Programme Specification

Course record information

Name and level of final award	• Master of Arts - Expanded Photography The award is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible
Name and level of intermediate awards	• Postgraduate Diploma (Pg Dip) - Expanded Photography • Postgraduate Certificate (Pg Cert) - Expanded Photography
Awarding body/institution	University of Westminster
Teaching institution	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution	Recognised Body
Location of delivery	Primary: Harrow
Language of delivery and assessment	English
QAA subject benchmarking group(s)	Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design 2020
Professional statutory or regulatory body	
Westminster course title, mode of attendance and standard length	• Expanded Photography, Full-time, September start - 1 year standard length • Expanded Photography, Part-time day, September start - 2 years standard length
Valid for cohorts	From 2024/5

Additional Course Information

The MA Expanded Photography is a programme that is distinctive in its embrace of photography as an expanded field, encompassing specialisms like art, fashion, editorial, virtual photography, documentary, photojournalism, photobooks and writing photography. Informed by critical knowledge of photography as a contemporary practice and an understanding of contemporary social diversity, each student is empowered to develop new forms of independent practice within this evolving field.

The course is part of a wider matrix of courses including the MA Art and Emerging Technologies and MA Global Contemporary Arts. The structure allows students to tailor their learning through a flexible set of open option modules shared across the courses that address contemporary challenges, advanced digital approaches, and specialised professional contexts, and facilitate collaborative opportunities and cross-disciplinary learning with students from the other courses. Our students also undertake the Professional Practice module and the Masters Project alongside students from the other MA art programs, thus benefiting from collaborative opportunities and cross-disciplinary learning.

Admissions requirements

There are standard minimum entry requirements for all postgraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information. For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements. More information can be found here: https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate/how-to-apply.

Aims of the programme

The MA Expanded Photography course aims to inspire students to work creatively, ethically and sustainably with expanded photography in the rapidly changing visual image culture and global environment. The MA Expanded Photography sits alongside a suite of postgraduate art courses offered at Westminster School of Arts. Students from this MA have the opportunity of choosing two optional postgraduate modules from other art disciplines. Our students also undertake the Professional Practice module and the Masters Project alongside students from other MA art programs, thus benefitting from collaborative opportunities and cross-disciplinary learning.

The course creates an inclusive, progressive and compassionate learning environment to motivate students into learning skills, developing knowledge and expanding expertise in the thinking and practice of photography. The program provides a cutting-edge platform for visual, technical and conceptual innovation, while addressing evolving global image markets and industries. .

The program is aimed at those who are passionate about photography and wish to develop the skills, knowledge and independent critical thinking to experience an authentic immersive research practice and a sustained creative practice within the globally diverse visual arts and related industries.

Students gain professional visual skills and knowledge of expansive practices appropriate to diverse contemporary creative fields of photographic image cultures and industries. Students develop projects through independent student-centred research. Graduates complete the course with a personal portfolio of photographic-based work and future-facing transferable and professional skills. Students benefit from the excellence of the Photography research environment and updated facilities in the School of Arts.

The course is designed to provide students with the ability to adapt their skills to evolving technological and cultural contexts, and to direct their continuous learning process following graduation.

COURSE EDI STATEMENT

We are proud to teach such a diverse range of students on the Photography courses at Westminster. Students are at the core of everything we do, and we encourage everyone to draw on their own experience when approaching creative work, centring their practice at the heart of their and our communities.

The study of photography contributes to a more equal and diverse society. Photography is inherently concerned with issues around representation, identity, and power, and has the potential to challenge stereotypes. By studying photography, our students are equipped with the skills and knowledge to critically engage with images and their social and cultural meanings, and to produce work that reflects diverse perspectives and experiences.

Community and Collaboration

We are actively working to decolonise our curriculum and to include diverse voices, perspectives, and histories in course materials and curricula. We listen to our students and support them in all aspects of the programme to develop their own creative practice and shape their individual journey through the course. Students come to Westminster from many different and varied backgrounds, and this rich cultural heritage enables an exciting atmosphere of mutual support, where students learn about other communities as well as find the space to explore their own. The course design ensures that students can take charge of their projects, based on their own knowledge and cultural interests. Students have the opportunity to collaborate with peers and participate in community-oriented spaces, as we seek to expand education beyond the classroom and to contribute to society in a meaningful way.

Inclusion and Equality

Our commitment to inclusivity drives us to address inequality wherever we find it. We welcome applications from students of all backgrounds and needs. We provide a safe and inclusive environment for all, so that everyone feels valued and contributes to our program, and throughout the program we embed diversity and inclusion in all that we do. This goes right from students' first day on the course to well beyond graduation, as the course is designed to enhance career options for everyone.

We provide career enhancement opportunities that allow our community of students to flourish well beyond graduation, whether that is in the art world, in photographic creative industries, in fashion, digital and virtual environments, or in commercial settings. Our course provides opportunities for students to gain practical experience through regular contact with industry professionals, such as work placements, guest talks by industry experts, participation in mentorship programs, and field trips to photography-related spaces. These experiences help students to become familiar with industry practices and provide them with a sense of agency and confidence, while also enhancing their employability prospects. This can be particularly beneficial for students who may not have access to wider networks.

Neurodiversity and Disability

Creative courses often attract a wide range of students and staff members, including those who are neurodiverse. Our course team is experienced in providing the necessary support to meet the unique needs of our students and we are

committed to creating course materials and assessments that are accessible to all students, regardless of their learning style or ability. We work closely with the disability team to ensure that our course is structured in a way that is truly inclusive, with sessions that cater for a range of learning styles and needs, and we ensure that our assessments and teaching formats are adapted to fully accommodate our diverse student body.

Active Learning Strategies

We use active learning strategies that encourage students to participate in group work, discussions, and collaborative projects. We provide multiple modes of content delivery, including audio-visual and written materials. We encourage student feedback throughout the course to ensure that their needs and concerns are being met. We also offer mentorship and support to students, particularly those from underrepresented groups, to help them succeed in their studies and future careers.

Technology and Inclusion; assessment

We support and celebrate diversity as something that contributes to individual and collective creativity. We embrace change and technological developments to bring these to students from all backgrounds, promoting social mobility in the photographic industries. We are committed to removing any barriers that prevent students from succeeding. Our assessment methods – including portfolios, presentations, live briefs, group exhibitions, and publications – are designed to contribute to building equality for all. When possible, we include 'authentic' assessment methods that replicate real-world scenarios and tasks that students might encounter in their future careers or professional lives.

Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses

- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students

- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision

- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

The University of Westminster is committed to cultivating highly employable graduates, by ensuring that career development skills are integrated into our academic programs. The MA Expanded Photography course has a strong emphasis on employability. We aim to equip our students with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in the creative industries, fostering highly motivated and proficient individuals with a deep understanding of their field. Our students are encouraged to think innovatively, engage with their community, and possess unwavering confidence in their creative vision.

The course offers a combination of photography and image literacy skills, and introduces students to a range of emerging technologies such as 3D Scanning, AI and computer-generated imaging. By the end of their studies, employers will find in each of our graduates a rare and attractive professional profile.

The program puts professional skills at the core of the students' education. As well as developing an independent project with a final exhibition and project portfolio of professional standard or dissertation, the student journey includes responding to live briefs and competitions, taking part in workshops around key areas of contemporary art and creative industries, building confidence in research and writing, and developing a professional practice portfolio that will outline next steps for launching sustainable careers.

We have developed extensive relationships with industry professionals, including picture editors, gallery directors and commercial agents, and sought consultations with a variety of experts from the tech industries, to consider career paths available to our students, and maintain external perspectives on the course. This will be done through a variety of professional related activities, including professional talks, mentoring schemes, external visits and in-house industry sessions.

The Professional Practice module aims to identify and support student progression beyond the MA, providing mentorship sessions, career seminars and practical workshops in:

Live briefs, competitions and commissions

Coaching skills for self-development

Editorial assignments

Pricing and editioning

Commercial agencies

The gallery system

Ethics of emerging imaging technologies

Publishing

Curation

Academia and teaching

Websites, social media

Networking

Promotion

Project Management

Post-production work

Community engagement

Participatory practices

The activities within the Professional Practice module also provide opportunities to engage with the Careers and Employability service and the Westminster Enterprise Network (WEN) to help students to identify career and personal development opportunities. Through these and other extra-curricular activities, students may also apply for the **Westminster Employability Award** at Postgraduate level. This is an employability achievement award, providing students with a guided pathway, supported through Engage, which helps them to gain relevant experience and key skills, and identify and evidence them for employers.

As well as being prepared for careers as independent creative artists and free-lance photographers and entrepreneurs, students will be able to tailor their own progress through the course to prepare them for a diverse range of related careers in the arts and creative industries, including in photography galleries, museums, picture and talent agencies, further academic study, teaching in secondary, further and higher education, and as employees of corporations that use contemporary imaging and technologies, such as Ikea, Google and Microsoft.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Course learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning.

These are threshold statements of achievement the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (KU)

Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course (GA)

Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (PPP)

Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course. (KTS)

Level 7 course learning outcomes: upon completion of Level 7 you will be able to:

- 01 Produce innovative, ethical practices through iterative processes of experimentation and evaluation in relation to an understanding of current practices in the field (KU)

- 02 Apply entrepreneurial skills that address real-world opportunities and challenges, working independently or

collaboratively with partners from the cultural and creative industries and community on live briefs and shared outcomes. (PPP KTS)

- 03 Design and create a substantial practice-led research project synthesizing understanding and expertise around applications and practices relevant to the discipline and topic, engaging with discourses, communities and practice relevant to a well-defined context and audience (KU)

- 04 Formulate an independent research approach that is grounded in critical analysis of historical and contemporary sources, and effectively communicate your ideas in a range of appropriate forms to diverse audiences. (PPP)

- 05 Critically evaluate your own work and articulate a well-defined personal voice that is grounded in theoretical knowledge, technical experimentation, and a clear sense of personal vision (KTS)

- 06 Experiment, analyze and interrogate the use of emergent technologies, within your discipline, from a critical and ethical perspective (KU SS)

- 07 Produce a research practice that synthesizes individual interests with existing and emerging global photographic practices and theories (KU)

- 08 Formulate and develop innovative proposals to address strategic issues or opportunities that position your work in relation to current debates in photography and related fields, which may include virtual, global, social, environmental, ethical and aesthetic concerns. (KTS)

- 09 Create a sustained independent photography project to be presented at a professional standard through exhibition, portfolio, publication or other outputs, which may include writing (KU)

- 10 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of contemporary and expanded photographic practices and theories through a range of written and practical outputs (KU)

How will you learn?

Learning methods

The course provides an authentic, inclusive and progressive learning environment, that addresses different ways of leaning and where students are constantly supported by their tutors and encouraged to think critically about their practice, while questioning its position in a rapidly changing visual image industry. Students in this course spend a significant time doing independent study. They are expected to make use of the extensive photography facilities, libraries and online resources to deepen their learning outside timetabled lessons. The course promotes risk taking and experimentation and invites students to own their own learning process by directing and designing a continuous learning path according to their personal goals and interests. Active Class Participation creates a rich learning environment that reflects the experience and diversity of the students. Reflective exercises enable students to critically evaluate their own learning progress and completed projects. This might be articulated through journals, live presentations or in the form of a critical evaluation essay at the end of the module. As part of their professional development, this course enables students to identify their best abilities and personal motivations, in order to locate their potential and make informed career decisions post-graduation.

Teaching methods

Teaching in this course is mostly delivered in person during timetabled lessons, as well as through a number of extracurricular activities. Lectures are delivered to teach a broad range of photographic histories, contexts and contemporary photographic practices appropriate to each module. Seminars serve students to discuss their learning and contrast individual ideas as a group and in relation to a given topic. Technical demonstrations and workshops are run at our Harrow facilities and serve to teach a variety of photographic techniques and expanded practices. Group and individual tutorials are offered regularly to advise students on the progress of their practical and written projects, and their overall learning throughout the module. Group work reviews are designed for students to present their work in progress, with the aim of obtaining formative feedback from their tutors and peers. Other teaching activities include professional and artist talks, interdisciplinary collaborative activities, gallery visits, field trips, work-based and placement learning activities, as well as career mentoring sessions.

Assessment methods

Formative and summative assessment is performed in every module to evaluate the student's learning throughout the course. Module assignments are usually shorter and more directed earlier in the course, with students gaining greater independence in their projects, and producing larger bodies of work as they progress in their studies. Practical projects serve to assess the student's ability to produce a coherent body of photographic work that is critically informed and presented to a professional standard. Assessment on their projects also evaluates their technical competence and ability to communicate ideas in a visual form. When produced in groups, these projects also assess the students' ability to work collaboratively. Written and visual essays are used to assess the student's understanding of critical and historical photographic contexts as appropriate to each module. These essays also serve to evaluate the student's ability to conduct independent research, articulate ideas, organise them logically, and communicate their arguments in a written and visual format. Individual and group presentations are used to assess the students' ability to present their practice and research in public. These can take form of work reviews, research talks or interactive sessions as appropriate. In their final semester, students produce a Masters Project, which serves to assess the overall learning achieved throughout the course.

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	01, 03, 04, 05, 07, 09, 10
Literate and effective communicator	04, 05, 08, 09
Entrepreneurial	01, 02, 06
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	02, 03, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	02, 06, 08, 09

Course Structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year. Additional free text information on the choices may also be included, for example where students must choose one of two modules.. Course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources.

Modules

Level 7

Module Code	Module Title	Status	PT Year (where applicable)	UK credit	ECTS
7IMAG027W	Contemporary Photography Contexts	Core	1	20	10
7IMAG028W	Photography Practice and Innovation	Core	1	20	10
7CTAD013W	MA Arts - Masters" Project	Core	2	60	30
7CTAD014W	MA Arts - Professional Practice in The Creative Industries	Core	2	40	20
7CTAD015W	Curatorial & Social Practices	Option	1	20	10
7CTAD016W	Future Archives	Option	1	20	10
7CTAD017W	Global Arts & Sustainable Futures	Option	1	20	10
7IMAG029W	Image Futures	Option	1	20	10
7CTAD018W	Interactive Art and Storytelling	Option	1	20	10
7IMAG030W	Virtual Photography	Option	1	20	10

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. In addition, timetabling and limited spaces may mean you cannot register for your first choice of option modules.

Professional body accreditation or other external references

N/A

Course management

Course Management
The MA Expanded Photography is hosted in the Westminster School of Arts (WSA), within the College of Digital, Creative and Design Industries (DCDI). It is directly managed by a course leader within the Westminster School of Arts. Each module also has a designated module leader responsible for the administration and monitoring of its design and delivery. The MA is directly linked to two other postgraduate courses, the *MA Art and Emerging Technologies* and the *MA Global Contemporary Arts,* through a shared pool of options, and within the *Professional Practice in the Creative Industries* shared core module, where students undertake both specific activities relevant to the course and have the option of engaging in shared activities workshops with the other courses and students where appropriate, enhancing opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Because of the wide-ranging topics covered by the MA, the course teaching team consists of a large number of staff in WSA. Key members of the course team meet regularly each year, including with students, to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of the course. Staff undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by colleagues and are engaged staff development through course attendance and/or research and knowledge exchange, public engagement, and scholarly activity.

The MA Expanded Photography intersects with and draws upon the institutional resources provided by the wider set of events and cultural initiatives co-ordinated by staff within the School as well as the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Media (CREAM) and other relevant programmes hosted by the School and elsewhere in the university, allowing it to draw on research findings and resources from a wider range of creative subjects.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations.

Course specific regulations apply to some courses.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Campus Registry. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students. Further information on Blackboard can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/studies/your-student-journey/when-you-arrive/blackboard

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments. Further information on the Academic Learning Development Centre can be found at westminster.ac.uk/academic-learning-development.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students1 can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught in their College. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student and Academic Services department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. Further information on the advice available to students can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/student-advice

The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University. Further information on UWSU can be found at https://www.westminster.ac.uk/students-union

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel. University Panels normally include internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university. a representative from industry and a Student Advisor.

The course is also monitored each year by the College to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the evidence of student surveys, student progression and achievement and reports from external examiners, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the course and make changes where necessary.

A Course revalidation takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with revalidation panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through student engagement activities at Course/Module level, students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Course representatives are elected to expressly represent the views of their peers. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course representatives.

- There are also School Representatives appointed jointly by the University and the Students' Union who meet with senior School staff to discuss wider issues affecting student experience across the School. Student representatives are also represented on key College and University committees.;

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.

- Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.

This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate, if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification is supplemented by the Course Handbook, Module proforma and Module Handbooks provided to students.   Copyright in this document belongs to the University of Westminster. All rights are reserved. This document is for personal use only and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose, either in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of the University of Westminster. All copies of this document must incorporate this Copyright Notice – 2022©

Additional Details

Course Diagram:

MA Arts Matrix

MA Expanded Photography

Pathway Cores
2 x 20 credits +
Core Professional
Practice

Matrix Options
2 x 20 credits + Core
Professional Practice

Shared Core
60 credits + Core
Professional Practice

SHARED CORE 40 credits
MA Arts Professional Practice in the Creative Industries

CORE 1
Contemporary Photography Contexts
(20 credits)

CORE 2
Photography Practice & Innovation
(20 credits)

MA Matrix Option
(20 credits)

MA Matrix Option
(20 credits)

SHARED CORE 60 credits
(proposal in term 2)
MA Arts Masters Project

MA Arts Matrix Options

Image Futures
(20 credits)

Virtual Photography
(20 credits)

Future Archives
(20 credits)

Interactive Art and Storytelling
(20 credits)

Global Arts & Sustainability
(20 credits)

Curatorial & Social Practices
(20 credits)