Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art and Design

Programme Specification
subject to validation

1.   General Information

Programme title:	Interior Design
Award:	Masters
Qualification Framework level:	Level 7
School/Department or equivalent:	School of Architecture
Campus location(s):	Kensington
Total UK credits:	180
Date valid from/to:	2022-23

2.   Programme Philosophy

The MA Interior Design Programme engages its participants in exploring emergent ideas and issues concerning distinct aspects of the design of the interior. This incorporates research, practice and making work that explores the diversity of human occupation in numerous environments, extending from the room to the city. The programme encourages the view that the interior is an interface between its occupants and the built environment, and it supports the notion that the interior is an agent for social change.

The programme values speculation, analysis and rigor with regards to the thinking and making of all aspects of the design of interior environments. It challenges its participants to formulate their own rigorous and critically independent responses to these fundamental concerns. This is often undertaken via the reworking of existing structures, the creation of temporal installations and the formation of permanent interventions. All of these practices involve the construction and communication of particular spatial identities using space, objects and materials.

The programme is located in the school of architecture. Its work is undertaken through design studios, known as platforms and is supported with lectures, seminars and workshops. Talks by researchers, academics and practitioners from related disciplines – set design, architecture, branding, installation art - constitute the 'inside/out' lecture series. These are offered in the unique RCA context of interdisciplinary, studio and workshop-oriented, speculative advanced study. There are often opportunities for projects in conjunction with appropriate external partners and practice mentorship is offered throughout the provision.

The programme is delivered by leading academics, well known practicing designers, architects and theorists, all of whom are internationally renowned and innovators in their fields. Graduates exemplify responsive and intellectually sophisticated designers. They exit the programme replete with practices and processes that will enable them to undertake further research, education and enter interior or other design professions.

3. Educational Aims and Outcomes of the Programme

Programme aims

- Develop and apply independent and advanced level thinking in research and design;
- Formulate work that articulates a critical awareness of emergent issues informed by current thinking in Interior design research, practice and education;
- Evaluate, critique and articulate insights that demonstrate a systematic understanding of historical and theoretically disciplinary-relevant knowledge;
- Reflect and engage in an appropriate manner with a diverse range of communities, stakeholders and professionals in order to formulate research and design-led responses;
- Produce a body of work that communicates their own unique professional identity.

What will I be expected to achieve?

Upon successful completion of the programme, you will be expected to meet the requirements of both the College-wide Learning Outcomes and your programme-specific Learning Outcomes.

College-Wide Learning Outcomes

You should be able to:

- Interrogate and articulate the intentions of your work in relation to the critical and conceptual context of your field(s) of study;
- Independently plan and produce work that is informed by developments at the forefront of your field(s) of study;
- Evaluate and critique the principles and methods of research in your field(s) of study, and apply these principles to your creative, professional and/or scholarly practice;
- Demonstrate originality in how you translate knowledge into practice;
- Communicate your creative, professional and/or scholarly practice to a non-specialist audience;
- Critically reflect on the likely public impact of your creative, professional and/or scholarly practice, and on your responsibilities as a practitioner;
- Define your professional ambitions and identify the challenges involved in meeting them.

Programme-Specific Learning Outcomes

You should be able to:

- Interrogate and articulate complex ideas that challenge the understanding of interior design and your own practice in relation to the discipline;
- Evaluate and synthesise the principles and methods of research and articulate their effective application to your practice;
- Communicate a comprehensive understanding of the developments at the forefront of the discipline;
- Produce interior design work that challenges knowledge, creativity and technique within the discipline;
- Articulate and communicate your practices using appropriate processes and technologies to a specific audience;
- Critically reflect on the impact of your work and your responsibilities as a practitioner.
- Define your professional identity and ambitions through self-reflection and an understanding of the field of interior design.

4. What will I learn?

Curriculum Map

T1	T2	T3
PRIMER (30CP)	PLATFORM (30CP)	INDEPENDENT RESEARCH PROJECT (60CP)
SCHOOL WIDE OFFER (15CP)	ELECTIVE (15CP)	
COLLEGE WIDE OFFER (30CP)		

Programme Structure

Unit Title	Term	Credit Value	Core or Elective?
Primer	1	15	CORE
Platform	2	15	CORE
School-wide Unit	2	15	CORE
College-wide Unit	1&2	30	CORE
Elective	1	15	ELECTIVE
Independent Research Project	3	60	CORE

Platforms

This unit engages you in the origination and development of your own project in relation to the thematic concerns of the programme platforms. Each platform in this unit is design to emphasise a particular way of thinking or aspect of the design of the interior.

Platform themes are the provocations or generators of ideas that students utilise in the development of their own research and projects. It is anticipated that you will use the platforms interests to assist in the determination of your own practice interests and ultimately your professional identities.

Primer

This unit will engage you in the exploration and synthesis of the principles and methods of critical ideas in interior space. It introduces you to ideas and the processes that will enable participants to synthesise thinking and research in the design of interior spaces. The work in this unit will be based on a focused exploration that affords the participant the possibilities to challenge their thinking through research, design, exploration in order to generate new meanings for buildings, objects, spaces and the elements within them.

College-wide unit

Across **terms 1 and 2**, you will participate in the **College-wide** unit. This unit aims to support students to meet the challenges of a complex, uncertain and changing world by bringing them together to work collaboratively on a series of themed projects informed by expertise within and beyond the College. These projects will challenge you to use your intellect and imagination to address key cultural, social, environmental and economic challenges. In doing so, you will develop and reflect on the abilities required to translate knowledge into action, and help demonstrate the contribution that the creative arts can make to our understanding and experience of the world.

Media Studies
In term 2 all School of Architecture students will participate in the Media Studies, School-wide unit. The unit aims to increase students' critical engagement with media and space. Through this unit you will be supported to increase your cross-disciplinary communication and you will be challenged to expand your media practice beyond architecture's reliance on media as purely representation.

Independent Research Project

The purpose of the Independent Research Project is to enable you to apply the intellectual, technical and professional skills that you have developed throughout the programme to a challenging self-set brief. The project will normally be advanced from the work previously undertaken in the platforms.

Working within the thematic concerns of the platforms, each student is expected to have agreed a research and project proposal, a brief, with their tutor that identifies the parameters

of their project, including its aims, rationale, approaches and methodologies and possible resource implications.

This majority of this unit will involve independent study in the platform system. This unit engages the student in the development and realisation of their Independent Research Project (IPR). The provocations provided by the platforms are expected to be utilised in order to assist in the determination of the students own practice interests and ultimately their professional ambitions and responsibilities and identities as a practising designer.

5.   How will I learn?

In order to demonstrate that effective learning is being undertaken, that analysis and research methods are being acquired and implemented, that evaluation and process techniques are being understood, and that the synthesis of these elements is being sufficiently realised, students will be expected to participate in numerous methods of learning. This will include but are not limited too;

- Personal and group tutorials
- Research seminars and presentations
- Progress reviews and critiques
- End of project presentations and reviews
- Site visits
- Examinations and assessments

6.   Assessment and feedback

Regulations
Regulations for assessment and progression can be found here. Please note that College regulations are subject to annual updates and amendments.
Unit assessment

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7. What award can I get?

To be awarded an RCA MA degree you need to gain 180 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 at resit 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 programme 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 programme 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/programme-finder/interior-design-ma/#requirements