The Design Products programme is about creativity for purpose – educating students to be design leaders, who address real-world challenges through balancing high levels of creativity and technical capability with contextual insight and empathy for people.

The Design Products identity is characterised by a pluralistic approach to designing for purpose through a number of design cultures – Design through Making, Design for Manufacture, Object Mediated Interactions, Design as Catalyst and Exploring Emergent Futures – which are underpinned by a set of contextual and real-world themes. This provides a platform for students to conceptualise and validate ideas by provoking, challenging people, places, things and systems through crafted artefacts.

Through team and individual projects involving external partners and tutored by practising designers and design researchers, students determine their own design culture, building a portfolio of work that locates them in their desired professional context. Graduates are creative catalysts and visionaries who go on to become leaders in their respective fields.

The programme offers:
- intensive teaching in platforms
- a programme of activities related to the themes
- tutors who are leading practitioners and researchers
- technical support for prototyping
- access to College workshops and technical facilities
- opportunities to exhibit in London and elsewhere
- collaborative projects with industrial partners
- a truly international perspective, with students from around 20 nations

240 credits
2-year programme
Full-time study
The MA programme provides students who have already acquired knowledge and skills in various areas of design with an academic framework in which to continue to develop their own professional direction. The programme takes a pluralistic view of the students' ideas and interests and there is an atmosphere that encourages experimental, groundbreaking work, encouraging a critical approach and a questioning of accepted practices to address real world problems and global challenges.

The programme has a matrix structure comprised of horizontal teaching units, called Platforms, and a set of vertical Themes, which cut across the Platforms.

In the autumn term of the first year, students undergo a cross-School introductory period, during which they will work with students from the other programmes in the School. The School of Design has created unique environment for interdisciplinary design-led innovation. It attracts students from a highly diverse set of disciplines and work experience, to give them the opportunity to not only reshape their own design practice, but to reshape the discipline of design itself.

In the autumn term students from Design Products, Service Design, Vehicle Design and Global Innovation Design work together in a common platform of seminars and workshops and a joint project. This will provide the vibrant interdisciplinary environment to accelerate new ways of thinking, design practice and new skills. It is designed to reinforce existing best practice in design well as introduce those who are new to design and some of the key principles and practices for design-led innovation.

This common platform introduces students to the principles, tools and techniques and practice of design in each of the disciplines, introduces them to design research methods, systems thinking, advanced ideation techniques, visualisation and prototyping in physical and digital environments and issues of design for sustainability, the circular economy and commercial viability.

It is delivered through a combination of seminars, workshops and studio projects linked to each of these topics, and culminates with a group project where students from different programmes work together to deliver an exhibition of their work.

Each of the individual programmes builds upon this platform, both during the autumn term and in subsequent terms, enabling students to develop their specialism in their respective disciplines of Design Products, Service Design, Intelligent Mobility and Global Innovation Design.

In the autumn and spring terms, students will work on projects related to the Themes in order to expose them to global contexts, and in the spring term they will experience the different design perspectives of the Platforms. Students will also work on their dissertation during the whole of their first year, which they are encouraged to use to research their design interests and develop a personal project alongside it. In the summer term, students elect a Platform to follow for the remainder of their studies, underpinned by one of the Themes (or a global challenge of their own choosing).

Second-year students are expected to produce a minimum of two graduation projects, or one large graduation project. Students are expected to use the programme’s Themes and their Platform’s approach to design as the basis for their work.

There is a progress review at the end of the autumn and spring terms for second-year students, and at the end of the summer term for first-year students. Each Platform is led by two Tutors (who are practising designers and professionals in research & development), and the Themes are led by the Tutor, Senior Tutor or the Head of Programme. While the Tutors’ primary focus is the students in their Platform, their knowledge and expertise is available to the entire programme; the Head of Programme and Senior Tutor/Tutor teach across the programme. In addition, students benefit from Visiting Professors and visiting lecturers who are practising designers and experts in their fields.

### MA Entrance Requirements

For MA Design Products, you should have a good undergraduate degree or equivalent in an area of design, and proficient written and spoken English. Several years of professional experience, either before or after a first degree, is a benefit, and you should have a passion for making the world a better place. Applications are welcomed from candidates from related backgrounds, such as engineering, architecture, communication, sports science, medical/health, international development/NGOs, economics/business.

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/design-products

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

### Student Story

**Dani Clode MA Design Products, 2015—**

“When I was in New Zealand and researching the work of different designers so many seemed to be alumni of the RCA, so it seemed like it was the place to go. The history of the place blows my mind – coming from New Zealand, 180 years is pretty impressive! My background is in Design Products so that seemed like the natural programme for me to apply to and I was really impressed by the work coming out of that programme.

The doors that studying here opens up is astounding; there are emails every day about internship opportunities and competitions to apply for. And the students and tutors I work alongside are amazing. The time and energy that the tutors put into helping us succeed is awesome.”

### Alumni

- Tomoko Azumi
- Paul Cockededge
- Simon Hasan
- Thomas Heatherwick
- Alex Hulme Barber Osgerby
- Roland Lamb ROLI Seaboard
- Peter Marigold
- Florian Ortkrass Random
- International

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**School of Design**

**MA Design Products**

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design-products@rca.ac.uk

rca.ac.uk/design-products
Global Innovation Design (GID) is a multidisciplinary and transnational design programme, awarding both an MA from the Royal College of Art and an MSc from Imperial College London. It is jointly run by the two institutions, and students are fully enrolled at both.

On this six-term (two-year) Master’s programme, each student spends terms three and four overseas, studying at two of our partner institutions: either a term each at Keio University Tokyo then the Pratt Institute New York, or Tsinghua University Beijing then Nanyang Technical University Singapore. Each institution offers its unique expertise and complementary approach to design, engineering and technology, business and culture, within the context of internationally oriented innovation. All students return to London for their final two terms.

GID offers an unparalleled transformative postgraduate experience that cultivates activated designers – future creative leaders who will tackle complex problems and deliver positive social, environmental, economic and cultural change.

The programme offers:
— a double Master’s: MA and MSc
— a diverse and international mix of students
— potential enterprise and commercialisation support through the InnovationRCA incubator
— leadership skills for design-related enterprises operating in international environments
— high-level graduate destinations: alumni work in international corporations, global consultancies as well as new self-started enterprises

240 credits 2-year programme Full-time study
Programme Description

First Year
Students take the following formally taught elements of the curriculum:

GID1 London Core: A two-term foundation in leading edge research-based design theory and methodology, mechatronics, form-giving, design research and anthropological methods, innovation, communication and creation of vision.

GID1 Critical & Historical Studies (CHS) Dissertation Programme: A key element of the GID Master’s programme is the chance for designers to write a significant piece of written work on a reflective theoretical subject area related to their studies.

GID1 Partner Residency: A one-term residency with either Keio University in Tokyo or Tsinghua University in Beijing during the final term of the first academic year.

Second Year
Students take the following formally taught elements of the curriculum:

GID2 Partner Residency: A one-term residency with either Pratt Institute in New York or Nanyang Technological University in Singapore during the first term of the second academic year.

GID2 Professional Development: A two-term period directed toward refinement of the body of work and professional development. During the final two terms, designers return to London to focus leadership, outreach and business development to cultivate their professional design practice. The course culminates in Final Examination and the Final Show.

MA Entrance Requirements

Applicants normally need to have at least a UK honours degree at 2:1 level (or the equivalent) in any subject relevant to innovation. It is normally desirable for applicants to have some relevant work experience.

In exceptional circumstances applicants without this degree qualification will be considered (for example, excellent professional experience or outstanding creative or technical abilities).

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/gid

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

Student Story

Bilal Raja MA Global Innovation Design, 2014–

"I have always dreamt about creating a big impact on the world around me, but had got to a point where I felt that my ambitions were larger than those of the companies I was working for.

My time here has really shaped the way I approach projects. Now it isn’t just about creating a good product or service, but also considering everything it would take to establish a project in the real world, from securing financing and having a solid business plan to setting up an effective team."
Innovation Design Engineering (IDE) is a unique double Master’s programme that has been run jointly with Imperial College London for over 35 years. It is a leading-edge, interdisciplinary course that focuses on the exploration and development of impactful innovation through critical observation, disruptive design thinking, experimentation, exploration of emergent technologies, advanced engineering and enterprise activities.

Innovation at IDE involves the creation of new human interactions, system-based experiences and devices that foster behavioural change and generate value for society. IDE projects have the breadth of vision and the ambition of generating a real impact on diverse aspects including culture, politics, economics, engineering, design and ultimately on people. Diversity is a core factor in the IDE culture that embraces students and staff from over 25 countries and with very diverse disciplinary backgrounds.

The programme nurtures students to shape their unique identity as leading innovators with pioneering attitude who push the boundaries of diverse fields to challenge important real-world matters and envision future scenarios.

The programme offers:
- full enrolment at the RCA and Imperial College London with access to both institutions’ facilities
- multidisciplinary teaching input by leading practitioners and researchers
- commercial connections (projects have included Coca Cola, Airbus, BBC, Unilever, Future Agenda, Guzzini, LG)
- very good links and involvement in enterprise teaching and potential support through InnovationRCA incubator
- international exchanges and student modules organised annually in different countries (recent visits include South Africa, Israel, India, Japan and Chile)
Programme Description

First Year

In the first year, students embark on a range of taught modules to develop skills and experience. Each of these focuses on a particular aspect of IDE and involves practising design skills, as well as research activities both within product development itself, and in exploring user and broader social issues. In each module, students will undertake a design project to a brief sometimes set and sometimes of their own devising. The work periods vary in length, and students practise the transferability of the core skills in different design settings. Emphasis is placed on generating imaginative ideas, and on testing prototypes through simulation and feedback from potential users, design, engineering and other experts. During the first year students are introduced to two learning strands:

- Disruptive Market Innovation (DMI): is core IDE territory and is about delivering innovative products to the market that work.
- Experimental Design (EXP): is for design innovation at a fundamental level, which may incorporate the exploration of new technologies, new product categories or new contexts.

The learning strands enable students to excel at a particular approach to design or to expand their abilities through exploring a way of working unfamiliar to them. The strands are lightly embedded into the programme, they are intended to be a framework to guide and not a rigid methodology.

Second Year

The programme of work in the second year (IDE2) consists of two projects:

- Group project, which is a team-based activity
- Solo project, which is conducted on an individual basis

The Solo project runs throughout the year (albeit thin at first), and the Group project runs during the autumn term and a brief period of the spring term. The Group project is assessed early in the spring term at the Work-in-progress Show and the Solo project is assessed at the end of the year in the Graduate Show as part of the Final Examination. The Solo project also forms the subject of a Solo project report involving a full description of the project development and results – this is completed and handed in to be assessed towards the end of the summer term.

MA Entrance Requirements

The Innovation Design Engineering MA/MSc programme accepts a multidisciplinary range of applicants – we want diversity of expertise, culture and experience. We are interested in engineers and technologists, we are looking for designers from all aspects of the subject area and we welcome applicants from other diverse fields such as business, social science, and the arts. In fact successful IDE applicants can come from many fields: anyone with outstanding skills in their current activities that has an excellent aptitude for innovation and team working and has a fundamental belief that design can make a direct contribution to the quality of life. Engineers, designers, scientists, technologist, artists, social scientists, business people, if you have intelligence, curiosity, passion and a drive to improve the world then IDE is interested in you.

IDE is a double Master’s programme run jointly with Imperial College London, and consequently applicants need to have a degree at 2:1 level or higher (or the equivalent). In exceptional circumstances applicants without this degree qualification will be considered (for example, excellent professional experience or outstanding creative or technical abilities).

Candidates who do not speak English as their first language are required to produce evidence that within the previous two years they have achieved at least an IELTS exam score of 6.5 with 6 in ALL elements (or equivalent from another approved test by another provider such as Pearson Academic PTE).

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/ide

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

Student Story

Eun Kyung Shin MA/MSc Innovation Design Engineering

“Before coming to the RCA my design thinking was very much focused on the final product. My ideas are now much broader than before, and I consider the social impacts of design and technology more. I’ve come to realise technology has to be used in the right way to suit human behaviour and that the designer plays an important role in shaping the way technology develops.”

Alumni

N Gus Desbarats The Alloy
Virginia Gardiner Loowatt
Duncan Kerr Apple
Isabel Lizardi Bare Conductive
Nick Munro
Maryam Nabavi Idea Couture
Mark Sanders MAS Design Products
Richard Whitehall Smart Design
MA Fashion Menswear at the RCA looks for and encourages a fearless approach to creative expression, fanatical technique and an informed outlook. The focus is towards strengthening this spirit of exploration through unique expertise and a polymathic debate with modern global awareness. We further encourage a strong work ethic across a broad variety of personally driven, industry-oriented and cross-programme design projects.

The realisation of individuality within a global design context is enabled through our excellent links with practising designers, international fashion houses, cross-programme relations and a dedicated staff team.

New ideas, materials, methods and design applications are continually originated and progressed by our MA, MPhil and PhD students. Fashion Menswear staff endeavour to create a course environment directed towards this creative self-discovery, one that offers each student both the conceptual tutelage and technical guidance to achieve their 3D design objectives.

The programme offers:

— an environment geared towards creating: designer/makers who drive their discipline forward through strong personal vision and a passionate commitment
— one-on-one tutorials developing vibrant intellectual debate about the work and ambition
— a curriculum designed to develop self confidence by balancing creative expression, technical excellence, communication and professionalism
— excellent technical facilities and vibrant, dedicated studio space and workshops
— a constantly evolving range of visiting lecturers from all facets of the fashion industry: key players at the vanguard of their disciplines
— active encouragement and facilitation of College-wide interdisciplinary investigation
— opportunities for project collaborations with international corporations, companies and fashion houses
— opportunities for representation in major exhibitions and competitions
— we maintain excellent graduate destinations, including: Adidas, Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Burberry, Celine, Gucci, Givenchy, Lanvin, Loewe, Louis Vuitton, Nike and Rapha

240 credits 2-year programme Full-time study
Programme Description

The Menswear programme encourages the development of students’ individual design identity through the translation of their personal research into design.

Within the discipline there are four areas of separate design specialisation that may be studied: knitwear, footwear, accessory design and millinery. Specialism students will follow their own curriculum but a cross over, in lectures on relevant design topics, research and materials are shared.

During the programme, students are given the opportunity to develop their individuality and creativity through concentrating on the following subjects: research and development of design ideas, colour, fabric and yarn sourcing, dedicated technical workshops relevant to the specialism selected, drawing and portfolio presentation. Professional presentations and portfolio development focus on communication skills and the ability of students to present their work coherently and intelligently.

The course offers a personalised learning environment, created through one-to-one tutorials and work reviews with the staff and invited guests from industry and the media.

External, industry-set projects are selected primarily to provide students with the experience of working professionally, and are timetabled in both first and second years. These professional contacts frequently lead to sponsorship, international placements and freelance design work for our students.

In their second year, students work more independently, developing their design ethos that leads through material support, silhouette and cutting experiments to a final collection or narrative. Students will have the opportunity to show their work at the end of their final year.

MA Entrance Requirements

Candidates for all MA courses are assessed on their existing qualities as demonstrated in their work and in their interview, as well as on their potential to benefit from the programme and to achieve MA standards overall. The assessment will consider: creativity, imagination and innovation evident in the work; ability to articulate the intentions of the work; intellectual engagement in relevant areas; appropriate technical skills; overall interview performance, including oral use of English.

We seek to enrol students who:

— are imaginative, self-motivated, determined, passionate about their discipline, technically curious and professionally orientated
— understand that their commitment to the course is a significant investment in their future.

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/fashion-menswear

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

Student Story

Mark Glasgow MA Fashion Menswear 2013–15

“As soon as I arrived, I was working at a different level, harder than ever before and to a professional standard. You know that you’re there with the best of the best, with people who really want to be there and have worked incredibly hard to get there. Everyone wants to push themselves up to the next tier.”
MA Fashion Womenswear at the RCA looks for and encourages a fearless approach to creative expression, fanatical technique and an informed outlook. The focus is towards strengthening this spirit of exploration through unique expertise and a polymathic debate with modern global awareness. We further encourage a strong work ethic across a broad variety of personally driven, industry-oriented and cross-programme design projects.

The realisation of individuality within a global design context is enabled through our excellent links with practising designers, international fashion houses, cross-programme relations and a dedicated staff team.

New ideas, materials, methods and design applications are continually originated and progressed by our MA, MPhil and PhD students. Fashion Menswear staff endeavour to create a course environment directed towards this creative self-discovery, one that offers each student both the conceptual tutelage and technical guidance to achieve their 3D design objectives.

The programme offers:

— an environment geared towards creating: designer/makers who drive their discipline forward through strong personal vision and a passionate commitment
— one-on-one tutorials developing vibrant intellectual debate about the work and ambition
— a curriculum designed to develop self confidence by balancing creative expression, technical excellence, communication and professionalism
— excellent technical facilities and vibrant, dedicated studio space and workshops
— a constantly evolving range of visiting lecturers from all facets of the fashion industry: key players at the vanguard of their disciplines
— active encouragement and facilitation of College-wide interdisciplinary investigation
— opportunities for project collaborations with international corporations, companies and fashion houses
— opportunities for representation in major exhibitions and competitions
— we maintain excellent graduate destinations, including: Adidas, Alexander McQueen, Balenciaga, Burberry, Celine, Gucci, Givenchy, Lanvin, Loewe, Louis Vuitton, Nike and Rapha
Programme Description

The Womenswear programme encourages the development of students’ individual design identity through the translation of their personal research into design.

Within the discipline there are four areas of separate design specialisation that may be studied: knitwear, footwear, accessory design and millinery. Specialism students will follow their own curriculum but a cross over, in lectures on relevant design topics, research and materials are shared.

During the programme, students are given the opportunity to develop their individuality and creativity through concentrating on the following subjects: research and development of design ideas, colour, fabric and yarn sourcing, dedicated technical workshops relevant to the specialism selected, drawing and portfolio presentation. Professional presentations and portfolio development focus on communication skills and the ability of students to present their work coherently and intelligently. The course offers a personalised learning environment, created through one-to-one tutorials and work reviews with the staff and invited guests from industry and the media.

External, industry-set projects are selected primarily to provide students with the experience of working professionally, and are timetabled in both first and second years. These professional contacts frequently lead to sponsorship, international placements and freelance design work for our students.

In their second year, students work more independently, developing their design ethos that leads through material support, silhouette and cutting experiments to a final collection or narrative. Students will have the opportunity to show their work at the end of their final year.

MA Entrance Requirements

Candidates for all MA courses are assessed on their existing qualities as demonstrated in their work and in their interview, as well as on their potential to benefit from the programme and to achieve MA standards overall. The assessment will consider: creativity, imagination and innovation evident in the work; ability to articulate the intentions of the work; intellectual engagement in relevant areas; appropriate technical skills; overall interview performance, including oral use of English.

We seek to enrol students who:

— are imaginative, self-motivated, determined, passionate about their discipline, technically curious and professionally orientated
— understand that their commitment to the course is a significant investment in their future.

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/womenswear

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

Student Story

Chu-Ting Lee MA Fashion
Womenswear, 2013–15

“.. Our tutor was always interested in more unusual ideas. She would always encourage the weirder ideas, that come from a more real side of me. With that encouragement, I became more confident and allowed myself to be who I really am as a designer.”
MA SERVICE DESIGN

Service Design applies design practice to the service sector – from retail and banking to transportation, health and education. Services represent around 80 per cent of the economy and offer a new frontier for designers seeking to make a difference.

Our programme examines the complex systemic issues facing business and governments and creates new services to transform customer and citizen experiences.

The programme has three platforms. The first, service innovation, focuses on creating new consumers services; the second focuses on public service and policy innovation; and the third looks decades ahead to envision radically new services and user experiences. Students can work across all three platforms or specialise in one.

The curriculum is truly trans-disciplinary, blending design expertise at the RCA with technology and business management from Imperial College’s MBA and its Department of Computing, and is the leading programme of its kind globally. Uniquely, students get to work on live industry and public sector projects, while our research hub is helping shape this new discipline.

The programme offers:
An impressive employment record, with recent graduates joining IDEO, Fjord, Engine, Livework, EY-Seren, Government Digital Services, the Ministry of Justice, Future Public, Royal Bank of Scotland, Barclays, Jaguar Land Rover, IBM, Samsung, Tesco, Arup and McKinsey
Programme Description

First Year
At the outset of the programme, students are introduced to the scope of the overall programme and co-design a personalised academic pathway reflecting their background, context for the learning and personal goals for undertaking the course.

Term 1: A common platform for the School of Design complemented by three half-day seminars focusing on service innovation, value creation in the public sector, and envisioning future service experiences. These represent the three platforms offered by Service Design.

Term 2: In this term we explore the fundamental principles of Service Design and the key tools and techniques starting with an introduction to the design research tools and methods used in both academia and professional practice. Workshops provide an opportunity for students to carry out specific skill drills applied to standalone briefs which can then be applied to the individual or group project that runs alongside the formal sessions. A series of 3 further Service Design Seminars also provides a thread of critical thinking and discourse, focusing on the design industry, social and public innovation as well as service, digital and the experience economy.

The second half of the term focuses on value creation through the development of ideas in a specific domain. Lectures, masterclasses and workshops include themes of sustainability, social innovation, data driven innovation, the digital and physical environment within the service landscape. Students also embark on the Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Design course as part of the Imperial College Business School MBA programme, an opportunity for students to evolve their service design practice in a different context and demonstrate its value and use in an entrepreneurial journey.

The three Service Design Seminars look at Service & Value, Service Science and Introducing Service Ecosystems. During Term 2 we will explore the three different platforms – Envision, Public Service and Policy Innovation, and Service Innovation and help students select which platforms they would like to specialise within for the remainder of their final year.

Term 3: this focuses on the complexity of service design and hence examines Systems Design by addressing the deployment of services, understanding business and understanding organisations. The three Service Design Seminars focus on General System Theory, People in Services and Service Business and Strategy. Interim Exams take place in the middle of Term 3 after which students will focus on completing the IE&D project, help second-year students in the planning of Show RCA as well as take part in organising a range of events to create an engaging platform for future employers, academics and practitioners.

Second Year
Collaborative and Final Projects Students will be asked at the start of Term 4 to select the primary platform they will be focusing on for their master’s project as well as group project that’s undertaken in Term 4. They may choose one or more platforms but their primary choice will relate to their personal tutor who will be the relevant platform leader.

Amongst the skills which the course seeks to develop in its students, are the abilities to manage large, long-term projects and to collaborate with others, including other professionals from different design disciplines, as well as those from different professional or industry backgrounds.

MA Entrance Requirements
The Service Design MA is designed for students with the following characteristics:

- Experienced designers, especially communications and product designers seeking to significantly expand their capabilities with services and service systems design and engage higher up the value chain in terms of strategic design and delivery. This may include the coordination and leadership of a project involving several other design disciplines.

- Recent high-performing graduates from design disciplines as well as from computing and other technical disciplines, seeking to develop their design capabilities and create higher value added services for their clients. It is also designed for budding designer entrepreneurs interested in launching new service led business ventures through the multiple award winning RCA business incubator.

- Mid and senior professionals from industry and the public sector, with evidence of their creative talents as demonstrated by leadership of innovative projects, who are seeking to enhance their capabilities and apply a design led approach to the transformation of consumer, business to business, and public sector services e.g. health service or home office professionals, service designers from telecommunications and hospitality sector.

Student Story
Holly May Mahoney MA Service Design 2014–16

"The first year took me by surprise – all the projects were done in groups, which meant you learnt a lot through other people as well as from the actual teaching. And they were ‘real world’ projects, with actual clients briefing us and valuing the work we did for them."

Alumni
Iban Benzal Microsoft
Jo Blundell Future Public
Lynn Chung and Sherry
Xiaoxue Dong Fjord, part of Accenture
Marion Ferrec Barclays
Amy Lee and Roman Schöneboom
Ministry of Justice
Saejin Lee and Taeyeon Kim Samsung
Tae Young Kang
Valentina Lopez FutureGov
Anna Poyry Arup
Magda Rok UKTI Ideas Lab
Julia Schrot Engine
Harry Trimble Government Digital Services
Kate Wakely IDEO
Kyungsik Yoon Samsung
Textiles offer uniquely fluid, flexible and infinitely adaptable ways of questioning, examining and solving the some of the increasingly complex societal challenges of the twenty-first century.

Textiles RCA is a multi-faceted discipline, and we work at the creative interface between materials, making and meaning. Our focus is new knowledge that impacts across many sectors, exploring new territories for tomorrow’s Textiles specialist.

New materials, new ways of making and new ways of experiencing our man-made world require us to constantly reconsider and question our activities, generating a culture of creative restlessness throughout the activities of the programme.

We engage with industry at all levels and our graduates’ career profiles match this multi-faceted identity.

Delivered through five unique specialisms, our dynamic approach frequently employs multidisciplinary and collaborative methods. Our discipline thrives on a spirit of creative flux that encourages stepping away from the status-quo.
Programme Description

Textiles offers five specialisms, in Printed, Knitted, Woven, Mixed Media Textiles and Soft Systems. Students base their study within one of the making specialisms and develop their own creative language through a combination of working within their making specialism and positioning themselves within one of the contextual platforms of ‘Body’, ‘Space’, ‘Colour’, ‘Materials & Finish (CMF)’ or ‘Gallery’ that are delivered across the programme. Students across all the specialisms develop their creativity through individual research and development of design ideas, concept development, material engagement and process, contextual application, presentation and communication of their work.

During the first year, students take part in a range of technical induction and practical instruction programmes alongside their personal development. The second year is devoted to the self-driven creation of a final project which challenges the boundaries of the subject and builds on the individual's personal design philosophy. Each of the specialisms have specific curricula content and are described below:

Knitted Textiles Specialism: Knitted Textiles is the exploration of textiles through an engagement with the structural, conceptual and technical possibilities offered by knitting and the use of soft, linked structures.

Knitting is a process laden with cultural pre-conceptions and industrial expectations, students are expected to challenge these perceived boundaries alongside challenging themselves, their current knowledge, creativity and skills. Students are encouraged to take creative risks and are expected to be innovators in their field. Students are free to determine the context of their work; there are no limitations and no boundaries. The specialism encompasses all forms of knitting processes and production spanning the range from hand-knitting and crochet, through to domestic and doubled machines to digital automated industrial machinery (Shima Seiki). The first year commences with technical projects covering hand, machine and digital knitting. Students learn how to undertake shaping and 3D knitted construction. Students are encouraged to explore the opportunities offered by collaborative practice and expected to make links with the appropriate audiences and industries for their work.

Printed Textiles Specialism: Printed textiles at the RCA captures a vast and varied cross-section of creativity within the design industry. It is a method of thinking, making and manufacture that questions the notion of surface; its identity and purpose. This constant negotiation of the surface nurtures the breadth and exploration of both process and materials and students are encouraged to question and challenge the possibilities and pre-conceptions of print and textiles and redefine these by pushing these boundaries through experimentation.

The first year includes building the skills and knowledge associated with the discipline including advanced making techniques, theories around colour, perception and line, alongside industry linked collaborations and continued development of personal lines of enquiry. Students are encouraged to explore the opportunities offered by collaborative practice and expected to make links with the appropriate audiences and industries for their work.

Woven Textiles Specialism: Woven textiles is one of the largest and most vibrant textile industries globally, spanning the handmade to the cutting edge of new materials and manufacturing techniques and systems.

Within the Textiles programme, the woven textiles specialism explores dynamic and varied methods of woven technique from handloom to industrial Jacquard. The first year begins with an advanced technical project covering both hand and Jacquard weaving. During the first year students explore, research and innovate in terms of yarn, materials, dyeing techniques and finishing processes. Students are encouraged to explore the opportunities offered by collaborative practice and expected to make links with the appropriate audiences and industries for their work.

Mixed Media Specialism: Mixed Media represents an experimental and interdisciplinary approach to Textiles that links a broad range of practices, techniques, materials and methods of working. The history of the specialism lies with embroidery and stitched textiles and core technical skills in these areas continue to provide a valuable foundation in the first year of the programme. Students are introduced to hand, machine and digital processes alongside 3D modelling, sculptural and digital fabrication techniques.

As a specialism we focus on radical experimentation, material testing and transformation. We encourage an exploratory, non-linear approach that embraces the conceptual and the magical, allowing a space for the incidental and accidental processes of discovery that foster a culture of research through making. Students are encouraged to explore the opportunities offered by collaborative practice and expected to make links with the appropriate audiences and industries for their work.

Soft Systems Specialism: Soft systems focuses on the developments in soft materials (fibres, filaments, yarns, gels, liquids, coatings, moldable materials and flexible films, virtual materials) and digital assemblies and places creative practice at the forefront of the innovation ecosystem to question the materiality of our lives and pioneer new ways of thinking and new ways of making that transcend digital and physical boundaries informed by a robust background in material knowledge and emerging fabrication technologies.

Students use a creative experimental approach to propose and prototype new architectures for responsive and adaptive textiles. During the first year, students develop their knowledge of the classes and characterisation of materials through technical projects. Digital fabrication of and new technologies for processing materials are explored both theoretically and practically, alongside traditional textile processing platforms. Material experimentation focuses on aspects of e-textiles, physical computing, responsive properties and self-assembly with biomaterials.

MA Entrance Requirements

Applicants should have:
- a BA in Textiles or a related Art and Design subject, or equivalent experience
- for Soft Systems only: a BA in Textiles, BSc or BEng, or equivalent experience
- a personal proposal for the intended direction of their MA study
- passion, commitment and a strong sense of personal responsibility for one’s own learning and development are essential for MA study.

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/textiles

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

Student Story

Anna Neklesa MA Textiles (Print), 2015–

“...As part of a programme project with Mantero, I won the prize of a summer internship. I think these kinds of industry-related projects are one of the most important things the RCA offers to students. As well as contacts, they give you such massive understanding and insight into what industry wants.”

Alumni

Orla Kiely
Zandra Rhodes
Margo Selby
Paul Simmons
Alice Temperley
Sue Timney
Donna Wilson

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rca.ac.uk/textiles
The programme offers:
— strong tutor team with diverse, high-level practitioner experience
— close ties to the Intelligent Mobility Lab, a new multidisciplinary research centre
— extensive industrial relationships through sponsored projects, internships and bursaries/awards. Recent collaborations include: Audi, Bentley, Citroen, Hitachi Rail Europe, Jaguar, Kia, EXA, Sabic and TATA
— close relationships with other RCA MA programmes e.g. Fashion and Innovation Design Engineering
— a west-London location at the heart of a uniquely diverse vehicle, design and cultural environment alumni in numerous top design positions globally.

MA Intelligent Mobility succeeds the RCA’s previous MA Vehicle Design. The programme launched in 2017/18 alongside the Intelligent Mobility Lab, a new multidisciplinary research centre dedicated to the future of transportation design, systems and urban mobility, led by Director and inaugural Chair in Intelligent Mobility Professor Dale Harrow.

MA Intelligent Mobility aims to place the RCA in the vanguard of the ‘third age’ of automotive design. The programme comprises two distinct specialisms: Automotive Transitions and Urban Mobility. Automotive Transitions students focus on using design thinking to develop innovative forms of transportation, such as autonomous vehicles. Urban Mobility students focus on designing the systems and frameworks that enable people to move through hyper-connected cities. The programme also acknowledges and explore solutions for the 80 per cent of people in developing or emerging economies without access to transport.

The programme offers:
— strong tutor team with diverse, high-level practitioner experience
— close ties to the Intelligent Mobility Lab, a new multidisciplinary research centre
— extensive industrial relationships through sponsored projects, internships and bursaries/awards. Recent collaborations include: Audi, Bentley, Citroen, Hitachi Rail Europe, Jaguar, Kia, EXA, Sabic and TATA
— close relationships with other RCA MA programmes e.g. Fashion and Innovation Design Engineering
— a west-London location at the heart of a uniquely diverse vehicle, design and cultural environment alumni in numerous top design positions globally.
Programme Description

The initial two terms are designed to equip students with a critical perspective, experience and knowledge base in which to understand and create new mobility solutions.

This term features a long team project to challenge convention and demonstrate the student’s ability to handle teamwork, develop a complete project and deliver a full package. The final proposal must identify and feature innovation through service, technology and design as a group experience.

In the final term students lead their own major project (Independent Research Project) which is a well-researched and highly developed critical response to a clearly articulated mobility question.

MA Entrance Requirements

Applicants must have completed or be in the final year of a first degree in an art and design or a related subject. You will need a proven commitment to the discipline, with a high level of self-motivation and evidence of independent study. You should possess a high standard of illustrative skills and understanding of 3D form.

For more information on portfolio requirements and interviews, visit: rca.ac.uk/intelligent-mobility

For cross-College entrance requirements, visit: rca.ac.uk/ma-entrance-requirements

Student Story

Pauline Mariotti MA Vehicle Design, 2016—

“ I’m writing my dissertation on the impact of automotive technology on society, looking at different automotive components throughout history and whether they’ve been readily adopted or rejected by society. Our next project is a collaboration with Textiles; I’m looking forward to working with people from such different backgrounds, and together we’ll be able to come up with a design for a complete vehicle.”

Alumni

Pratap Bose Head of Design Tata Motors
Thomas Ingenlath Senior Vice President Design, Volvo Car Corporation
Sergio Loureiro da Silva Interior Design Director, Chery Motors
Marek Reichman Design Director, Aston Martin Lagonda Ltd
Frank Stephenson Design Director, McLaren Automotive
Nick Talbot Head of Design and Innovation, Global at Tata Elxsi
Giles Taylor Design Director, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars
David Woodhouse Design Director, Lincoln Motor Company

Intelligent Mobility Studios, Photograph: Richard Haughton