

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	MA Digital Media Design (Level 7)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	PG Dip Digital Media Design PG Cert Digital Media Design
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home school/other teaching departments	Creative Arts, Culture and Communication
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Full-time (1 year) Part-time (2 years) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	TMADIGMD_C
HECoS Code	100440 (digital media)
Start date of programme	Autumn 2017
Date of programme approval	Autumn 2016
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2022
Valid for academic entry year	2023-24
Programme Director	Rebekah Cupitt
Date of last revision to document	02/02/23

Admissions requirements

A second-class honours degree (2:2 or above) in a related subject.

Applications are reviewed on their individual merits and your professional qualifications and/or relevant work experience will be taken into consideration positively. We actively support and encourage applications from mature learners.

On your application form, please list all your relevant qualifications and experience, including those you aim to gain through studying on the programme. Indicate your motivations and interests in learning more about web design, user experience, and development in your application.

Course aims

Digital design is one of the most rapidly expanding sectors in the UK, with most jobs located in London and the southeast. How can you as future designers, web developers, user experience researchers and scholars develop a toolkit that can adapt to the ever-changing landscape of digital design? A core component of our MA is about helping you learn core skills, innovative approaches and problem-solving methods that speak to future development and design of digital media technologies like websites, apps, and immersive experiences.

This course combines the latest approaches, technical digital design skills, academic rigour, and critical thinking to produce expert designers who can grow with the field. The philosophy of the course is that innovative design of digital media is not just about the latest tech; it is about the user and their needs, accessibility and standards, socially responsible design, and critical thinking about the role of technology in people's everyday lives.

The MA Digital Media Design concentrates on industry-standard techniques, introducing you to core development tools and design frameworks; teaching you how to use them. You will develop skills in coding, visual design, user-centred design methods, and have the freedom to experiment with the design of interactive technologies.

The unique combination of practical, technical, and conceptual skills you will learn during this Master's programme will set you up to launch into a new job as a web developer, interaction designer, UI designer, UX copywriter, or UX researcher roles. By the end of the programme, you will have developed project-based portfolio items that will facilitate your entry into the job market, and you will have learnt skills in design and development that push the boundaries of conventional standards in digital design and look towards using design to create a better future.

Course structure

The modules on the programme will be offered in person with the chance to take some option modules online. The core module, Digital Design Thinking, will offer the option of either in person or online seminars. The compulsory modules, Web Development and UX and Visual Design and Web Project, will be in person. Option modules will vary according to the course descriptions. The core Final Project module will offer the option of either in person or online supervision meetings.

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
7	ARMC245S7	Digital Design Thinking	30	Compulsory	T1
7	ARMC243S7	Web Development and User Experience	30	Compulsory	T1
7	ARMC244S7	Visual Design and Web Project*	30	Compulsory	T2
7	Option	(See options list below)	30	Option	T2 (or T3**)
7	ARMC248D7	Final Project/Dissertation	60	Core	T3 & Summer
Part-time – 2 years					
Year 1					
7	ARMC243S7	Web Development and User Experience	30	Compulsory	T1
7	ARMC244S7	Visual Design and Web Project	30	Compulsory	T2
7	Option	(See options list below)	30	Option	T3
Year 2					
7	ARMC245S7	Digital Design Thinking	30	Compulsory	T1
7	Option (if not taken in year 1, T3)	(See options list below)	30	Option	T2
7	ARMC248D7	Final Project/Dissertation	60	Core	T3 & Summer
Indicative Options:					
7	ARMC268S7	Designing Interactions	30	Option	T2
7	ARMC222S7	Digital Culture	30	Option	T2
7	ARMC247S7	Managing Digital Media	30	Option	T1
7	ARMC246S7	Social Media & Online Branding	30	Option	T2
7	ARMC263S7	Industry placement	30	Option	T3
7	ARMC266S7	Media, Digitalisation and the City	30	Option	T2
7	ARMC172S7	Theoretical Perspectives in Media	30	Option	T2
7	ARMC160S7	Inside Out of Culture: organisations, placements and practice	30	Option	T1
7	FDME014S7	Digital Journalism	30	Option	T3
7	SSPO263S7	Investigating the Social World	30	Option	T2

T1-Autumn Term, T2-Spring Term, T3-Summer Term

Note: on the PT structure students take either 60 or 90 credits of taught modules in year one plus 30 or 60 credits of taught modules in year two and the final project

*Web Development & User Experience is a Prerequisite

** In the case of no option module in the Spring term.

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

Your learning for this course will be organised around the activities outlined below.

The taught component of the programme will comprise a combination of lectures, discussion seminars, practical sessions and computer lab workshops, with a strong emphasis on peer collaboration and a range of academic and practice-oriented assessments. Modules incorporate a variety of learning methods including lectures, class discussion and in class group activities. In addition, practical modules involve both lab-based workshops and seminars. As well as attend lectures and seminars, students will be expected to work at home supported by an online working environment which contains course notes.

The dissertation/final project will require a higher degree of independent learning, as well as distinct teaching delivery in the form of dissertation supervision and research methods workshops.

How we will assess you

The course will use a variety of assessment methods. Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it.

Students will be expected to prepare coursework for formal assessment appropriate to the teaching and learning on the module as set out in the module descriptions. The balance between different forms of coursework will depend on the objectives and outcomes of the module. Practice-based modules will be assessed on the quality of items produced and the critical evaluation undertaken by students. Academic modules will be assessed primarily through essay writing assignments.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

On successful completion of the programme we would expect students to have:

Subject Specific:

1. Systematic and creative command of the language of digital media and its main areas of application across different areas of society and business.
2. Expert knowledge of the historical development of areas of digital media design, development and application relating to Web design and other digital formats.
3. Advanced understanding of the different approaches to digital development and their viability and sustainability in an appropriate context.
4. Expert knowledge of the categorisation of information in different contexts and for different audiences.

5. Advanced awareness of international standards relating to digital media development.
6. A complete toolkit of people-centred design methods and a critical understanding of the contexts in which they are most suitably used.

Intellectual:

7. Ability to understand the wider social and cultural context of digital media production and reception.
8. Ability to critically evaluate interactive technologies and recommend and justify changes.
9. Ability to formulate research questions, evaluate responses and apply to projects.
10. Ability to understand and critique theoretical arguments.
11. Ability to assess a wide variety of data, evaluate, prioritise and discard inappropriate information in the context of their projects.
12. Ability to critically evaluate own work, and the work of others.
13. Ability to plan own learning and skills development.

Practical:

14. Use of the internet to research, supply information and network.
15. Advanced social research skills
16. Design skills focused on interface and interaction design
17. Web programming and the fundamentals of coding languages.
18. Ability to analyse the effectiveness of own creative work.
19. The ability to work with others, respect their views and transfer best practice.
20. Ability to effectively communicate research findings and design goals through clear written and visual documentation.

Personal and Social:

21. Interpersonal skills such as the ability to work in a group or as a member of a team and network.
22. Communicate effectively using different media and appropriate interpersonal skills.
23. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving complex problems.
24. Work under pressure and to deadlines.

Careers and further study

MA Digital Media Design graduates will be well positioned to pursue further academic study at the PhD level. They will also have the necessary skills needed to launch their careers within the media technology and design industries as designers, developers or user experience experts.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment

called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services.](#) This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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