NCAD DUBLIN

National College of Art and Design
A Recognised College of University College Dublin

BA (Hons) Visual Culture
AD215

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATIONS

Programme title	BA (Hons) Visual Culture	School	School of Visual Culture
Resulting awards	BA (Hons) Visual Culture	Head of School	Professor David Crowley
Level	8	ECTS credits[1]	180 / 240 (if student takes Visual Culture Plus)
University award	Honours Bachelor Degree	Programme type	Full time undergraduate programme over 3 years (or 4 years if a student takes Visual Culture Plus)
Programme Co-ordinator	Dr E Mahony	External Examiner	Dr Alice Twemlow, Royal Academy of Art (KABK) in The Hague
Programme team	Dr R O'Dwyer, Dr P. Caffrey, Dr L. Godson, Dr F. Halsall, Professor D Crowley, Dr D. Long, Dr A. Moran, Dr H. O'Kelly, , D Kehoe, H O'Kelly, F. Loughnane, Dr S Loeffler		

1. Programme Aims and Objectives: Purpose Vision and Values

The BA (Hons) in Visual Culture provides an opportunity for the critical study of the history and theory of art and design practice in a creative arts setting and facilitates the application of this knowledge through various professional settings. This new degree path provides pertinent and unique learning opportunities in the visual arts and their related professional fields. The first cohort of BA Visual Culture degree students graduated in 2016.

As a field of study, Visual Culture encompasses a wide range of subjects from Impressionist painting to mass advertising and from Bollywood cinema to underground fashion. It examines the ways in which artworks, moving and still images, spaces and objects of all kinds are shaped by society and, in turn, have marked effects on the societies that produce them.

Visual Culture is open to the study of different historical periods, but at NCAD we focus on the last two centuries, an era marked by rapid social, cultural and technical change. Visual Culture Studies has been engaged with trying to expand our understanding of diversity in the world, as well as exploring the effects of globalisation. It is very open to the future, asking questions, for instance, about the impact of digital tools like smart phones on how the world is represented and by whom.

Visual Culture Studies has been enlivened by a deep engagement with theory: gender studies, psychoanalysis, as well as language-based theories like deconstruction as well as a fascination with

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[1] European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, where 60 ECTS credits equate to the workload of a full-time academic year

materiality have all had a major impact on the way that we can understand and critique our image-saturated world

This course also capitalises on the context of the College's studio based teaching provision and builds on the existing strengths of the members of the School of Visual Culture who deliver the theoretical and critical curriculum content to all existing NCAD studio-based degrees. It recognises and values the forms of practical knowledge which are central to the culture of making in an art and design school in specialist introductory modules. Visual Culture BA students have opportunities to study alongside studio-based students. Practically orientated classes – offered as part of our Professional Practice modules – offer undergraduate students to experience the responsibilities of curation, image and text based publishing and project management alongside collaborative engagement with the studio practices of NCAD undergraduates.

In addition, students make choose to undertake Visual Culture Plus. The programme is an optional additional year of study between the second and final year of study that offers students the opportunity to combine accredited work and/or study placements, allowing students build a bespoke learning experience to suit an individual's particular skills and ambitions.

Visual Culture Plus is a 60 credit year after year 2 of the existing BA programme which will allow students to gain practical work experience, study abroad and/or connect with art and design studios, venues and businesses across Dublin and the wider global NCAD creative network.

The programme aims
- To provide a comprehensive engagement with the concepts and practices of the evolving field of Visual Culture studies;
- To provide stimulating opportunities for students to fully engage with current Visual Culture practices including the activities of artists and designers, public and private institutions and the media;
- To engage our students fully in the life of the college, thereby providing unique opportunities to work with our gallery, archive as well as other taught programmes;
- To develop in our students high level research, writing and analytical skills that will equip them for successful careers in a wide range of fields;
- To develop in our students practical skills in digital technologies which will enhance their understanding of the field and their future prospects on graduation.

We have adopted various measures for learning and teaching in response to Covid 19 conditions in 2020-21. They include the adoption of blended learning practices and tools (online and onsite) for all modules; revision and online delivery of current teaching materials and assignments to compensate for reduced library access. The maximum duration of a class will be 2 hours to mitigate against the difficulties of learning online or in classes where Covid 19 safety measures have been applied (e.g. social distancing). Where study visits or placements feature they are modified in order to ensure safe delivery. All modules have been adapted to reflect these arrangements. Where students are unable to be on campus as a result of the need to be isolated, all modules have been reviewed and alternative learning and assessment arrangements will be put in place for students to achieve learning outcomes. When necessary this may include the recording of classes for remote, asynchronous delivery. These arrangements will be monitored and reviewed over the course of the year.

2. Programme Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the BA (Hons) in Visual Culture students will possess:

1) a sophisticated understanding of the histories and theories of art and design at a level appropriate for undergraduate study;
2) written, spoken and visual communication skills appropriate to the interpretation and dissemination of Visual Culture to both public and academic audiences
3) an understanding of the professional contexts in which a knowledge of Visual Culture is pertinent, and the ability to reflect critically on the potentials and limitations of these contexts
4) a keen understanding of the contemporary practices of art and design.

Graduates of the programme will have the skills in writing, research, presentation and communication as well as the understanding of Visual Culture (including knowledge of the operations and interests of cultural institutions, the media, as well as the contemporary practice of art and design) to pursue successful careers in the arts.

The writing, communication and research skills that they develop on the programme will be transferrable to other professional contexts.

2a. Stage Outcomes

On successful completion of Year 1 of the programme, students will be able to:
- RESEARCH: Demonstrate an applied knowledge of the main developments of modernity in visual and material culture in relation to wider cultural contexts; identify and apply an appropriate range of key historical definitions and concepts used in the History of Art and Design and Visual Culture; develop skills to generate and evaluate content in a range of professional contexts.
- ANALYSE: Show a critical awareness of the influences in art, design and culture, which form the foundation of visual and material production. Develop and apply some key strategies of visual analysis
- COMMUNICATE: Show initiative in managing your work and convey ideas in a range of appropriately structured and coherent forms. Develop the capacity to use specific forms of writing in ways appropriate to specific professional contexts alongside the ability to work in a self-directed and critical manner and, where appropriate, contribute to team and collaborative projects Successfully navigate the cultural resources of Dublin and utilise these for study purposes

On successful completion of Year 2 of the programme, students will be able to:
- RESEARCH: Employ an appropriate range of sources that relate current practices in art and/or design to broader cultural and critical issues. Develop knowledge of local, national and international professional practice contexts for the study of Visual Culture. Show an awareness of key philosophical issues pertaining to digital culture.
- ANALYSE: Demonstrate a critical understanding of several key areas of contemporary practice in art and/or design that enable evaluation and critical reflection on own work and/or field. Understand ideas of 'audience' and public' in relation to the production of Visual Culture. Show critical awareness of media and its systems of delivery, including critical developments.
- COMMUNICATE/PLAN/ORGANISE: Successfully communicate research, analysis and initiative in coherent and relevant forms. Develop capacity to address and develop audiences in a targeted, strategic manner

On successful completion of the final year of the programme, students will be able to:

- RESEARCH: Recognise paradigmatic examples of Visual Culture in relation to their markets. Identify and critique key examples of contemporary curatorial practice. Evidence a critical understanding of debates around contemporary craft and collaborative practices.
- ANALYSE: Show awareness of alternative strategies for distribution of contemporary practices in art, design and craft. Demonstrate capacity to contextualise and situate observations. Reflect on the efficacy of specified models of practice in relation to a self-generated research plan.
- COMMUNICATION: Develop effective command of academic conventions applied to an extended body of self-directed research. Additionally, question existing formats and templates for text based communication. Engage appropriate resources and co-ordinate these to a professional stands in the realization of a project. Apply appropriate forms of writing and visual display

3. Admission Requirements

All first year applications through the Central Applications Office (CAO). Offers made on a competitive basis to applicants who meet the minimum academic entry requirements through the Irish Leaving Certificate Page 3 of 8 examination (6 passes, 2 at Higher Level, passes to include Irish, English and Art or a third language) or equivalent result in other country school leaving certificate examinations (www.nui.ie). Offers also made on a competitive basis to holders of FETAC awards with a minimum qualification of 5 distinctions from a full award in a cognate area of study. College RPL policy applies for mature and other non-standard applicants. Applicants with prior academic qualifications and/or academic credits may enter directly into the second or final year of the programme.

4. Garda vetting requirements

N/A

5. Further Educational Opportunities

Transition to Masters level study on Art in the Contemporary World (MA ACW) or Design History and Material Culture (MA DHMC) is possible for those undergraduates who achieve the requisite skills and competences.

6. Careers and skills

NCAD offers a broad approach to the study of Visual Culture, focusing on the past, present and future of images and objects. It not only addresses works of art and design but also the ways in which they are represented in the media and through institutions like galleries and museums. As such, Visual Culture BA students acquire a broad understanding of the workings of contemporary culture.
The programme offers professional practice modules in each year of study as well as meaningful opportunities to undertake placements and 'live' projects with public institutions and other partners.
As a consequence, Visual Culture graduates have a wide range of local and international opportunities open to them, including: arts administration (in contemporary and heritage contexts); publishing, journalism, critical writing; work in museums and private galleries; or pure art and design historical research and lecturing.

7. Teaching and Learning Methodologies

Student work presented for assessment takes a variety of forms:

- Presentations: develop public speaking skills, refined oral communication.
- Portfolio of Writing Samples: develop flexibility and confidence in a range of writing practices and styles, including but not limited to, the academic.
- Illustrated Essay: refine understanding of importance of communication via image and text.
- Research Essay: propose, plan and execute an   extended body of self-directed research.

8. Methods of Assessment

Assessment for all modules is delivered as written feedback. All feedback conforms to the College's published assessment criteria and grading system. Particular consideration is given to the development of students over the period of study (later phase assessment places greater value on independence and depth of research). Assessment on the BA programme takes both formative and summative forms.

9. Programme Review and Evaluation

a) Programme and modular review processes

It is important to NCAD that students inform the development of teaching and learning at NCAD. We encourage all students to communicate their concerns and their observations about their study to members of staff so that any changes can be made in a timely manner.

About two-thirds of the way through the semester, a student forum will be convened to gather students' comments about their study and the delivery of the programme. In addition, at the end of Semester 2, students have the opportunity to complete an online evaluation of their study and experience at NCAD. These evaluation events are important to current and future students, to ensure we can enhance the delivery of programmes at NCAD.

In addition, students are invited to discuss your experience on the module with your lecturers at any point during the year. Students can also relay comments to the class student representative who will communicate them to the staff.

b) College-wide quality review processes

A review of this programme will be carried out in 2020-21 academic year.

10. Modular Provision

Major/Minor or exit/entry/pathway programme Title:	Stage	Level	Credits	Trimester	New (N), Existing (E) or from different HEI (D) Module?	Name of Institute (D)	Does Module (D) contribute to stage GPA and Award GPA?**
Introduction to Key Concepts in Art & Design (VC1-1) (C)	1	8	5	1	E	--	--
Professional Practice: Mediation (VC1-3) (C)	1	8	5	1	E	--	--
Introduction to Visual Culture (VC1-4) (C)	1	8	10	1	E	--	--
Materials, Techniques & Processes (VC1-9)	1	8	10	2	E	--	--
Introduction to Key Concepts in Art & Design 2 (VC1-2) (C)	1	8	5	2	E	--	--
Histories of Art & Design (VC1-5) (C)	1	8	10	2	E	--	--
Technologies of Visual Culture (VC1-6) (C)	1	8	10	1	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories & Practices 1 (VC1-8) (C)	1	8	5	2	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories & Practices 2 (VC2-1) (C)	2	8	5	1	E	--	--
Histories of Art & Design: Varieties of Modernism (VC2-2) (C)	2	8	10	1	E	--	--
Professional Practice (Institutions) (VC2-3) (C)	2	8	10	1	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories and Practices 3 (VC2-4) (C)	2	8	5	1	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories and Practices 4 (VC2-5) (C)	2	8	5	2	E	--	--
Understanding Digital Cultures (VC2-6) (C)	2	8	10	2	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories and Practices 5 (VC2-8) (C)	2	8	5	2	E	--	--
Professional Practice: Podcasting (VC2-9) (O)	1	8	5	2	E	--	--
Professional Practice: Exhibitions (VC2-10)	2	8	10	2	E	--	--
Research Practices (VC3-12) (C)	3	8	20	1 & 2	E	--	--
Situations of Visual Culture (VC3-13) (C)	3	8	5	1	E	--	--
Economies of Visual Culture (VC3-1) (C)	3	8	10	1	E	--	--
Visual Culture Placement (VC3-3) (O)	3	8	5	2	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories & Practices 6 (VC3-4) (C)	3	8	5	1	E	--	--
Collaborative Practices (VC3-5) (C)	3	8	10	2	E	--	--
Contemporary Theories & Practices 7 (VC3-8) (C)	3	8	5	2	E	--	--

All modules are compulsory but some contain opportunities for students to choose content from a range of choices. These modules are VC1-6, VC2-1, VC2-4, VC2-5, VC2-8, VC3-4, VC3-8. The learning outcomes and assessment tasks for these modules are consistent whatever choice is made.

Professional Practice: Podcasting (VC2-9) and Placement (VC3-3)   are presented as 'options' here. This reflects the fact that in 2020-21, it may be difficult to secure placements for students.

Students who choose to do an additional year of study can undertake the Visual Culture Plus year. This is a range of options which add up to 60 credits. In 2019-20, they will be as follows:

	Stage	Level	Credits	Trimester	New (N), Existing (E) or from different HEI (D) Module?
Visual Culture Plus: Internship	1	8	30	1 or 2	E
Visual Culture Plus: Studio Modules	1	8	30	1 or 2	E
Visual Culture Plus: Media Platform	1	8	30	1 or 2	E
Visual Culture Plus: International Study	1	8	30	1 or 2	E
Visual Culture Plus: The Garden Project	1	8	30	1 or 2	E

11. Programme Structure

Year 1 Trimester 1	Introduction to Key Concepts in Art & Design (VC1-1) – 5 credits Coordinated by Denis Kehoe	Professional Practice: Mediation (VC1-3) – 5 credits. Coordinated by Dr Emma Mahony	Introduction to Visual Culture (VC1-4) – 10 credits. Coordinated by Fiona Loughnane	Technologies of Visual Culture (VC1-6) – 10 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley
Year 1 Trimester 2	Introduction to Key Concepts in Art & Design 2 (VC1-2) – 5 credits Coordinated by Denis Kehoe	Histories of Art & Design (VC1-5) – 10 credits. Coordinated by Hilary O' Kelly	Materials, Techniques & Processes (VC1-9) – 10 credits. Coordinated by Dr Sorcha O'Brien	Contemporary Theories and Practices 1 (VC1-8) – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley
Year 2 Trimester 1	VC2-1 Contemporary Theories and Practices 2 (VC2-1) – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley	VC2-2 Histories of Art and Design: Varieties of Modernism – 10 credits. Coordinated by Dr Francis Halsall	VC2-3 Professional Practice (Institutions) – 10 credits. Coordinated by Dr Sarah Pierce	VC2-4 Contemporary Theories and Practices 3 (VC2-4) – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley
Year 2 Trimester 2	VC2-5 Contemporary Theories and Practices 4 (VC2-5) – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley	VC2-6 Understanding Digital Culture– 10 credits. Coordinated by Dr Rachel O'Dwyer	VC2-10 Professional Practice Exhibitions – 10 credits. Coordinated by Dr Emma Mahony	VC2-8 Contemporary Theories and Practices 5 (VC2-8) – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley
Year 3 Trimester 1	VC3-1 Economies of Visual Culture – 10 credits. Coordinated by Hilary O'Kelly	VC3-12 Research Practices – 20 credits. Coordinated by Emma Mahony	VC3-13 Situations of Visual Culture – 5 credits. Coordinated by Dr Declan Long	VC3-4 Contemporary Theories and Practices 6 (VC3-4)– 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley
Year 3 Trimester 2	VC3-5 Collaborative Practices – 10 credits. Coordinated by Dr Lisa Godson		VC3-3 Visual Culture Placement – 5 credits. Coordinated by Dr Emma Mahony OR VC2-9 Professional Practice: Podcasting – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley	VC3-8 Contemporary Theories and Practices 7 (VC3-8) – 5 credits. Coordinated by David Crowley

12. Student Fitness to Practice

N/A

13. Exit Points and Credit Requirements

N/A

14. Final Award Calculation

Students awarded the BA (Hons) in Visual Culture will have completed 180 credits (or 240 credits if taking the Visual Culture Plus year). The Final Award is calculated on the basis of the performance of the student in the final year of study. No grades from years 1 and 2 are used to calculate the basis of the final award. But students need to have passed all modules in years 1 and 2 in order to progress.

15. Programme Accreditation

None

16. Resources

Staffing

	Name	Role
Teaching Staff	Dr Paul Caffey Dr Lisa Godson Dr Francis Halsall Denis Kehoe Dr Silvia Loeffler Dr Declan Long Fiona Loughnane Dr Emma Mahony Hilary O'Kelly Dr Rachel O'Dwyer Dr Maebh O'Regan Dr Sorcha O'Brien Dr Sarah Pierce	The staff indicated all contribute to modules on the BA Hons Visual Culture. Programme Leader
Administrative Staff	Neasa Travers	School Secretary
Technical Support Staff		

Space

Teaching occurs in a range of seminar and lecture theatres at the College's Thomas Street site. Classes often take place in those galleries and museums which support the programme (such as the ESB Centre for

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the Study of Irish Art at the National Gallery). The library is a key facility for student research and study, as is NIVAL Students have access to their own study space in Room 111 HCH.

Facilities

No special facilities are attached the programme. Students make extensive use of College facilities such as the library and NIVAL. All modules are supported by a range of digital resources delivered via Google Classroom.

For further information on this programme contact Dr Emma Mahony, Programme leader
mahonye@staff.ncad.ie