

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART  
**DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK**  
2009/2010

**VEHICLE DESIGN**

DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK  
DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK

AUTOMOTIVATION

NAME

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# WELCOME

**Welcome** to the Vehicle Design Department at the Royal College of Art.

This Handbook is intended to provide a route map to help guide you as you steer your way through your studies here. It provides information about the nature of the Department, the structure of the Department team, resources available to you and where to turn for help and guidance, together with essential practical information. Please refer to this Department Handbook throughout your time here. It should be read in conjunction with the College-wide Handbook and the Regulations. Students registered for a Research Degree will also receive a Research Handbook.

We hope you will find new design directions for mobility, exploiting the possibilities created by new materials, processes and technologies, exploring future social, environmental and political contexts for vehicles and maximising the new commercial opportunities. You will graduate into a dynamic profession that evolves as the industry it serves responds to the changing climate of the twenty-first century.

Whenever you need detailed directions please ask your Personal Tutor, a member of the Department team or your Student Representative.

Enjoy the journey!

**Professor Dale Harrow**  
Head of Department



# INTRODUCTION

## TRAVELLED ROADS: HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT

If you have travelled in an Audi Quattro, Land-Rover Freelander, Aston Martin DB7 or a Ford Ka you have experienced the substantial, often decisive, design input from a graduate of the Royal College of Art, many in senior executive design positions.

It is over forty years since the first vehicle designers graduated from the College; Vehicle Design has been studied here since 1967. The first two postgraduate students in 1969 were Peter Stevens and Dawson Sellar. To date there have been over 350 graduates, representing over 35 different nationalities.

The original "Automotive Design Unit", the first within any British art or engineering School, was based in the School of Industrial Design. It was created by Sir Misha Black, Professor of Industrial Design, with the assistance of the Ford Motor Company, who have remained key supporters of the Department. Over time the ambitions of the discipline have grown and Vehicle Design has become an established Department, covering a full spectrum of design and research activity. Today the Department considers mobility and transportation in the widest possible sense, from aeroplanes to airships, bikes to boats, cars to caravans, trains, trams and trucks.

The Department is proud of its enviable employment record, with most of our graduates successfully employed as designers and consultants in the motor industry. We have always had strong industrial links through the sponsorship of projects, individual students and professional placements. For example, in 1998 Ford sponsored a major exhibition, "Moving Objects", which celebrated 30 years of Vehicle Design at the RCA. Recently the Department has collaborated on industrial projects with Nissan, Renault, Toyota, Fiat, BMW, General Motors and GEPlastics, as well as design research exercises with Bombardier Transportation, First plc and the Worshipful Company of Carmen.

Students also benefit from eligibility for a number of awards provided by our affiliates, such as the Pilkington Awards for innovation in the use of glass.

# DEPARTMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

## START: AUTOMOTIVATION

Automotivation is the philosophy of the Department. It takes vehicle design in new directions that encourage creative excellence through exploration, innovation and research. It seeks to reposition the practice of the discipline at the forefront of the debate about movement of goods and people.

Traffic jams, congestion charging, parking spaces, safety and environmental concerns are all determinants of the changing landscape for private and public transport. The motor-car, the defining machine of the twentieth century and the technological achievement that facilitated private transport for the masses, has to respond to the changing social, cultural, economic and environmental agendas of the twenty-first century.

Vehicle Design at the RCA provides a fertile arena for considering the future of inclusive mobility. Students are encouraged to develop their own concepts, drawing from the history of car design, including the pioneering stylists that defined the early vehicle design profession, whilst also identifying potential new design methodologies. Research, observation and scenario building facilitate new design narratives and new vehicle typologies. Students are expected to develop an awareness of the range of issues that affect vehicle design, including legislation, production, safety, technology, materials, aerodynamics, ergonomics and environmental impact, as well as key aesthetic principles.

Central to the Department methodology is the understanding of the broader issues of vehicle design within a framework of changing social, personal and technological environments, addressing the widest possible opportunities for mobility. Studio teaching supports design development from research to initial design concepts and resolved feasible design solutions. Students are expected to visualise design work to a high quality using a range of devices, from hand sketching to computer rendering and clay modelling. They are required to produce a range of ideas, designs, models and visualisations to communicate their design concepts to transport service providers, the motor industry and the general public.

Specialist studies by in-house and visiting professionals are enriched by Departmental and College-wide lectures and seminars as well as visits to vehicle design studios. The Department hosts a series of seminars to challenge perceptions, encourage the mixing of design disciplines and generate discussion between students and vehicle design professionals.

Since the foundation of the course in 1967 graduates from the Department have influenced thinking on all aspects of vehicle design innovation. Consequently, the Department has excellent contacts with the motor industry and public transport operators.



# DEPARTMENTAL AIMS

The Department of Vehicle Design at the Royal College of Art is a global centre of excellence in education and research, equipping future professionals with the creative, intellectual, technical and communication skills to advance twenty-first century mobility and facilitate new directions in vehicle and related design.

The Department has developed the teaching structure to encourage more focused study areas. Three pathways have been put in place, the curriculum structure modified, projects linked with paths and industrial partners, and study programmes implemented. From 2003 students have been streamed within these pathways for specific purposes, alongside skills workshops, modelling seminars and whole-Department projects.

Students access specialist tutors, industrial partners, visiting designers and skilled technicians within and without the pathways. Visiting Lecturers and Professors offer guidance on research, historic design and related matters

Through the pathways, projects and personal tuition, appraisal and advice, the Department sets out to deliver comprehensive development of individual ability and imagination, to encourage innovation, experiment and visionary exploration of automotive design, within a practical, commercially viable and aesthetically satisfying context.

Students work in pathway groups, on projects, both within pathways and across the Department, where relevant, interfacing with students from other disciplines, especially Architecture and Textiles.

Each pathway is led by an experienced tutor, supported by one or more other specialists, and all students have access to all tutors when necessary. The design staff is augmented by specialists in infrastructure, urban travel, mass transit and transport structures, and by technicians fluent in modelling and IT techniques.

Workshops are programmed into the course in Computer Aided Design, modelling and rendering skills; specialist advice and regular practice enhances presentation abilities, and tuition is offered to second language students to improve verbal and written skills.

One of the strongest features of the course is the diversity of race, country and experience of graduates selected by the Department from those who apply, alongside MPhil and PhD students and qualified designers seconded by their companies for project studies. Recent graduates join those with substantial work experience, often but not exclusively in the automotive industry, from government and from design studios, alongside those with their own business interests.

Students in their first year interface with the previous year's intake to mutual advantage, while each year pursues a discrete course, those in their second year focusing on developing their earlier work, their portfolios, and their presentations for the all-important end-of-course Summer Show.

Students also discuss their work, needs, and achievements with pathway tutors in one-on-one personal tutorials, twice each term, alongside group tuition and specialist advice.

Within each pathway there are two personal tutorials each term, visits, seminars, lectures and interaction with other College Departments

## THE PATHWAYS

There are three pathways within which students explore vehicle design, each complementary to the others, and across which projects bridge different areas. These pathways inform each student's work, whether in projects, with groups, or independently.

**Automark** explores strategic design solutions – creative concepts that focus on the relationship of people to image and identity, enabling commercial expression through vehicle design.

Here the emphasis is on the needs and aspirations of the individual, blending with the practicalities of manufacture and marketplace, seeking an interface between corporate image and personal identity, where inspiration, innovation and imagination all play their parts.

Automark examines brand loyalty, business image, market awareness and response to consumer research, expressed in the design of the vehicle, its context, components and complex imagery.

It also dissects and develops design strategies for maximum appeal and feasibility in a changing marketplace, and extends this beyond the developed world to the emerging economies worldwide, seeking to synthesise individual expression and commercial imperative.

It seeks design opportunities and recognises design constraints in vehicle type, presentation, range, and the place of design within corporate policies, presentation and aspirations.

Automark seeks to place design at the forefront of vehicle development within a commercial framework that satisfies personal need and desire.

**Inside Out** focuses on vehicle materials, production and manufacturing techniques, and fast-developing technologies, emphasising the nature of the vehicle's interface with the user, through the opportunities facilitated by technology, and the options presented by new materials, with wit, imagination and understanding.

With the unparalleled pace of technological change in today's consumer world, Inside Out explores relevant changes in material process, production technique and systems technology, while engaging the senses through innovation, and exposing opportunities through change, not immediately present or obvious. It reaches beyond the face of technological advance to add a personal design dimension.

It utilises digital innovation, communications development, enhanced fabrics, new structures, alternative power sources, changing manufacturing processes, new



or improved external materials, innovative finishes, and progressive control systems alongside new applications of light, sound and touch to develop vehicles in advanced or different typologies .

Inside Out looks at improved manipulation of material as well as new materials themselves, at systems in the service of the user, and how best to harness change in systems, materials and production for the vehicle user. It seeks to harness imagination, sensibility and humour through an appreciation of what is made possible by contemporary development of materials, methods and technology.

**Urban Flow** advances inclusive mobility, moving people and goods within and between urban environments. It inspires design innovation towards integrated transport, to improve the streetscape and transport infrastructure, explore vehicle typologies, improve urban mass transit, interchange and access, enabling all travellers, able or otherwise, young or elderly, resident, commuter or visitor, towards individual mobility, singly or collectively.

Urban Flow studies the journey, understands the constraints of developed urban areas, and seeks to improve context, method, use and communication.

The pathway focuses on the whole journey, seeking specific solutions between vehicle types and their interface. It explores regulation and physical limitations in order to position alternative typologies within the urban matrix, towards socially inclusive public provision.

It looks at systems which significantly improve user experience, information tools to facilitate mobility, control mechanisms to meet social requirements and the use of light, sound and symbol to enhance the travel experience.

It explores tourist travel, short and long distance aids to convenient, comfortable and appealing journeys, and seeks to enhance the movement experience of the short-term commuter, shopper or recreational visitor.

Urban Flow examines new vehicle modes, group travel, shared units, and fixed route systems alongside established facilities, and considers how they might be improved.

It explores the needs, aspirations and circumstances of the physically less mobile to integrate their mobility within the transport structure.

It seeks new outlets for urban mobility with innovative solutions towards passenger process, facilities and dedicated destinations.

It considers freight and consumer goods distribution methods, systems, vehicles, and their impact on infrastructure, individual and collective mobility, reflecting consumer demand, retail culture and market forces.

It looks at the built environment, vehicle types and options, public and private initiatives, commercial and public sector opportunities, hubs and routes, interchanges and associated facilities, current or potential.

Urban Flow seeks solutions towards faster, safer, simpler, cost-effective, attractive and reliable movement and mobility within and between towns and cities.

# MA COURSE DESCRIPTION

## OBJECTIVES OF MA COURSE

The aim is to educate future generations of vehicle designers and make them aware of the changing social, cultural, commercial and technical context of mobility.

Through its original teaching programme, expert staff team and collaboration with industry and users, the Department educates Vehicle Designers who are strategic and visionary. It meets the motor industry's demand for conceptual thinkers capable of leading design teams including draftsman, engineers, body design engineers, aerodynamic designers, interior designers, model makers, technology specialists and production engineers, and the public demand for better designed products and environments.

The work of the Department is exceptional in that it bridges traditional vehicle design as an exercise in styling with a user and issues-based approach.

The work of the students and staff in the Department is highly innovative, influential and creative, pushing the limits of rapid realisation technologies, offering new architectural configurations for vehicles and encouraging the role of the designer to become more influential and strategic within the industry.

## THE ROUTE: MA CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The course is structured around six terms of a taught programme to build a portfolio demonstrating a wide range of skills, abilities and personal development.

The first two terms are structured to provide orientation for you to understand a wide range of vehicle design related methodologies and processes and introduce you to facilities available.

**VISION Term 1** opens with an introduction to each pathway, and individual presentations by students of their work and experience to date. Students also enjoy an introduction to London and its transport systems.

It includes skills workshops and lectures on the year's theme, the latter conducted by the Critical and Historical Studies Department.

Alongside workshops, students participate in the Metro-project, conducting individual research, isolating a specific issue, presenting findings and stating an intention towards design solutions, working through all relevant skills to provide outcomes, and presenting those in model, visual and verbal modes.

The project may also involve an external industrial or design partner, providing specialist information and expertise.

The Department incorporates Metro-project outcomes in its publications.



**FOCUS Term 2** maintains pathway focus and tuition, course monitoring, seminars, internship interviews and two major initiatives.

Either independently or as part of the term's major project, students visit a significant external facility, such as an automotive factory, design museum, specific exhibition or show. The term features one or more workshops or lectures with a leading designer, producer, commentator or outside academic.

The two principal initiatives during the term are the dissertation and the industry project.

The industry project sees the Department working closely with an industrial partner in the automotive, transport or related fields. Partners brief students, input throughout the project, and assess the outcomes.

The project is usually conducted in groups, while individual students pursue aspects related to their pathways. It culminates in a display of student outcomes and a publication, and may include an exhibition.

The dissertation comprises a major part of the course. Students determine a relevant theme in discussion with tutors, research it, develop it, evolve and enlarge a sustainable argument, and present an initial statement, an interim essay and a final presentation, with title page, index, annotated sources, introduction, main text in chapters, illustration and conclusion. In this term, students concentrate on their proposals, research and first text.

The dissertation requires intellectual rigour, aesthetic awareness and a logical thesis; it stretches students as a significant exercise in thought process and explanation which is not primarily visual. It is conducted to a tight timetable, which has to be observed.

**REFLECTION Term 3** focuses on students' independent study and dissertations.

Throughout the term, tutors advise and assist students in developing their work towards the second year. Seminars are conducted in conjunction with second year students.

During Term 3 students are also expected to start working on their dissertations. The dissertation is developed to a first draft of some 6,000 words, with all the components in place. Special attention is paid to adequate sources, properly annotated. By the end of term, the final draft is developed, so that 10,000 words of finished work can be delivered at the beginning of Year 2.

In this final term of the first year, students work with their counterparts in the second year to prepare the Summer Show, where second year work is displayed to experts, high profile visitors, the media and the general public.

## CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDIES

The RCA provides a unique environment for postgraduate art and design students to

reflect upon their own practice, and to engage with students from their own and other disciplines. The role of Critical and Historical Studies (CHS) is to support the studio courses in enabling these critical engagements to take place. The courses offered by CHS to every first year MA student propose an intellectual framework within which they can begin to establish a coherent relationship between theory and practice.

In the Autumn and Spring terms there are a series of College-wide seminars and lectures. The Autumn Term series will relate to your particular discipline (though it is possible to elect to join a series being offered to other Departments), whereas the Spring term series will be more broad-based and cross-disciplinary in nature.

You will be given a reading week and a writing week to encourage you to focus on this important piece of work.

The finished dissertation is delivered by the first day of the first week of Year 2 Autumn Term. There will be some supervision available during the latter part of the summer vacation. It will be read by your CHS tutors and second marked in the categories: Distinction, Commendation, Pass, Fail. A sample will be externally moderated. This grading will be taken into account by the Examination Board at the time of the Final Examination.

The Critical and Historical Programme is intended to enhance the creative relationship between theory and practice. It is designed to make a significant contribution to the student experience at the Royal College of Art by engaging with theoretical ideas in an exciting and challenging manner, and by establishing their relevance to each student's own practice.

More information about the CHS programme is provided in the College-wide Handbook, and information about the lecture series will also be distributed to you in a comprehensive brochure at the beginning of the Autumn term.

### **PLACEMENTS IN INDUSTRY**

Placements, when arranged, are usually during the Summer vacation between the 1st and 2nd year. They need to be negotiated during the Spring term of your first year.

They are dependent upon us being able to match your skills and ambitions against a suitable industrial studio. It is very unlikely for a student to be permitted to make, or have made for them, any work within a high volume factory. Most placements depend upon you meeting with a Senior Designer, Studio Manager or Design Director. Before this meeting, you must discuss with your tutor and others who can advise you, what the issues are likely to be, and how you can prepare your folio and your thinking for this event.

Past placements have included: Aprilia, Audi, Bentley, Daihatsu, DCE (Sitges), Design Storz, Ford, Jaguar, JCB, Nissan Japan, Toyota Europe, Toyota Japan.



## **CURRICULUM YEAR TWO**

Through the 2nd year, you are expected to become progressively more independent in both the studios and workshops. You should, by this stage, have developed a working method which can be sustained after graduation, together with an understanding of the intellectual, creative and professional contexts for yourself and your work. You should be able to discuss these ideas confidently in tutorials, seminars and reviews.

There are termly reviews where any necessary adjustments are made to your individual programme, supervised by your Personal Tutor. You are responsible for the development of an appropriate volume and quality of work to reflect your talent, ambitions, and your defined professional context.

### **COMPUTING**

The Department offers intensive specialised 2D and 3D courses, which are run in the Department's own computer facilities. Courses are mandatory for first years and are run in your pathway groups.

Many other computer courses are available outside the Department; these are advertised either on the notice board or electronically through the College Intranet (<http://intranet.rca.ac.uk>) and are usually filled on a first-come first-served basis. You are encouraged to make full use of these courses as a vital extension of your work in the Department.

The Department has a dedicated part-time computer technician, Nasos Kotsenos. Nasos is not responsible for your personal computers, but may be willing to advise on a range of problems.

### **MODEL MAKING**

You will have an induction to the facilities in Term One. You will make models as part of your studies. You can use the main Darwin workshops on the second floor and the specialist clay studio on the fourth floor. The Clay Room Technician can be contacted on extension 4356.

### **RAPID PROTOTYPING**

You will have an induction to the facilities in Term One. You are able to produce rapid prototyped models at a reduced student rate through the College's Rapidform facility. All use of rapid prototyping must be discussed and agreed with the Senior Tutor.

# RCA ETHICS CHECKLIST

The Royal College of Art aims for the highest possible standards within the disciplines of art and design, and you are expected to demonstrate professional integrity and discipline in all areas of your work. The College has a Code of Practice for Research Ethics that equally applies to the work you will undertake as part of your MA degree.

Should any of the following elements be involved in your work, advice from the RCA Research Ethics Committee must be sought before the work is undertaken:

- Active involvement of other participants
- Passive involvement of other participants
- Colleagues and staff within other higher education institutions
- Members of the public
- Children, young and other vulnerable persons
- Animals
- External bodies.

Potential influencing factors:

- Potential adverse impact on the environment
- Moral obligations
- Legal liabilities
- Insurance
- Health and safety

If any of the above elements are present in your work, you are required to complete the Research Ethics Checklist and Consent Form (RE1) (available on the RCA Intranet: [http://intranet.rca.ac.uk/pages/research/researchrelated\\_forms\\_3325.html](http://intranet.rca.ac.uk/pages/research/researchrelated_forms_3325.html)), providing details. This form should be returned to the Research Office, where it will in turn be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration.

# LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

## ON THE ROAD: LEARNING AND TEACHING

The range of teaching activity is designed for you to draw out what you find relevant or useful. Each student is expected to develop the ability to select and initiate activities which are appropriate.

It is expected that you learn from the range of teaching activity by:

- Engaging in the making and designing of work in the Vehicle Design discipline
- Writing Tutorial Report records, which contribute to your own evaluation of your progress



- Conducting research of a visual, academic and technical nature.

## PERSONAL TUTORIALS

You will be supervised through regular personal tutorials with your Pathway Tutors. The purpose is to encourage and engage you in a debate about your work and ambitions, to challenge your thinking and preconceptions. The personal tutorial is the occasion to review progress, identify problems and devise strategies to overcome them. Its nature will be different at different times and may be wide ranging or narrowly focused, totally practical or a discussion of ideas and concepts. It may review history and traditions or look forward to the future. At every level, it requires a close interaction that needs time to develop.

You are expected to prepare work to present at scheduled personal tutorials and a record of the discussion will be kept on your personal file (which can be accessed via the Administrator). The personal tutorial is augmented by additional tutorials requested by you with other members of the teaching staff, including tutorials with visiting lecturers and staff running particular projects.

Our Department has a dedicated CHS/Vehicle Design Tutor to supervise you all throughout your dissertation via regular tutorials.

By Term 3 you are expected to own your development process, and staff will act more as consultants than teachers. The supervisory role of staff at this stage of your course is used to check that your progress is timely and appropriate.

## GROUP AND PATHWAY TUTORIALS

Group tutorials are arranged where they support pathway or researcher studio projects. These consist of two or more students coming together with one or more tutors to discuss work and ideas and to engage in constructive criticism.

## SEMINARS

You will be asked to contribute to occasional group seminars, where students come together to discuss and share views on a predetermined theme. This will normally require some preliminary thought and research.

## LECTURES

The Department invites speakers to make formal presentations of ideas and information, normally to a pathway group or the whole Department, either in our studio or in one of the College lecture theatres. Lectures are given by specially invited speakers and by Department staff and Visiting Lecturers.

## DEMONSTRATIONS

You will be introduced to new techniques and processes by demonstrations given by academic and technical staff. These might be on a one-to-one basis or in a group.

## VISITS

External visits to museums, galleries, automotive and transport industry facilities, and to areas of special interest, together with journeys on different forms of transport, are arranged to augment experience gained in workshop or studio and to place it in context. In addition, some students may have the opportunity to travel overseas.

Recent visits have included London's Museum of Transport, the City of London Museum, Guildhall Art Gallery, Plaisterers' Hall and rail manufacturing in Derby, while trips have been conducted to Greenwich by river and by Routemaster and other buses, and students have recently visited India, China and Italy.

## ROLE OF THE STUDENT

You will be working alongside 35-40 first and second year MA students, research students and Post Experience Programme researchers. This creates an environment where some of the most important learning is experienced within the student group. It is of critical importance that you engage with your peers and you contribute to a studio atmosphere where constructive discussion and criticism occurs. Your priority peer group is your pathway colleagues, and it is important that you respond to advice from both the student body and the staff members, and that you co-operate across year groups, especially with joint projects and on show displays.

Other student responsibilities are:

- To take responsibility for your own development
- To respond to advice and act upon instruction
- To be prepared practically, mentally and physically
- To seek help and guidance from all relevant sources
- To be in time for all pre-arranged tutorials, time-tabled events and projects

## DYSLEXIA AND LANGUAGE SUPPORT

To obtain a copy of the Dyslexia Handbook, or to arrange an assessment or tutorial, please contact: Qona Rankin (Dyslexia Coordinator) ext: 4544.

To seek advice on your English Language skills please contact: Harriet Edwards (English for Academic Purposes Coordinator) ext: 4543.

# MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

## PATHWAY AND PERSONAL TUTORS

Each student is allocated a Pathway and Personal Tutor from amongst the Department's academic staff. The choice of tutor is made by the Department at the beginning of each year. It will be made on the basis of your proposed work programme and areas of interest.



## ROLE OF PERSONAL TUTOR:

- To maintain an overview of your academic progress - monitoring and recording this throughout the year;
- To meet with you on a regular basis (minimum of once per term) to:
  - Provide advice and guidance on academic issues and refer you to other colleagues, if necessary
  - Provide pastoral support, referring you to other areas of the College or external agencies for help, if necessary;
- Represent your interest in staff discussions and at the Interim and Final Examinations Boards;
- Ensure that there are documented reports on your work and progress filed once per term. These are placed in your personal file in the office and are available for you to refer to at any time.

## ROLE OF PATHWAY TUTOR

- To guide, explain and encourage student work within Pathway specifics
- To integrate Pathway interests within Department projects
- To arrange seminars and other events specific to each Pathway
- To support dissertation research in each Pathway context
- To ensure relevant linkage between Pathways
- To provide Pathway consultation to enquiring students

## CHANGES OF PERSONAL TUTOR

You may request a change of Personal Tutor through a discussion with the Head of Department. Changes are made if, for example, there is an unproductive personality clash or if the direction of your work means that it would be more fruitful to work with another tutor.

## TUTORIAL REPORTS

Your Personal Tutor will fix dates and times in advance for two formal tutorials each term. On these occasions you are expected to bring work for discussion, showing evidence of progress and increased awareness through self-evaluation.

You and/or your Personal Tutor will record the discussion for your personal file, which is available to you via the Administrator. The mechanism enables us to check that both parties have the same understanding of the discussion and any misunderstandings can be addressed straight away.

We expect the students to be on time for all pre-arranged tutorials, to be prepared, and to respond to advice and act upon instruction.

# ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

## CHEQUERED FLAG: COLLEGE-WIDE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The College-wide assessment scheme (introduced for studio-based MA Interim and Final Examinations in 2006) provides criteria for the evaluation of student achievement which can be applied across all studio-based MA courses. The scheme is intended to ensure consistency in assessment across the College and from year to year. Details of the scheme are provided in the College-wide Handbook. It is **very important** that you read these so that you understand the basis on which you will be assessed at Interim and Final Examination.

While the assessment criteria used by Examination Boards will be common to all studio-based MA courses, the actual procedures employed for Interim and Final Examinations will vary to an extent from course to course. The sections below outline our assessment procedures in Vehicle Design.

### SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A list of submission requirements for each examination will be issued before these take place.

### EXAMINATION BOARD

All Examination Boards are constituted according to College Regulations. Each student's Personal Tutor and the Head of Department will be present at the individual's examination.

### DEFERRALS, REFERRALS AND APPEALS

Details of the College's procedures can be found in the Regulations.

## EXAMINATIONS

You have successfully passed the first examination of the Vehicle Design course, which was the Entrance Examination.

There are two further formal examination points during the 2 years of study:

- 1) Interim Examination: Term Three
- 2) Final Examination: Term Six

### INTERIM EXAMINATION

This takes place during Term Three of the first year.

#### Interim Examination Board

The Board consists of at least the Head of Department and the student's Personal Tutor. Other academic staff may also attend.



### Interim Examination Method

You are required to present a portfolio of all the College work completed to date. You should also present an outline area of study for the final year along with the partial draft of your Critical and Historical Studies dissertation – see below.

The 30 minute examination is conducted in private with the members of the Board and you are given time to present your work and time for discussion with the Board.

### Submission requirements

#### 1 A Portfolio Review

You are asked to provide a portfolio demonstrating your progression and status of your project work. This is of your choice and could be multi-media, etc. The portfolio would be expected to contain a selection of sketchbooks, working drawings, final design proposals and appropriate CAD work to show evidence of progression and personal exploration.

#### 2 CHS Dissertation

You must provide an outline of your thesis area of study, draft text (see below) and explain its related interest to your project work. This will be discussed with tutorial staff and the dedicated Critical and Historic Studies tutor and Vehicle Design Tutor. For Interim Examination you are required to submit a piece of written work of no less than 1,000 words (known as a First Text) together with a dissertation bibliography by a date given to you by the CHS Department. Details of this submission will be given to you in the Autumn Term. You cannot proceed to the second year without completing this submission.

#### 3 Projects and Time Plan

You will outline your project study areas and be asked to provide key 'milestones' in the academic year outside your normal tutorial and examination calendar.

### FINAL EXAMINATION

#### In Vehicle Design the Final Examination is in two stages:

- 1) The Preliminary visit by the External Examiner which takes place in Term Five
- 2) The Final Examination which takes place in Term Six

At the Preliminary visit the External Examiner and members of Department staff will consider:

- a Coursework: evidence of study from the previous four terms.
- b Personal programme: work in progress on the projects that go to make up the portfolio.

#### Final Examination Method

The Final Examination includes an assessment of:

- a Your work displayed in The Show
- b A presentation by you to the Examination Board
- c A final evaluation of your work across the two years of the course.

The examination is concerned with assessment of the completed Project Work. This will be in the form of an exhibition and supporting work as described at the Preliminary Visit.

#### **Final Examination Board**

The Final Examination Board consists of:

The Head of Department  
The External Examiner  
An Internal Moderator  
Two Tutors/Senior Tutors  
The student's Personal Tutor (where they would not already be a member of the Board)

The Examination Criteria apply to all courses in the College – see the section on the College-wide Assessment criteria.

## RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT

The research degrees offered by the College are as follows:

MPhil by Project  
MPhil by Thesis  
PhD by Project  
PhD by Thesis

The Department is pleased to host MPhil, PhD, Post Experience Programme students and Helen Hamlyn Research Associates.

All Research Students will receive the Research Handbook which covers all the information particular to research degrees. The RCA Regulations contains definitions of standards required for MPhil and PhD.

#### **POST EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME**

For the last ten years the Post Experience Programme has encouraged staff development for overseas companies. This teaching and research programme re-educates practising professional designers in current issues, such as environmental, social and sustainable design agendas. The mixing of professional designers enhances the MA programme, exposing students to industry standards and practices.

#### **HELEN HAMLYN RESEARCH ASSOCIATES PROGRAMME**

This programme addresses specific user needs related to socially inclusive design, via a programme in which new RCA graduates undertake one-year design research and development projects within the RCA studios. Research Associates are funded jointly by external partners, who set briefs and participate in projects, and by the Centre which manages the programme.



The programme runs from October to October each year. It is woven into the RCA's academic cycle, with a Spring work-in-progress seminar and a final symposium and exhibition in the RCA galleries in the Autumn. For RCA design graduates the scheme offers the chance to develop further an existing idea or project in a 'live' context, or spend a year at the College exploring new areas for practice-based design research which is socially inclusive.

## EXHIBITING YOUR WORK

### INTERIM SHOW

You will get the opportunity to exhibit your work prior to the Final Show. In the Vehicle Design Department this usually happens at the conclusion of the industry supported project in the Second or Third Term.

### FINAL SHOW

The Show is your opportunity to present your work in a public exhibition in the College's exhibition spaces. The space is always limited, so the task is to develop creative solutions allowing a diverse group of individual students to show their work in the best possible way. Because each group of students is a unique mix, there can be no formula for an exhibition design. Each year needs a fresh approach. First year students normally help graduating students with the set up of the Show, but graduating students should take ownership and responsibility for the design and completion of the Show.

It is important to note that the work to be included in the Summer Show be agreed in principle with the Head of Department and Pathway Tutor.

### INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

You should be aware that the College owns the rights to the work created while you study here. If you think your work is patentable or you are concerned about someone copying it, you should avoid disclosing it to anyone who is not a College member of staff or a College student until after it has been protected. If you sell any work 15% of the proceeds will go to the College's Student Fund. This includes any work you may sell during The Show. More information on how to protect your work is available from InnovationRCA's website ([http://www.innovation.rca.ac.uk/PD/sw/IP/st\\_rights&discl.html](http://www.innovation.rca.ac.uk/PD/sw/IP/st_rights&discl.html)). Full details of the College's Policy on Intellectual Property Rights can be found in the College Regulations.

# DEPARTMENTAL MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representatives are elected annually from each year group to represent the interests of the students through formal Departmental meetings, at the Student Union meetings and any College-wide meetings that are organised.

## MEETINGS

Each term the Department convenes a Department Monitoring Meeting at which the Student Representatives are required to be present to put forward any issues the students may have had over the previous term. Other meetings are convened as required throughout the year, for example the Workshop User's Group or the Degree Show Planning Committee.

## STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES

At the end of each academic year all of you are required to complete a confidential feedback questionnaire. The Department carefully considers your responses. Additional opportunities for student feedback are orchestrated at appropriate moments throughout the academic year.

## ANNUAL DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW

These feedback mechanisms form part of the annual Departmental Review process, which is a review of the academic health of the Department and considers the issues and concerns for the forthcoming year. One of the Departmental Monitoring meetings will consider the report that results from this review. The document should also contain a summary of the student feedback with an indication of the actions taken in response. Further details can be found in the College Regulations.

## VALIDATION EVENTS

On a periodic basis, at least once every six years, the Department will undergo a validation event. The purpose of the validation process is to ensure that the standards of the College's courses are maintained and enhanced and that the course content is relevant and appropriate. The process is based on critical and analytical peer review by a panel of professors or tutors and practising artists, both internal and external. As part of the process, the panel will meet privately with a cross-section of the student cohort to hear your views on the content, delivery and organisation of the course. Further details can be found in the College Regulations.

Our Department was last validated in November 2005.



# OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

## STAFF TEAM

### STUDIO

#### Head of Department

Professor Dale Harrow

#### Senior Tutors

Richard Winsor (First Year)

Sam Livingstone (Second Year)

#### Visiting Tutors

Patrick Giraud

Ron Saunders

Clive Birch

#### Visiting Professors / Pathway Leaders

Marek Reichmann (Inside Out)

Stephan Swarz (Automark)

Peter Stevens (Urban Flow)

#### Dissertation Tutor

Clive Birch

#### Department Administrator

Wanda Polanski

### RESEARCH

#### Research Co-ordinators

Prof Andrew Nahum

#### Research Supervisor

Dr Paul Ewing

### TECHNICIANS

#### Instructors

Brian Davey (modelling)

Nassos Kotsenos (computers)

#### Glass Technology Adviser

TBC

### RECENT VISITING LECTURERS

Chris Bangle

Julia Barfield

Rob Butterfield

Salvatore Cacciatore

Adrian Caddy

Jonathan Glancey

Tom Karen

J Mays

Gerry McGovern

Marek Reichman

Geert Schellekens

Nick Talbot

Mel Thomas

### ALUMNI

Peter Stevens, *international car design consultant*

Ian Callum, *Design Director, Jaguar*

Simon Cox, *General Motors*

*Advanced Design*

Nick Talbot, *Transport Design Director, Seymour Powell*

Ken Melville, *Renault Design*

Merak Reichman, *Chief Designer,*

*Aston Martin*

Geert Schellekens, *GEPlastics*

Gerry McGovern, *LandRover Advanced*

Stefan Seilaff, *Audi*

Steve Murkett, *Porsche*

Martin Smith, *Ford*

## TIMETABLE

### Autumn Term

Monday 28 September 2009 – Friday 18 December 2009

Dissertation Hand-in October 2009

Reflection Week (dates tbc)

Vehicle Design Open Day (November dates tbc)

### Spring Term

Monday 11 January 2010 – Friday 26 March 2010

Incoming Student Interviews (January dates tbc)

Second Year Part One Examination (March dates tbc)

### Summer Term

Monday 19 April 2010 – Friday 2 July 2010

First Year Interim Examination (May dates tbc)

Final Show (end June dates tbc)

Second Year Final Examination (June dates tbc)

2 July 2010 Graduating Students Convocation

## ATTENDANCE

We don't run a signing-in book or formal register but all of you are expected to be in the studio or attending College-wide activities all day. You are expected to organise your own time, keep appointments and arrange for help you need as far in advance as you can. If you need to be away from the Department we must be informed, you must let your Tutor and Wanda know what you are doing and your date of return. Criteria, and the procedure for applying, for a Leave of Absence can be found in the Regulations.

## BURSARIES, AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS 2009-2010

The Department and the School benefit from goodwill, financial and support in kind. Opportunities for bursaries, prizes and sponsorship vary from year to year and are applied for individually and are in most cases open to all students in the Department.

In addition you are encouraged individually to apply for national and international awards and competitions where possible. Calls for entries are placed on notice boards.

# MANUAL: FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

The Department's facilities and resources are geared towards professional practices associated with the discipline. This is focused around the two and three-dimensional development of design intentions and ideas through to a computer or physical



model. The computer facility within the Vehicle Design Department has grown to satisfy an increasing student demand for this equipment.

This includes high-end 3D modelling and presentation systems, Alias Wavefront (totalling 10 seats), which gives students the opportunity to experience industry standard equipment. This is supported by 3 high-end Apple Macintosh machines, with graphics tablets, for developing and presenting designs through the use of 2D rendering packages. In addition there are a wide variety of computers and packages available for general design and word processing on the 2nd Floor computer room. Nasos will give details of these in his computer introduction.

The computer facility offers colour and black and white printers printing up to A1 size. Printing within the Department includes a two-colour laser printer. Some of the printing services will have to be paid by you.

The Department also has three large plasma screens enabling design to be presented at large scale. Because of bad past experiences the Department will not have digital cameras available to you.

The majority of three dimensional model developments occur in the clay-modelling studio, which can provide tools and facilities appropriate to the craft.

To aid the development and smooth running of the workshop, a committee of staff and students (Workshop Users Group) meets regularly to highlight any areas of concern.

The College has high-end Rapid Prototyping facilities (5 axis milling machine and 3D printers). Although we encourage you to experiment with this facility, because of the high cost and complexity of these techniques you must get the Senior Tutor's permission before you intend to use them once approval is given. You must also:

- Book a cutting/printing slot well in advance
- Submit professionally finished 3D models on time
- Keep the Senior Tutor well informed throughout the entire process
- Keep material cost under control – which is expected to pay for speciality materials

We cannot guarantee access to this facility and if it is abused by individual students access may be withdrawn.

## MATERIALS ALLOWANCE

Your personal allowance contributes to the basic model-making materials and other general consumables provided by the Department.

All other materials are your responsibility.



DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK  
DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK