

Programme Specification

1	Awarding body	University of London
2	Teaching Institution	Birkbeck College
3	Programme Title(s)	MA Film Programming and Curating
4	Programme Code(s)	TMAFMCUP_C
5	UCAS code	N/A
6	Home Department	Media and Cultural Studies
7	Exit Award(s)	PG Dip, PG Cert
8	Duration of Study (number of years)	One year full-time Two years part-time
9	Mode of Study (FT/PT/DL)	FT/PT
10	Level of Award (FHEQ)	7
11	Other teaching depts or institution	N/A
12	Professional, Statutory Regulatory Body(PSRB) details	N/A
13	QAA Benchmark Group	N/A

14	Programme Rationale & Aims
	<p>This one-year full-time, or two-year part-time, taught MA offers a specially selected programme of cultural events, as well as teaching by internationally distinguished academics and experienced film programmer and curators. Core coursework is combined with personal research.</p> <p>The MA Film Programme and Curating aims to provide students with a historical, theoretical and curatorial overview of moving image practices within a multidisciplinary intellectual framework. The moving image is more ubiquitous and more deeply embedded in everyday life than at any time since the birth of film. At a time when digital technologies are transforming and expanding the everyday terms of engagement with moving images of all kinds, both traditional notions of curating and conventional models of film distribution are undergoing rapid change. Bringing together recent thinking about programming film and curating moving image with close analysis of the history of film distribution and exhibition, and offering modules that focus in detail on cinema, non-theatrical film and artists' film practice, the MA offers a complex exploration of the mediation of the moving image through a practice of programming and curating. As well as attending to a broad range of moving image practices, the course includes a critical consideration of contemporary film culture, and a key attraction of the programme is the privileged access that students have to an international film festival and leading film programmers and curators across London.</p> <p>In recent years, moving image formats have undergone a rapid process of diffusion and diversification, and as a result the number of professional and creative fields, which utilise moving images has greatly multiplied. This innovative new degree will look at the mediation of moving images across multiple contexts and will seek to situate the institutional and commercial sectors that handle film within a broad historical and theoretical matrix. The</p>

MA provides students with an inventive and rich configuration of taught elements, a weekly programme of screenings, and a unique range of guest lecturers and site visits. The MA challenges students to think about the mediation of moving images in an expanded field of practical and theoretical knowledge and seeks to open productive and original avenues of communication networks between a wide variety of fields and practices. The degree is ideal for students of film and media history, and any of the taught core elements offer the potential for in-depth explorations of these areas, and the degree also appeals to students of the humanities and social sciences generally.

15	<p>Entry Criteria</p> <p>Good honours degree (second-class or above, or overseas equivalent). Professional or work experience in a field relevant to graduate study in the humanities may also be taken into account.</p> <p>All courses are taught in English, and all coursework and dissertations must be written and submitted in English. Students who do not have English as a first language may find the following advice helpful as a guide to the level of language competence that is expected:</p> <p>A minimum of 7 in the IELTS (International English Language Testing System), with a minimum of 6.5 in the subtests..</p> <p>Applicants must submit with an online application a 500-word personal statement with regards to why they are interested in studying in this programme, along with a 700-1000 words admissions exercise (see entrance task). Two referees required.</p> <p>Applicants who satisfy the entry criteria will be invited to attend an interview with the Academic Director and one other member of faculty. At the interview they will be expected to expand on points made in their application, as well as their admissions exercise. International applicants will be interviewed through Skype (or other online means) if they are unable to travel to London. Applicants will be notified shortly after interview whether they are being offered a place on the programme.</p>
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16	<p>Learning Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a strong understanding of the nature of film as an art form 2. Be able to demonstrate an understanding of film programming and curating theory and practice 3. Have a strong understanding of relevant areas of cultural theory and media history 4. Understand the principal features of film distribution and exhibition 5. Have an appreciation of the changing technological conditions bearing on the exhibition of film and the moving image 6. Have a strong understanding of the history and status of the moving image in cultural spaces beyond the cinema. 7. Have a strong understanding of the diversity of moving image practices
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	<p>8. Be able to demonstrate the ability to programme or curate a moving image event through independent, practice-based research, through a diverse range of writings forms (e.g. essays, reports, programme notes, etc).</p> <p>9. Have developed powers of critical reasoning</p> <p>10. Be able to form and express individual arguments</p> <p>11. Be able to think collectively through problems</p> <p>12. Be able to apply theoretical concepts to particular issues</p> <p>13. Have skills of written and oral communication</p> <p>14. Have skills of information and time management</p> <p>15. Understand different of forms of research source and method in the humanities and cultural studies</p>
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17	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment methods</p> <p>Lectures, seminars, screenings, field trips and site visits.</p> <p>Eight essays and a final project (a practice-based written thesis).</p> <p>Lectures and seminars will be conducted by academics at levels of intellectual generality appropriate for post-graduate study. Reading lists will be set with appropriate level of study in mind.</p> <p>Screenings will be integrated into the learning context, and students will be expected to respond critically with reference to core course texts and themes.</p> <p>Field trips are to be undertaken in critical and creative spirit, with expert guidance.</p> <p>Expert practitioners will be engaged for guest lectures and seminars.</p> <p>Assessment will be in line with Birkbeck post-graduate assessment standards and will clearly demonstrate progress toward learning outcomes through detailed feedback to students.</p>
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18	<p>Programme Description and Structure</p> <p>Description:</p> <p>Students take a compulsory course of study, following a carefully plotted route. There are two strands.</p> <p>The compulsory module, History Theory Methods, runs across the autumn and spring terms, and offers a historical, intellectual and conceptual understanding of film programming, curatorial practice and moving image culture. It looks at the various approaches to thinking about film programming curating: the audience and theories of spectatorship (autumn); sites of exhibition and the architecture of the film experience (autumn); great collections and exhibiting the archive (spring); and issues of practices in programming and curating, both past and present (spring). It is taught on a weekly basis, augmented by a linked weekly screening and occasional guest lectures.</p> <p>Alongside the ‘core’ History Theory Methods there is a sequence of four intensively focused courses which introduce students to the multidisciplinary study of the moving</p>
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image, with particular emphasis on mediation and curation in both cinema and gallery contexts. These include:

Curating Film, Sharing Passions deals with the instability of a film text and how it 'lives' in exhibition. It takes as its centre the silent Expressionist 'classic', *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), and explores its history and the different ways and different contexts in which this film from Weimar Germany has been shown, (re)interpreted, sometimes forgotten and (re)remembered. The module will start by looking at its production context and how the film was initially screened, before considering how the film has subsequently been remember-by who, and why. Issues covered in the module are in what context is a film (re)remembered: how is it archived, preserved and selected in relation to other films; and who is the audience and how to locate them? A film remains alive through being shown, and this course addresses this question through the custodians of cinema culture who select and screen film.

Artists' Film Practice Course convened by Helen de Witt. This module introduces issues in the history and theory of artists' film practice, and focuses in detail on key works, artists and themes. Course content will include a broad chronological introduction to 20th century artists' moving image practice coupled with a more concentrated focus on post-war and contemporary work, and with specific attention being paid to issues of curation and installation but also programming. Artists' moving image work will be approached from a wide perspective that seeks to marry social and political readings with the close formal analysis of specific film texts, and the course will move across categories and boundaries to connect the gallery and installation space with the cinema.

Shaping Contemporary Film Culture, i: The Essay Film and the Archive. Course convened by Michael Temple, with Laura Mulvey. This module explores the history of the essay film as a hybrid experimental form, as a way to explore alternative forms of exhibition and screening contexts. It looks at how the essay form offers different kinds of representation and allows for different creative voices to emerge, as well as engages with the film archive (through found footage). This course leads into the Essay Film Festival hosted at Birkbeck, University of London and the ICA.

Shaping Contemporary Film Culture, ii: Themes in Film Festivals: Course convened by Dr. Janet McCabe. The module is an exploration of film festivals as sources of curatorial knowledge and as cultural events which are the focus of numerous curatorial and programming practices associated with film and the moving image. The module examines film festivals from the perspective of film festival programming and curators and their dynamic, creative and dialogic relationship with film materials, artists who produce them, audiences, other film festivals, location of festivals and the particular spatial and temporal constraints under which an event such as a film festival happens. The module includes an accredited field trip to the Edinburgh International Film Festival to experience this major international film festival first hand and the assessment is based on a diary of that experience, reflecting on the programming of a specific strand.

C. Final Project.

MA students research and write a practice-based film project of 10,000-12,000 words.

Year of entry: 2022/23



Screenings Students attend a compulsory weekly screening of up to 3 hours, which takes place before the course seminar. Screenings will be programmed with relation to the content of the compulsory course, and where possible with reference to guests and short courses.

Full-time programme – 1 year				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ARMC197H7	Shaping Contemporary Film Culture: The Essay Film and the Archive	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC198H7	Shaping Contemporary Film Culture: Themes in Film Festivals:	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC159H7	Curating Film, Sharing Passions	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC199H7	Artists' Film Practice	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC200D7	History Theory Methods	60	Compulsory
7	ARMC201D7 ARMC047D7	Final Project – MA Film Curating or Final Project / Dissertation / Portfolio	60	Core
Part-time programme – 2 years				
Year 1				
Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Status*
7	ARMC200D7	History Theory Methods	60	Compulsory
Year 2				
7	ARMC197H7	Shaping Contemporary Film Culture: The Essay Film and the Archive	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC198H7	Shaping Contemporary Film Culture: Themes in Film Festivals:	15	Compulsory
7	ARVC159H7	Curating Film, Sharing Passions	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC199H7	Artists' Film: the museum, the gallery and beyond	15	Compulsory
7	ARMC201D7 ARMC047D7	Final Project – MA Film Curating or Final Project / Dissertation / Portfolio	60	Core

Status*

CORE – Module must be taken and passed by student; COMPULSORY – Module must be taken, mark can be reviewed at sub-exam board; OPTIONAL – Student can choose to take this module

19	Programme Director	Prof Laura Mulvey
20	Start Date (term/year)	Autumn 2013
21	Date approved by TQEC	Spring 2014
22	Date approved by Academic Board	12 March 2014
23	Date(s) updated/amended	July 2020