



# Programme Specification

## 1. General Information

<b>Programme title:</b>	Fashion
<b>Award:</b>	Masters
<b>Qualification Framework level:</b>	Level 7
<b>School/Department or equivalent:</b>	School of Design
<b>Campus location(s):</b>	Kensington
<b>Total UK credits:</b>	180
<b>Date valid from/to:</b>	2023-24

## 2. Programme Philosophy

Fashion is designed, articulated, manipulated, and simulated in both physical and digital spaces. It aims for a state change, where you are open to new and emerging thinking and to unlearning. It is also at its best when guided by diversity, inclusivity and cultural awareness. We must perceive systems and structures and express our fashion identities with an awareness of how our values are embedded in our outputs.

This programme creates an environment where you can look to reform the dominant fashion paradigm, focused on making clothes (line-up to collection to fashion show) to one that is responsive to environmental concerns, social responsibility, geopolitical and economic challenges. We are now at a critical crossroads.

Throughout you will also have the opportunity to reflect on, discuss and strengthen your own authentic identity, and help others to do the same.

There are points of intersection where you can engage with peers across platforms. There will also be an opportunity to participate in the School of Design's interdisciplinary *Grand Challenge*, which enables you to work collaboratively to develop projects that anticipate and respond to key societal concerns.

## 3. Educational Aims and Outcomes of the Programme

### **Programme aims**

The programme aims to:

- Develop an open learning environment that enables students to realise their aesthetic, intellectual and critical ambitions;

- Develop students' understanding of the broader cultural, political and economic systems that inform their practice;
- Encourage students to create bold, imaginative and ingenious work;
- Develop students' ability to effectively communicate their principles, perspectives and ideas.

### **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:

- Define and articulate your principles, perspectives and values as a practitioner;
- Demonstrate how your practice has been informed by an understanding of broader socio-cultural systems and structures;
- Demonstrate how to build and sustain networks through effective and responsible collaboration;
- Create work that is informed by your personal experimentation with new ideas, materials and tools;
- Demonstrate your personal design identity as a practitioner in relation to your chosen industry.

## **4. What will I learn?**

## Curriculum Map

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Change Agents: Talk Debate (15 credits)	<b>Grand Challenge (15 credits)</b>	<b>Independent Research Project (60 credits)</b>
New Perspectives (30 credits)	School-wide Elective (15 credits)	
	Advance Practise (15 credits)	
<b>AcrossRCA (30 credits)</b>		

## Programme Structure

Unit Title	Term	Credit Value	Core or Elective?
Change Agents: Talk Debate	1	15	CORE
New Perspectives	1	30	CORE
AcrossRCA (College-wide unit)	1&2	30	CORE
Grand Challenge	2	15	CORE
School-wide electives	2	15	ELECTIVE
Advanced Practise	2	15	CORE
Independent Research Project	3	60	CORE

### Change Agents: Talk Debate

*Change Agents: Talk Debate*, is a series of provocations that ask you to debate, your own values and critical thinking about Fashion.

There will be a series of lectures that may cover, Gender, Culture, Race, Digital Values, Design Justice, and that question our relationships to Nature, Time, Space, Data, our Planet, Ourselves. It will then open us up further to Neuroscience, Material Hierarchies, and Philosophy.

In parallel to the lectures, there will be a series of seminars based on the talks, where you will be invited to discuss deeper what insights you may have gained, what text you might choose to read and connect with, that will assist establishing your initial questions and research about your MA.

### New Perspectives

*New Perspectives* sets out distinct yet interrelated ways in which you might engage with a developing and changing fashion industry, and will support you in investigating experimental approaches to your

practice. This is a unit to provoke and challenge existing norms about the Fashion industry.

Our future embodied experiences across geographical and temporal scales can be studied in a way that connects both the emotional and the practical elements of Fashion, to bridging between our individual identities and our planet.

The unit looks to reform the dominant fashion paradigm, focused on making clothes (line-up to collection to fashion show) to one that is responsive to environmental concerns, social responsibility, geopolitical and economic challenges. We are now at a critical crossroads.

### Grand Challenge (School-wide unit)

In term 2 all School of Design students will participate in the **Grand Challenge**, School-wide unit. The aim of this unit is to connect and challenge all students in the School through the introduction of a 'wicked' design problem that requires a cross disciplinary approach to problem solving involving an external international scientific or industry partner (or both). This unit and lecture series has been hugely successful in connecting and disrupting disciplines, people, philosophies and approaches to design thinking whilst providing our student body with very unique networking opportunities.

### AccrossRCA (College-wide unit)

Across **terms 1 and 2**, you will participate in **AccrossRCA**. This unit aims to support you to meet the challenges of a complex, uncertain and changing world by bringing you together to work collaboratively in interdisciplinary teams 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.

### Advanced Practise

This unit gives space to further articulate your unique perspective, system and aesthetic for Fashion, that may have emerged during your first term and the units completed so far. It will be a time to identify spaces in the landscape that require new responses, and consider how Fashion might change behaviours.

This might include non-hierarchical thinking, trans & post-humans, all gender identities, inclusivity with an intersectional breadth, debate about the position of non-human agency, taking an open view to economics that includes all and offers alternatives.

### Independent Research Project

The Independent Research Project (IRP) is an opportunity for each student to take responsibility for their practice by developing their own brief. Through the programme, students will have been encouraged to experiment with a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary ideas and practices. Through focused self-study the IRP enables students to apply that learning to a unique project and body of work. While this should be informed by your studies it should not be seen as fully conclusive;

it is an emerging work that is now apparent and unambiguously your own voice as a designer.

Students will be mentored throughout the IRP to help them develop their voice and their project. There will also be opportunities to make connections with peers throughout the IRP. A 'Final Engagement', will ask professional experts to critique your choices through a series of talks, post a public exhibition.

## 5. How will I learn?

The programme uses the following learning and teaching methods:

- **Briefing:** a session that presents key information to students.
- **Group Tutorials:** a meeting between students and a member of staff to review progress.
- **Critiques:** a group review of student work.
- **Independent study:** students studying individually and/or collaboratively without supervision.
- **Individual tutorials:** a one-to-one meeting between a student and a member of staff to review progress.
- **Lectures:** presentations delivered to an audience of students.
- **Orientations:** sessions offering students an overview of a service and how to access it.
- **Seminars:** themed group discussions between a group of students and a member of staff.
- **Technical inductions:** a session that enables students to use technical facilities safely and responsibly.
- **Negotiated technical learning:** a scheduled session providing technical support for a specific student project.
- **Technical workshops:** interactive group sessions that focuses on the development of a particular technical process or skill.
- **Workshop:** interactive group sessions that focuses on the development of a particular process or skill.

## 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

Formative assessment will take place throughout the year during tutorials, group critiques, workshops and seminar discussions. Staff will give you feedback and guidance in relation to your progress with the learning outcomes in each unit.

Summative assessment will be supplemented by 'Reflective & Reflexive' sessions where you will have the opportunity to share your work with your peers and develop your distinctive voice.

You should be aware that assessment may take place synchronously, in person, or asynchronously, according to the academic requirements of the unit.

The kinds of assessment on the programme may include, but will not be limited to:

- A short piece of written work.
- Individual or group presentations to peers and/or academic staff.
- A short film or audio-commentary.
- Research portfolios.
- Initial prototypes and pieces for the body.
- A collection of still images.
- Public-facing outputs (these could include public exhibition, public lectures or symposia, public presentation).
- Self-reflection and self-assessment.
- Peer-to-peer evaluation and critique.

### **Reflective & reflexive**

You will share your reflections on each unit during 'Reflective & Reflexive' sessions. These offer a sense of exchange with peers that consider the socio-cultural implications of your work and allow you to take responsibility for your design decisions. This is designed to allow open learning across the cohort, so please be prepared to listen, learn and be challenged.

You will receive both formal and informal feedback at various points throughout the programme.

**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 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 Student Visa 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.

Whilst there are still spaces available, successful candidates will be made an offer of a place. If there is no vacancy for a subsequent successful applicant, the candidate will be placed on a waiting list, and may be made a firm offer should a place become available.

### **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/fashion-ma/#requirements>