaluate their choices and communicate these changes to a range of specialist and non-specialist audiences;
- Demonstrate self-direction and originality through an independent, research-led arts practice;
- Act autonomously in planning and implementing their work and understanding it's support structures;
- Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills and understanding to a high level;
- Demonstrate the qualities and transferable skill necessary for sustaining work on gradation, requiring:
  - The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;
  - An ability to improvise, using decision-making skills in complex and unpredictable situations;
  - The independent to experiment and take creative risks;
  - The creative use of materials and processes.

### **Programme-Specific Learning Outcomes**

Able to:	<b>A. Intellectual Engagement</b>
A1.	INNOVATION: Develop innovative ideas that challenge the understanding of their practice and discipline
A2.	CONTEXT: Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the context for Print within Fine Art and the broader social context in relation to their particular art practice
A3.	RESEARCH: Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the principles and methods of research and apply them effectively to their own practice
A4.	COMMUNICATION: Effectively articulate and debate the conceptual and technical processes involved in the production, exhibition and dissemination of their work

Able to:	<b>B. Technical Skills</b>
B1.	PRODUCTION: Produce work at an advanced level that integrates thought, imagination, creativity and appropriate technical skills
B2.	EXPERIMENTATION: Experiment in their use of materials, processes and environments in order to translate ideas into practice
B3.	SKILLS: Display excellence in the appropriate technical skills required in the creation, display and documentation of their work

Able to:	<b>C. Professional Development</b>
C1.	INDEPENDENCE: Take responsibility for directing their studies through setting goals and managing time and resources effectively
C2.	COLLABORATION: Participate as an active, thoughtful and responsible member of

	the program, school and college communities and understand the international context for their work. Make use of opportunities for collaborative work
C3.	IDENTITY: Define their professional identity through self-reflection and participation in exhibitions, seminars, school groups and externally facing projects

#### 4. What will I learn?

##### **Year One**

During the first year of the programme students undertake three units of study: Unit 1a, Unit 1b and CHS. These Units are each worth 40 credits and assessed through a combination of continuous and summative assessment methods.

The first year is experimental and diagnostic, students reflect on their previous work and often radically change their understanding and practice. In the first week of term students are registered and orientated to the College and School. An introductory seminar and brief introductions to each other via short presentations of work follow. Introductions to technical staff and workshops also take place.

Each student then begins the process of developing a self-initiated and self-directed body of studio work in whatever form will test and expand their ideas and ambitions. This is supported and challenged (in both years) by tutorials, lectures, seminars, and workshops. Group critiques in the programme take place in the first two terms.

A week of cross-college projects is open to students, and exhibition or archive visits help students to broaden their range of references and contextualise their work. These will be subject to local and national restrictions.

To support their progress in Units 1a and 1b students are assigned a personal tutor with whom they discuss their work in tutorials twice a term. Students will also be offered the opportunity for tutorials with other members of the programme team, and will have the opportunity to request tutorials from other tutors. Although working primarily on their own practice, there are also group critiques, seminars, lectures, and workshops. Students produce work for studio critiques in terms one and two. Students are expected to be engaged in all aspects of the curriculum and test out new ways of thinking and making. Students will be introduced to a range of presentation skills using digital tools preparing students for the end of the year assessments at which their progress will be examined.

In the spring term, first year students contribute to the Work in Progress Show. Their work is not expected to be resolved at this stage. It is an opportunity to take risks, trying new materials and ideas. As this is in a public context it includes the question of spectatorship. This enables students to reflect upon the efficacy of the visual forms and concepts with which they have been working.

Each unit is assessed in full at its conclusion as per the following table:

Unit 1A: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> <li>• Self-assessment then progress feedback from programme unit assessment meeting</li> </ul>	Unit 1B: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> <li>• Self-assessment (Continuous assessment) and Exam feedback (Final</li> </ul>	CHS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Credits</li> </ul>
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(staff double marking meeting) (continuous assessment) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December.</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: A2. A3, A4, B2, C1, C2, C3.</li> </ul>	Examination) from 1B exam panel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May.</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: A1. A2. A4. B2. B3. C1. C2. C3</li> </ul>	
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## **Year Two**

During the second year of the programme students undertake three units of study: Unit 2A (40 credits), Unit 2B (60 Credits) and SoAH School Unit (20 Credits). These units are assessed through a combination of continuous and summative assessment methods.

The second year requires a shift in emphasis towards sharing, distributing and contextualising work. Students are expected to produce a coherent body of ambitious work in a form that reflects their particular ideas and interests. Students will participate in an external exhibition project, a student-led final show event, and some form of publishing project, which will take a form in line with local and national guidelines. Each student gives a presentation about their work and optionally undertakes a talk or workshop to an external audience. Students are expected to be able to professionally document and present their work and ideas verbally, in writing and through images. Workshops are held to aid this process.

Students' work should now have a clear direction and resolution, demonstrating a level of conceptual and technical competency appropriate to their own aims and objectives. Preparations begin for the unit 2B assessment which is examined via the Independent Research Portfolio and a presentation of a major body of work undertaken by the student. Through this period the student is expected to undertake self-initiated research to develop and realise a body of self-directed work that is to Masters level.

Alongside their participation in programme based units, students will also participate in the SoAH School unit, which, through study groups, lectures, symposia, crits and tutorials will support students in discussing and evolving their work against a broader frame of reference.

Each unit is assessed in full at its conclusion as per the following:

<b>Unit 2A:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40 Credits</li> <li>Self-assessment then progress feedback from programme unit assessment meeting (staff double marking meeting) (continuous assessment)</li> <li>December</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: A1. A2. A3, A4. B1. B2. B3. C1. C2.</li> </ul>	<b>Unit 2B:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60 Credits</li> <li>Self-assessment (continuous assessment) and Exam feedback of Assessed Portfolio (Final Examination) from 2B/School Unit Joint Panel.</li> <li>June</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: A1, A2. A3. A4. B1. B2. B3. C1. C2. C3.</li> </ul>	<b>SoAH School Unit:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20 Credits</li> <li>Assessed Portfolio at 2B/School Unit Joint Panel. (Final Examination).</li> <li>May</li> <li>School Exam Board then reviews marks from all units and recommends pass or fail.</li> <li>Learning Outcomes: B2. C2. C3.</li> </ul>
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## **CHS Information**

Critical & Historical Studies is the cross-College platform that delivers teaching and activities aimed at enabling critical engagement to take place within, and between, the different disciplines at the RCA.

All studio-based first year MA students have a CHS unit as a core part of their programme of study, designed to enable this critical dialogue and enhance each student's development. Led by a team of dedicated, highly skilled and deeply engaged staff, CHS delivers a programme of lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials (both small group and one-to-one). Students will be encouraged to engage with vital and challenging ideas that relate to their practices. This both enriches and provides a broader intellectual framework within which to establish a coherent inter-relationship between theoretical and practice-based approaches to art and design.

As a team, our disciplinary interests span the fine and applied arts, architecture, design (including fashion, graphics, interior and product design), craft, communication, film, humanities, photography, digital media, science and technology.

CHS provides:

- contemporary, thought-provoking lectures by CHS staff and visiting tutors
- the opportunity for students to explore the theoretical background of their chosen discipline through a taught dissertation process
- individual and group tutorial support from our Programme's team of expert tutors

The CHS Handbook sets out the broad principles of CHS at the RCA. It outlines what you can expect of us and what we require of you to engage and produce work to your best ability. On the Moodle pages you will find details of the scheduled programme and the broad areas to be covered in each term, details about the tuition and assessment of your CHS dissertation, and information on resources that will help you during your studies.

Your main points of contact for CHS will be your group tutor and your School Liaison Tutor for your School. You will be assigned your group tutor at start of the Autumn Term.

We hope that you will enjoy working with the CHS team and use all the opportunities offered to you as a student at the Royal College of Art.

### **Curriculum Map**

<b>MA Print Year 1</b>		
<b>Term One</b>	<b>Term Two</b>	<b>Term Three</b>
<b>Unit 1A Studio (40 Credits)</b>	<b>Unit 1B Studio (40 Credits)</b>	
<b>Critical Historical Studies (CHS) – (40 credits)</b>		

<b>MA Print Year 2</b>		
<b>Term One</b>	<b>Term Two</b>	<b>Term Three</b>

<b>Unit 2A Studio (40 Credits)</b>	<b>Unit 2B Independent Research Project (60 Credits)</b>
<b>Portfolio (20 credits)</b>	

## 5. How will I learn?

Please note that these are subject to change, in line with the national guidance on the Covid-19 response.

<b>General</b>
Teaching consists of individual and group tutorials, workshops, reading groups, group critiques, symposia and lectures by leading artists and theorists.
<b>Tutorials</b>
<p>Students are allocated a personal tutor and will meet with them a minimum of five times in an academic year. They will also have a minimum of 4 additional tutorials which may include small groups of students discussing work in progress with another tutor or visiting artist. Students will also have a tutorial in their second year as part of their integrated school-wide group.</p> <p>At the end of each studio unit, students write a self-assessment form, which is a critical account of their practice, its development and reception in tutorials and critiques. This enables students to articulate and clarify in writing what their work attempts to achieve and the direction it takes. At the end of each unit of study, the student's Personal Tutor writes an evaluative feedback report in response both to the students' self-assessment and to the considered and moderated assessment of their work. A formal tutorial is a chance to get feedback on work in progress. It is a discussion between tutors and students on the ideas and processes informing work and not an assessment so should include an honest appraisal of strengths and difficulties in developing work. Group tutorials allow for peer learning and creation of communities of interest.</p>
<b>Critiques</b>
Group critiques take place throughout the school and programme and may also involve guest tutors. The group critique collectively appraises and evaluates the reception and processes of students' work.
<b>Lectures</b>
A range of lectures by visiting artists, theorists, critics and artists on the staff take place throughout the year. Attendance at all program/school lectures is strongly advised, ensuring that students encounter a wide variety of ideas and practices.
<b>Seminars</b>
Seminars are focused in the first year and expand on the reading list and student interests. They are a chance to explore themes of shared interest not directly through students work but via other references both textual and visual. Sometime trips to exhibitions or archives are the focus of these discussions, where local and national restrictions allow.

## **Workshop Learning and Inductions**

Students come from a wide range of backgrounds, with very different expertise. In the autumn and spring terms the programme provides workshops primarily for first year students. Inductions are provided by technical instructors through demonstration, written, online and verbal guidance. As part of their school-wide group, students will participate in a yearly workshop around a particular theme.

## **Study Visits**

Study visits make an important contribution to learning and promote independence in the students' research and practice. Written proposals are required for most travel opportunities and exchanges; competitive funding is available for some trips. Most trips will be virtual behind the scenes engagements with curators, artist's studios and collections. These are subject to local and national restrictions.

## **Personally Directed Study**

A great deal of time is spent on personally directed study. Much of the work of a postgraduate student is self-directed. Students are expected to show considerable individual responsibility and initiative, discovering and following up personal avenues of exploration. This ensures that the creative dialogue is driven by personal needs, and ensures that the teacher-student dialogue is real and constructive. This is also important in preparing the student for the demands and strategies of professional life.

## **6. Assessment and feedback**

### **Unit assessment**

#### **Continuous Assessment**

Continuous assessment enables the student's performance and progress to be understood and accounted for through a wide variety of academic contact points, recognising that students are able to perform in different ways and through different means and aspects of the curriculum while still achieving the requisite performance standards. This assessment is validated through a structure that ensures that student performance is evaluated from a range of perspectives and by a range of different tutors who are able to triangulate their experience of the student and enable parity of assessment across the cohort.

All Studio based Units (1A, 1B, 2A & 2B) are assessed wholly or in part through a process of continuous assessment.

#### **Final Examination**

Final Examination examines the students' ability to synthesise their learning and to express it in a formal exam context, either through their performance in a live event, such as the viva voce examinations (previously interim and final exams) at the conclusion of Units 1B and 2B, or through the submission of a formal assessed element such as a dissertation or portfolio at the conclusion of the SoAH School Unit and CHS.



## Unit 1B

The Final Examination for Unit 1B is held at the beginning of the third term as a Viva Voce. A Unit Assessment Meeting chaired by the Head of Programme or a Senior Tutor reviews the work produced by the student on the Unit. Students will be asked to demonstrate that their practice is evolving and that they are able to position your work within the context of contemporary art practice and theory, as per the relevant Learning Outcomes. The students' self-evaluation report will be read and considered in relation to their performance in the viva which may be conducted synchronously or asynchronously.

## Unit 2 B

The Final Examination for Unit 2B is held at the beginning of the third term as a Viva Voce. A Unit Assessment Meeting chaired by the Head of Programme or a Senior Tutor reviews the work produced by the student on the Unit. Students will be asked to demonstrate that their practice is evolving and that they are able to position their work within the context of contemporary art practice and theory, as per the relevant Learning Outcomes.

### SoAH School-Wide Unit

Assessment: Critical Reflection

Students will be required to produce a 1000-2000 word critical reflection on their learning from the School Unit. This written response offers the opportunity to consider the question of The Urgency of the Arts in relation to your own thinking and practice. The critical reflection should contextualise your work in relation to contemporary debates and needs to include:

- A reference to at least one speaker from the SoAH School Unit Lecture Series
- A reference to a text / concept / theme that was covered during the MA School Group that you attended
- Up to 3 images (max. 5mb each) relating to your participation in the School Crit with some evaluative commentary

This will be submitted to the joint assessment panel for the Joint Unit 2B / School Unit Exam, taking place toward the end of academic year.

**Information regarding individual assessments will be included in the Unit Descriptors, and will be available to students at the beginning of the academic year.**

## 7. What award can I get?

To be awarded an RCA MA degree you need to gain 240 credits at level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ). This will involve successfully completing all units.

If you fail a unit at the first attempt, you will be offered an opportunity to resit the unit. If you are successful you will be awarded the credits for that unit. If you are unsuccessful, you cannot progress further in your programme.

Exit awards:

If you have gained at least 120 credits at level 7 of the FHEQ, you may be eligible for the exit award of Postgraduate Diploma. An exit award is a final award from the College and cannot be rescinded.

For more detailed information about the College's assessment, progression and awards policies see the Regulations.

## 8. Admissions

### Cross-College requirements

#### **Academic Entry Requirements**

Candidates must normally have obtained a good relevant undergraduate degree or an equivalent qualification. The College recognises as an equivalent qualification any degree, diploma, certificate or other evidence of formal qualification awarded by a university or other higher education establishment where the award is made following the successful completion of a course of at least three years' study, the programme of study being open, as a general rule, only to persons holding a certificate awarded on the successful completion of a full course of upper secondary education.

Other qualifications may be approved, providing that the College's Academic Board for Concessions and Discipline (ABCD) is satisfied that the applicant has the ability to pursue the programme of study successfully. The ABCD is empowered to make judgements about the extent to which qualifications or experience gained elsewhere may be accepted in partial fulfilment of its requirements.

#### **Portfolio**

All applicants are required to submit a portfolio as part of the application process. A portfolio is a showcase of an applicant's work as an artist or designer and can be made up of images, videos or writing examples. The portfolio helps us to better understand the applicant and allows them to show evidence of their ability and motivation to undertake a given programme.

Each programme is looking for different things in a portfolio; each Head of Programme provides specific advice on portfolio requirements in the online application system. We advise prospective students to consider these requirements carefully before submitting their application.

#### **Applicant Qualities**

Generally, we are looking for applicants to demonstrate their:

- creativity, imagination and innovation;
- ability to articulate the intentions of the work;
- intellectual engagement in areas relevant to the work;
- technical skills appropriate to the work;
- potential to benefit from the programme and achieve MA standards overall.

#### **English Language**

Applicants who are not a national of a majority English-speaking country will need to demonstrate their English language proficiency. The College accepts a range of English language qualifications. The full list can be seen at <https://www.rca.ac.uk/studying-at-the-rca/apply/entrance-requirements/english-language-requirements/>

Applicants are exempt from this requirement if they have received a 2.1 degree or above from a university in a majority English-speaking nation within the last two years.

If a student would need a Tier 4 visa to study at the RCA, they will also need to meet the Home Office's minimum requirements for entry clearance.

### **Admission Process**

Applications must be made directly to the College through our online application portal:

<https://www.rca.ac.uk/studying-at-the-rca/apply/application-process/ma-application-process/>

Upon completion of that first stage of the application process, candidates will be invited to submit a portfolio of their work, a 300-word statement of intent and a video communicating clearly their motivations, personal interests and why they are pursuing a Masters degree at the Royal College of Art. These materials are reviewed by members of the programme team who will communicate an academic decision to the College Registry, who manage the process of offer-making in line with the College's recruitment targets. In some cases, where the programme team is not able to make an admission decision based solely upon the work submitted by the applicant, we may invite the candidate to undertake an interview with us.

Applications are considered chronologically by date and time of final portfolio submission. Whilst a programme still has vacancies, successful candidates will be made an offer of a place. Once a programme becomes full, subsequent successful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, and may be made a firm offer should a place become available for them.

### **Programme-Specific requirements**

Specific advice on programme portfolio requirements is provided by the Head of Programme in the online application system. Please consult the College website for further information on programme-specific admission and portfolio requirements:

<https://www.rca.ac.uk/study/schools/school-of-arts-humanities/print/ma-entrance/>