



# **Subject Benchmark Statement**

## **Art and Design**

### **Draft Version for Consultation**

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## About this Statement

This QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design defines what can be expected of a graduate in terms of what they might know, do and understand at the end of their studies. Subject Benchmark Statements are an established part of the quality assurance arrangements in UK higher education, but not a regulatory requirement. They are sector-owned reference points, developed and written by academics. Subject Benchmark Statements also describe the nature and characteristics of awards in a particular discipline or area. Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as an expert quality body on behalf of the higher education sector. A summary of the Statement is also available on the QAA website.

Key changes from the previous Subject Benchmark Statement include:

- a revised structure for the Statement, which includes the introduction of cross-cutting themes of:
  - equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
  - accessibility and the needs of disabled students
  - education for sustainable development (ESD)
  - employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education (EEE)
  - generative artificial intelligence (GenAI)
- a comprehensive review updating the context and purposes, including course design and content in order to inform and underpin the revised benchmark standards.

## How can I use this document?

Subject Benchmark Statements are not intended to prescribe any particular approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Rather, they provide a framework, agreed by the subject community, that forms the basis on which those responsible for curriculum design, approval and update can reflect upon a course, and its component modules. This allows for flexibility and innovation in course design while providing a broadly accepted external reference point for that discipline.

They may also be used as a reference point by external examiners when considering whether the design of a course and the threshold standards of achievement are comparable with those of other higher education providers. Furthermore, statements can support professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) with their definitions and interpretations of academic standards.

You may want to read this document if you are:

- involved in the design, delivery and review of courses in Art and Design
- a prospective student thinking about undertaking a course in Art and Design
- an employer, to find out about the knowledge and skills generally expected of Art and Design graduates.

## Relationship to legislation

The responsibility for academic standards lies with the higher education provider which awards the degree. Higher education providers are responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them by their relevant funding and regulatory bodies. This Statement does not interpret legislation, nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements.

The status of the Statement will differ depending on the educational jurisdictions of the UK.

In England, Subject Benchmark Statements are not [sector-recognised standards](#) as set out under the Office for Students' [regulatory framework](#). However, Subject Benchmark Statements are part of the current quality arrangements in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Because the Statement describes outcomes and attributes expected at the threshold standard of achievement in a UK-wide context, many higher education providers will use them as a tool for course design and approval, and for subsequent monitoring and review, in addition to helping demonstrate the security of academic standards.

## **Additional sector reference points**

Higher education providers are likely to consider other reference points in addition to this Statement when designing, delivering and reviewing courses. These may include requirements set out by PSRBs and industry or employer expectations. In 2024 QAA published an update to the [Quality Code](#), which will be helpful when using this Statement.

Explanations of unfamiliar terms used in this Subject Benchmark Statement can be found in [QAA's Glossary](#). Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Statement where appropriate.

In this Subject Benchmark Statement, courses refer to an approved pathway of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads towards a qualification. Depending on the provider, courses are also referred to as programmes, and these two terms are used interchangeably in this Statement. 'Modules' and 'units' are also used interchangeably in this Statement to refer to a self-contained, formally structured element of study, with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

# **1. Context and purposes of an Art and Design Degree**

1.1 The subject of Art and Design is at the forefront of transformational change, where evolving paradigms and emerging technologies are reshaping how we create, communicate, and engage with visual, material, and digital culture. These shifts are offering opportunities for new modes of Art and Design practice, expanding creative possibilities, and introducing innovative forms of exploration and expression across different disciplines. The practice of Art and Design shapes contemporary cultural and societal values through creative research, making, empathy, storytelling, critical and speculative thinking, engagement with complexity, and the building of meaningful connections.

1.2 For clarity in this Statement, Art and Design is referred to as the 'subject', while the distinct areas of activity within the subject are referred to as 'disciplines'. Some of these disciplines are in a state of evolution, necessitating benchmark standards that accommodate a wide spectrum of provision and support education for complex and uncertain futures.

1.3 This Subject Benchmark Statement acknowledges that higher education providers require flexibility to place greater or lesser emphasis upon specific aspects of the subject. It seeks to support the interpretation of disciplines at a local level and to provide a point of reference for course teams engaged in reviewing course design, content, learning and assessment.

## **Purposes and characteristics of an Art and Design Degree**

1.4 Art and Design covers broad disciplines with a breadth of creative processes, characterised by a student-centered and practice-based pedagogy. Art and Design courses create environments to explore, comment on and imagine how to understand the world. They foster creative curiosity, visual expression, material knowledge, digital literacy, and critical reflection. They provide opportunities to make interventions and speculations, responding to societal and global opportunities and challenges.

1.5 Art and Design practices are characterised by the conception, experimentation, creation, and dissemination of processes and outcomes that shape visual and material culture. To practise Art and Design, students need a broad knowledge base and a strong awareness of historical, social, cultural, and technical contexts, alongside specialised creative and research skills. Art and Design students contribute to, and participate in, social narratives, working flexibly across different areas.

1.6 Art and Design practices draw on diverse visual, spatial and sensory languages. Through research, imagination, analysis, synthesis, making, practice, and communication, the study of Art and Design develops creative thinking and innovation. These are translated into meaningful expressions and interactions that contribute to wellbeing and economic transformation, culture-enhancement, and sustainable development.

1.7 The disciplines of Art and Design have a symbiotic relationship with their learning environments. Studios and workshops often shape how students engage with practices and processes. There is an increased recognition of the value of flexible study modes to support students' diverse learning needs. Emerging tools and new workflows have supported this shift, and the distinctive practices of making and creative inquiry that are central to Art and Design are being adapted and sustained within these new contexts.

1.8 Art and Design disciplines increasingly intersect and converge with other subjects and disciplines, including Humanities, Business and Management, Engineering, Computing, Psychology, Health, and Education. Art and Design makes unique contributions when interacting with other sectors. Opportunities to collaborate and integrate different knowledge

and perspectives can enhance problem-solving, encouraging fresh ideas, new methodologies and holistic approaches.

1.9 Graduates of Art and Design disciplines demonstrate resourcefulness, resilience, entrepreneurial skills, and the capacity to establish new and innovative enterprises. Many are directly active as designers, artists and creatives, while others work in diverse fields where their knowledge and skills are increasingly acknowledged, needed and valued as having wider application.

## Equity, diversity and inclusion

1.10 Art and Design courses aim to enable all students to encounter diverse practices and artefacts, and to value the diversity of the student population as a driver of creativity. This acknowledges the development of learning environments, and teaching and assessment practices, which are in alignment with the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) as informed by the [Equality Act](#) (2010). Through the acknowledgement of its histories, critical/progressive understandings of the subject have been developed, using a range of theoretical approaches, and allowing new perspectives to emerge. Art and Design courses enable students to develop their reflexivity, and their unique voices, by exploring their individual influences, and their own ways of learning through making. This enables students to define their creative direction, and their own canon of forms and styles. This drives innovation within the subject, enabling Art and Design to inform and cultivate EDI within Higher Education, and the industries that employ graduates.

1.11 EDI is embedded in policy, systems and processes, pedagogies and curricula. To improve participation, course developers may engage with nationally relevant approaches implemented at institutional level, for example, through Access and Participation Plans (England), Enhancement-led Institutional Review (Scotland), Access to Success Strategy (Northern Ireland), and Strategic Equality Plans (Wales).

1.12 The values of acceptance, access, respect and (safe) experimentation strengthen the development of Art and Design's inclusive learning community. These may include an ethics of care, embracing and valuing a plurality of knowledges and experiences, respect for alternative perspectives and lifestyles, attentiveness to the opportunities and challenges raised by decolonial imperatives, and solidarity in recognising and addressing injustices. This enhances the contribution that studying Art and Design makes to the realisation of social justice.

1.13 Art and Design draws from a range of knowledge traditions which were supported/reinforced by narratives of white, able, and heteronormative superiority, leaving legacies of systemic disadvantage (for example, racism, classism, ablism, homophobia and patriarchy). These are acknowledged and countered by fostering an inclusive learning community which includes students, academics, technicians, professional staff, and external partners.

1.14 EDI is embedded in Art and Design throughout the lifecycle of students, from applicant stage to progression into professional employment. It is essential to recognise differences in prior experience and opportunity, and value the diverse forms of cultural capital that all students bring, to create equity. Inclusive learning environments foster a diverse community of practice; from studio culture, which promotes peer learning and critical dialogue, to field trips and online or hybrid platforms. Course developers and tutors may consult with external agencies and professional bodies to address EDI themes and, in turn, support industries with the ambition to develop a more diverse workforce. This approach encourages students to develop strategies for tackling inequalities in the workplace through establishing inclusive professional networks.

1.15 Embedding more inclusive practices also helps drive innovation in Art and Design by creating inclusive curriculum frameworks to support the development of culturally sensitive pedagogies.

1.16 EDI is a constantly evolving concept. Inclusive practice involves facilitating open dialogue between educators and students, and seeking out different views, to continually review and co-create curriculum content, learning activities, and modes of assessment, enabling all students to succeed.

## **Accessibility and the needs of disabled students**

1.17 Accessibility is a core value of an educational curriculum. An accessible Art and Design curriculum values the range of skills and perspectives that disabled students bring and recognises that this diversity enriches the learning environment. Disabilities may relate to mental health, neurodiversity and sensory experiences, physical impairments, and long-term medical conditions. Art and Design courses welcome neurodiverse students, including those with dyslexia, dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and autism, and aim to prevent both direct and indirect discrimination against disabled students.

1.18 Art and Design is open to all individuals, and applications to courses from disabled applicants are welcomed and actively encouraged. Accessibility informs student recruitment and admission processes. This includes the consideration of entry requirements which often include a portfolio of work, prior experience and achievement on courses such as Foundation courses alongside Level 3 qualifications.

1.19 Under the Equality Act 2010, higher education providers must make reasonable adjustments to support disabled students and ensure they can fully participate in academic life. Designing accessible courses benefits all students and helps create an inclusive learning environment. In Art and Design, this means building flexibility into teaching materials and structures, and making anticipatory adjustments. This could include sharing briefing materials in advance, offering alternative formats for lectures or course content, and providing support such as one-to-one assistance, or specialist equipment. Collaborative practice and group work are a common feature within Art and Design; this is also an area where reasonable adjustments are required for some students.

1.20 Accessibility principles include assessing the equality impact of courses, monitoring inclusion, and involving students in curriculum design. These principles guide the planning of live learning activities for Art and Design curricula which often include live projects, field trips, placements and collaborative work.

1.21 Studios and learning spaces, both physical and virtual are designed or adapted to be accessible and inclusive. Art and Design learning often takes place in shared studio spaces. In these settings, offering quiet areas can also be an appropriate anticipatory adjustment to support different needs.

1.22 Hybrid and blended modes of learning can enhance accessibility by, for example, supporting the use of voice-to-text tools or enabling flexible participation. However, Art and Design programmes also recognise that some disabilities, conditions and digital equity considerations may make online learning challenging. Flexible modes of engagement which account for different needs assist student engagement.

1.23 Assessment in Art and Design education reflects the value of learning through creative practice. This includes recognising that the work itself, including the process of making can serve as evidence of learning, broadening how knowledge is understood and assessed. This approach can enhance accessibility by enabling students to demonstrate their learning in ways that reflect their individual strengths and communication preferences.



1.24 The wide range of methods and modalities used within Art and Design disciplines supports diverse ways of thinking, communicating and presenting work. This is reflected in curriculum design, as programmes make use of different assessment methods, offering flexible and varied submission formats for formative and summative tasks. Flexible options, such as offering students the choice of submitting live or pre-recorded audio or video presentations instead of written essays or other text-based outcomes, allow students to document their process, demonstrate critical thinking and evidence research in ways that suit their strengths. While assessments are designed to be accessible from the outset, additional adjustments can be made to support individual needs and ensure fair participation for all.

## Education for sustainable development

1.25 Sustainable development is a process that encompasses goals such as social justice, poverty reduction, health, and education at local and global levels, aligning with external reference points such as the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#) (UNSDGs). Sustainable practices and strategy are integrated in many providers, supporting students and staff in their ability to co-create outcomes which contribute to co-design positive change. Beyond climate action and environmental concerns, sustainability serves as an intellectual framework and ethical orientation to inform contemporary creative practice.

1.26 Art and Design plays a pivotal role in developing the knowledge and skills needed to address these global challenges. The subject disciplines contribute by fostering aligned core skills - such as critical thinking, self-awareness, collaboration, and strategic foresight which feature in the [UNESCO key competencies for sustainability](#) along with the learning outcomes of [Education for Sustainable Development](#) (QAA & Advance HE, 2021).

1.27 Art and Design education provides creative pedagogies for addressing the interconnected nature of these challenges, from reducing institutional carbon footprints to leading community initiatives and embedding critical thinking on consumption. Ethical and responsible citizenship can be prioritised through curricula that reframe content, assessment, methodologies, and resources. QAA and Advance HE's Education for Sustainable Development framework supports these efforts, encouraging Art and Design to develop climate literacy and to review and re-examine existing sectorial practices.

1.28 While some approaches to sustainability aim to arrest climate impact, regenerative approaches go further by actively restoring and improving contexts and systems. Art and Design education can integrate regenerative creative practices such as biomimicry, circular design, eco-social activism, and community co-design. These approaches position Art and Design as a driver of renewal and innovation, focusing on progressive transformation.

1.29 Academic-industry partnerships in Art and Design support teamwork, confidence, and the real-world application of sustainability principles. As educators and employers collaborate, material cultures and creative thinking foster innovation and socially responsible entrepreneurship. Live projects and interdisciplinary collaborations with ethical partners can prepare students for the strategic challenges of an evolving workforce. Meanwhile, industry benefits from the problem-solving abilities of graduates trained in ethical and sustainability-focused creative practice.

1.30 Addressing global challenges requires graduates who can navigate uncertainty, visualise solutions, and think flexibly. Art and Design disciplines, working alongside Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects, social sciences, and business and humanities fields, can drive innovation, extending its legacy of cultural, social, and economic transformation.



1.31 To progress sustainability awareness among cohorts, students can be encouraged to reflect on their practices through, for example, carbon literacy training, connecting personal practice with global challenges, self-assessment tools, eco-audits of studio or digital projects, lifecycle analysis tasks and digital sustainability checklists.

1.32 Sustainable practice in Art and Design nurtures inclusion and interrogates the way we think and act socially and culturally, embedding explicitly defined ethical principles into creative curricula. This can be manifested through existing key Art and Design pedagogies such as fostering critical debate, material experimentation and interdisciplinary collaboration to develop long-term solutions and outcomes.

1.33 Sustainability in Art and Design curricula also encompasses responsible digital practices, recognising the broader environmental impact of hardware use, reuse and disposal, and more discreet and impactful software uses that include data storage, server usage, and energy consumption. Digital infrastructures rely on vast amounts of energy, and creative practitioners consider efficient file management, low-impact coding, and the carbon footprint of cloud computing. Ethical digital design may prioritise eco-conscious platforms, sustainable web practices, and mindful engagement with AI and blockchain technologies. By embedding responsible digital practices within curricula, Art and Design education can foster a holistic approach to sustainability that addresses both physical and virtual resource use.

## Employability, entrepreneurship and enterprise education

1.34 Art and Design graduates contribute social, cultural, environmental, and economic value through their careers, whether through civic engagement, cultural production, or innovation in sustainable and ethical practices. Their work enables them to lead meaningful, rewarding and self-determined creative lives that enrich professional practice, communities, enhance well-being, and drive positive change.

1.35 Art and Design education provides students with opportunities to develop a blend of technical expertise, entrepreneurial acumen, and emotional resilience skills. Developing entrepreneurial and enterprise skills enables students to navigate constantly changing cultural, ecological, economic and technological landscapes. The acquisition of these skills can enhance the capability to thrive and build professional careers, as identified by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport ([DCMS](#)) and Arts Council England ([ACE](#)).

1.36 Entrepreneurship and enterprise education are relevant to employability in its widest context and deliver the skills and attributes which employers value. For example, there are increasing numbers of designers founding their own companies to maximise their impact.

1.37 As careers in the creative sector continue to evolve, and a wider range of industrial sectors require creative skillsets, there is a need for graduates to be agile and responsive to the changes and demands. They need resilience to manage unpredictable scenarios, and to adapt to changing employer expectations and market dynamics. The rapid growth of GenAI, digital fabrication, immersive media, and platform-based economies has created both new opportunities and uncertainties in creative practice. Graduates, therefore, require problem-solving abilities, creative and technical fluency, teamwork skills, an understanding of economic and commercial value, and the capacity to apply their knowledge in a range of settings.

1.38 To support this, experiential and practice-based learning alongside inclusive assessment is essential. Live projects, exhibitions, arts residencies, incubators, mentorship schemes, micro-internships and placements offer students valuable professional engagement opportunities and reflect the demands and realities of creative careers. These experiences also help students build networks and develop the ability to work both

independently and collaboratively.

1.39 Interpersonal and leadership skills are essential professional competencies. Navigating professional relationships, interdisciplinary collaboration, and conflict resolution requires emotional intelligence, empathy, and team awareness. Embedding these attributes into the curriculum prepares students for the complex social and professional dynamics of creative work. Importantly, as many students now undertake part-time or freelance employment alongside their studies, these transferable skills also support employability whilst in higher education. They help students manage workplace expectations, develop confidence, and gain early career experience, complementing their long-term career development.

1.40 Art and Design education ensures that students develop the adaptability needed to succeed in evolving professional environments and creative economies. The skills which students need opportunities to develop include:

- developing creative-critical thinking and analytical prowess, including multiple approaches to problem-solving
- understanding the values of risk-taking and experimentation as key to personal and creative growth
- ensuring submitted work acknowledges the importance of learning through making and material play, placing emphasis on process
- applying transferable skills across interpersonal, leadership, and employability contexts
- demonstrating awareness of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and the ability to apply this knowledge to explore a challenging problem, or situation from different perspectives and points of view
- valuing the role of diverse voices and opinions to the evolution of the creative process
- building stakeholder relationships through placements, live briefs, and competitions
- developing self-management and resilience to navigate fast-paced creative environments, and to see challenges such as setbacks and financial instability as opportunities for growth and development
- developing personal branding and online presence through digital and immersive platforms, including crowdfunding and content creation
- building professional knowledge of project management, self-employment, funding, intellectual property (IP), marketing, and commercial models
- embedding ethical and social responsibility in creative practice, so as to address the needs of society and the environment.

## Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)

1.41 Art and Design has a long history of evolving, adapting and shaping emerging new digital, material, or conceptual technologies. Art and Design education provides opportunities to consider how Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) will affect its disciplinary knowledge, creative industries, practices, teaching, learning and assessment.

1.42 Contemporary GenAI tools offer both opportunities and challenges and necessitate continuous ethical discussions. Courses support students in developing their own approaches to integrating, challenging, and advancing GenAI tools and processes. This includes understanding how GenAI systems operate and evolving GenAI literacies, for example source checking and ethical practice. This foundation supports students in critically applying GenAI tools with integrity within academic and professional creative contexts.

1.43 There is a spectrum of interaction with GenAI, from complete automation to co-

creation or refusal. Art and Design courses help students to navigate this spectrum and establish their own position with GenAI, within a constantly evolving cultural, ecological, and technological environment. Students are recognised as the next generation of creative practitioners, thinkers, and cultural contributors who will shape the future of these technologies.

1.44 Learning in Art and Design education provides opportunities for speculative and open-ended exploration, acknowledging imagination and process as integral to outcomes. Art and Design courses enable students to develop, refine, and realise their ideas by selecting and using the most appropriate tools. In the learning context, GenAI is approached as one tool among many that prompt experimentation and support iterative inquiry within creative workflows.

1.45 Art and Design courses use authentic assessments that include the use of GenAI in preparing students for future work situations, while ensuring the integrity and security of the assessment method. Art and Design involves creative and critical judgment and decision-making. These human capabilities are developed throughout the student learning journey. Learning outcomes are designed to assess attributes such as empathy, critical context and judgement, emotional intelligence and personal motivation, including the articulation of the learner's position on the use of GenAI. Formats include reflective statements or dialogic forms. Experimentation within the design process using GenAI tools includes assessment through documentation of the process, prompt development, and exploratory work within a sketchbook or process journal.

1.46 Learners are supported to recognise GenAI as part of a wider process in which agency is retained, shared, negotiated, or delegated. Practice-led experimentation with GenAI enables students to explore speculative methods of making. Courses provide space for testing how tools can prompt new forms of process and interaction, without assuming fixed authorship or outcomes. Embodied, material, and multisensory approaches remain valid and valued, offering a counterbalance to the standardising tendencies of automated outputs.

1.47 Art and Design education recognises the importance of lived experience, sensory engagement and collaborative dynamics within creative practice. GenAI challenges existing models of creative labour – shifting ideas around automation, authorship, autonomy, originality, and the emotional aspects of Art and Design practices. Courses support students to explore how these shifts affect creative production, including social, economic, and time-based factors. Students are encouraged to stay responsive as they develop new positions in a changing context.

1.48 GenAI systems draw from datasets that tend to amplify dominant perspectives and reproduce systemic biases – often excluding underrepresented voices, geographies, and forms of knowledge. Art and Design education encourages students to critically examine how such systems shape cultural visibility: who is rendered visible, whose knowledge is legitimised, and which ways of knowing are devalued or erased. Art and Design courses explore how GenAI participates in shaping knowledge hierarchies, developing creative practices that resist, subvert, or reimagine these dynamics.

1.49 GenAI relies on resource-hungry data centres that constitute an environmental concern. Courses draw attention to the ways in which this concern may influence responsible and sustainable Art and Design practices, and to the need for informed decisions to be made about the true cost of using GenAI in real-world contexts, such as production and ethical sourcing. This equips artists and designers to consider balanced use of resources, and promotes critical thinking around AI dependency.

1.50 GenAI tools process vast amounts of data which often includes copyrighted

materials. Art and Design courses support students to understand, respect and acknowledge intellectual property of others. Students are equipped to use appropriate consents and licenses, learning how to attribute AI generated content legally. Courses explore ways to safeguard their own work and are aware of how to protect their own IP in relation to GenAI.

## 2. Distinctive features of Art and Design

### Design

2.1 Art and Design encompasses a spectrum of practices and theories. Common to all is a commitment to imagination, aesthetic awareness and purposeful exploration of materials, forms and concepts. Different disciplines feature distinct and evolving values, contexts, activities and identities. This distinctiveness enriches interdisciplinary activity both within Art and Design contexts and beyond, which is a key feature of the subject.

2.2 Art and Design course design offers a range of models, which may be used to support approaches to disciplinarity. Course design can combine core and elective modules, with compulsory elements being studied alongside options students select to broaden or deepen their learning. Art and Design course designers plan and engage with internal and external reference points to determine intended learning outcomes and programme specifications. Consultation typically includes students, external experts, employers and, where relevant, professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs).

2.3 Art and Design courses vary significantly in structure and emphasis. Curricula may follow disciplinary boundaries and the acquisition of knowledge and skills associated with these, or adopt flexible frameworks, supporting the acquisition of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, reflecting the evolving nature of the creative disciplines.

2.4 Art and Design education increasingly supports inter-disciplinarity, encouraging students to engage with diverse bodies of knowledge, skills, practices and histories. Courses vary from those that focus on a specific discipline to those that adopt a multi- or inter-disciplinary approach. A combination of cross-disciplinary courses and subject-specific study is characteristic of the varied approaches within Art and Design, reflecting its constantly evolving nature. It embraces both new developments, such as those driven by innovation and industry, and areas with long-standing traditions.

2.5 A distinctive feature of Art and Design education is the central role of creative practice, and learning through making and change-making. This practical engagement is both a method of learning and a means of evidencing it. Students are encouraged to experiment, reflect, and adapt their work in response to evolving ideas and contexts. Creative inquiry, grounded in the iterative exploration of problems and concerns, is core to how knowledge and understanding are developed. This can include a focus on identifying problem-solutions based on distinct approaches to research.

2.6 Curriculum design emphasises student-centred teaching and encourages deep experiential learning through practice. This enables students to embody, enact and interpret course content in ways that reflect their individual interests and strengths within the context of disciplines.

2.7 Art and Design curricula frequently include live experiential and inquiry-led learning. Activities such as responding to live briefs, participating in exhibitions or performances, undertaking placements, or working with external partners are common. These experiences often include collaboration and support the development of professional competencies, including teamwork, effective communication, and the ability to connect with diverse audiences both within and beyond the academic setting. Such activities enable students to develop the skills, attributes and capabilities needed for a wide range of future careers and professional practices.

2.8 Assessment in Art and Design is as varied and wide-ranging as the subject areas it encompasses. Reflecting the field's diversity of approaches and perspectives, assessment is

designed to enable students to demonstrate their learning, critical thinking and articulation of ideas through a variety of formats and methods that suit their strengths.

2.9 Contextual and critical awareness is frequently embedded within creative practice and its assessment. Even where such content is delivered through dedicated theoretical or contextual studies modules, courses aim to ensure that critical understanding within and beyond the subject of Art and Design is integrated throughout a student's learning experience.

2.10 At undergraduate level, Art and Design may be studied as a single honours award or as part of a broader interdisciplinary degree. Where Art and Design is combined with other subjects, it often contributes creative and conceptual perspectives. Generally, the flexibility of undergraduate provision in Art and Design allows for both specialisation in specific subjects, and for integrative study that encourages students to explore the intersections between disciplines. Undergraduate curricula are typically studio-based and practice-led, often underpinned by critical and historical studies, enabling students to develop personal creative identities while responding to social, cultural, political, technological and ecological contexts.

2.11 At postgraduate level, Art and Design taught provision is highly diverse and often defined by advanced specialisation or interdisciplinary innovation. Programmes may focus on specific areas of practice, while others may provide cross-disciplinary pathways that integrate theory and practice, or support research-led creative inquiry. Some postgraduate degrees are structured to develop professional practice within specific sectors of the creative industries, while others emphasise experimental, critical, or community-engaged approaches. It is common for students to combine modules that integrate studio practice, critical theory, professional development, and collaborative methodologies, often leading to self-directed major projects that reflect the student's individual focus within a broader contemporary Art and Design context.

## Progression

2.12 Over the course of a standard undergraduate degree with honours (FHEQ level 6; FQHEIS level 10) or, if available, an Integrated Master's degree (FHEQ Level 7; FQHEIS Level 11) an Art and Design student will progress from one level of study to the next, in line with the regulations and processes for each institution. However, it is expected that each level would see the attainment of knowledge, expertise and experience that builds towards the final achievement of meeting the threshold (and if specified higher-level) subject-specific and generic skills listed in this Statement. This will usually include successful completion and the award of credit for the full range of learning and assessment, including any practical components.

2.13 Upon graduation from an undergraduate degree, it would be expected that a student who had achieved a second-class degree or higher would be capable of, and equipped for, undertaking postgraduate study in Art and Design or a related discipline. Entry requirements to postgraduate courses are, however, determined by individual providers and may require specified levels of achievement at undergraduate level.

2.14 Undergraduates studying Art and Design courses as part of a combined or joint degree with other subjects (including courses that specify major and minor options) will achieve core elements of the specific and generic skills outlined in this Statement and will add others according to the areas covered in the other subject(s) of their degree. Additionally, they may explore the overlap between different disciplines, creating further opportunities for interdisciplinary study.

2.15 Any student enrolled in a standard undergraduate honours degree course in Art and Design, may exit earlier and be eligible for a Certificate of Higher Education (FHEQ level 4; FQHEIS level 7), a Diploma of Higher Education (FHEQ level 5; FQHEIS level 8), or other awards depending upon the levels of study completed to a satisfactory standard.

## Flexibility

2.16 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the duration of a full-time course leading to a standard undergraduate degree is typically three years and is set at Level 6 of the FHEQ. Degrees involving a year abroad or a placement year can take up to four years.

2.17 In Scotland, a bachelor's/ordinary degree is set at three years at Level 9 on the SCQF/FQHEIS. A bachelor's degree with honours, which is the most typical route for students, is designed to include four years of study, and is set at Level 10 of the SCQF/FQHEIS. In addition, a number of Scottish universities have a long tradition of labelling certain undergraduate academic degrees as a Master of Arts (MA). This title reflects historic Scottish custom and practice with an MA/ordinary degree at Level 9 and MA with Honours at Level 10 on the SCQF/FQHEIS.

2.18 Integrated master's degree courses typically include study equivalent to at least four full-time academic years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; and five in Scotland, of which study equivalent to at least one full-time academic year is at Level 7 of the FHEQ and Level 11 on the SCQF/FQHEIS. The courses are designed to meet the qualification descriptors in full (FHEQ Level 6 and SCQF/FQHEIS Level 10 and FHEQ Level 7 and SCQF/FQHEIS Level 11).

2.19 Students following part-time routes accumulate academic credit in proportion to the intensity of their study, and their total study time and credit value would be the equivalent to those achieved on full-time routes.

2.20 Higher education providers structure the courses they offer to support students' learning and attainment. Depending on the educational mission of the provider, this may include opportunities to engage in learning on campus, online, and/or through hybrid learning, arranged in terms, by semester, year-long, block, or other formats. These may be offered in full- and/or part-time modes of study and credit may be accumulated through the completion of micro-credentials, short-accredited learning, recognition of prior learning or accreditation of prior experiential learning.

## Partnership

2.21 Degree-awarding bodies may deliver courses in partnership with other providers through validation and franchising arrangements. Others may work with partners who deliver specific elements of the course through placement learning or as part of a degree apprenticeship. Subject Benchmark Statements, such as this one, play an important role in helping partners design provision that contributes to threshold standards being met in a specific subject area.

2.22 Knowledge and understanding of commercial and professional practice are developed in a variety of ways, for example through partnership. Externally-set, 'live' projects, placements and internships are a common feature of Art and Design courses. In addition, many courses encourage partnership and third-sector engagement, which serves to expand students' awareness of contemporary contexts and issues.

2.23 Professional, statutory or professional body (PSRB) accreditation for Art and Design programmes offers opportunities for curriculum areas. The process usually involves a review



of curriculum, facilities, staffing, student assessment and professional partnerships throughout the provision. Industry-led skills body accreditation, for example from the Institution of Engineering Designers and the Chartered Society of Designers, accredit courses ensuring industry preparation for students training for specific contexts such as product design. Other professional bodies, for example the [Association of Photographers](#) (AOP, photography), the [Association of Illustrators](#), (AOI, illustration) and [Interior Design Educators](#) do not accredit courses, but courses that are affiliated to them have access to professional/industry insights and opportunities.

## Monitoring and review

2.24 Degree-awarding bodies, and their collaborative partnerships, routinely collect and analyse information and undertake periodic course review according to their own needs. Considering the student voice will form part of this. They draw on a range of external reference points, including this Statement, to ensure that their provision aligns with sector norms. Monitoring and evaluation are a periodic assessment of a course, conducted internally or by external independent evaluators. Evaluation uses information from both current and historic monitoring to develop an understanding of student achievement or inform future course planning.

2.25 Externality is an essential component of the quality assurance system in the UK. Providers will use external reviewers as part of periodic review to gain an independent perspective on any proposed changes and ensure threshold standards are achieved and content is appropriate for the subject.

2.26 The external examining system currently in use across the UK higher education sector also helps to ensure consistency in the way academic standards are secured by degree-awarding bodies. External examiners of Art and Design courses may be invited to attend end-of-degree exhibitions, visit students in their studios, and tour specialist workshop facilities, providing them with an opportunity to directly observe the students' creative work and technical proficiency in the context of their practical learning environments.

2.27 External Examiners may be asked to comment on the types, principles and purposes of assessments being offered to students. They will consider the types of modules on offer to students, the outcomes of a cohort and how these compare to similar provision offered within other UK higher education providers. External examiners are asked to produce a report each year and make recommendations for changes to modules and assessments (where appropriate). Subject Benchmark Statements, such as this one, can play an important role in supporting external examiners in advising on whether threshold standards are being met in a specific subject area.

2.28 Courses with professional and vocational outcomes may also require evaluation and accreditation from professional and regulatory bodies. These are usually done through a combination of site visits and desk-based reviews.

### 3. Content, structure and delivery

3.1 This section explores how the content of the curriculum for Art and Design shapes the likely teaching and learning strategy and the modes of assessment that allow students to demonstrate they have met the benchmark standards and discriminate between different levels of attainment.

#### Content

3.2 Curricula across Art and Design increasingly respond to technological innovation, planetary concerns, global perspectives, and the changing needs of the creative industries.

3.3 Art and Design courses typically encompass the following areas of study.

- Art and design practices: the exploration of visual, material, spatial, and digital languages across a wide range of media.
- Historical, theoretical, and critical studies: examining or developing Art and Design through the lens of movements, contexts, and discourses.
- Research-led practice and methods: developing critical and creative research approaches, often through iterative making and reflective practice.
- Professional skills development: real-world engagement through placements, live briefs, exhibitions, community and industry collaboration, that explore the role of Art and Design in society and its impact on shaping experiences.

3.4 Art and Design courses are designed to equip students with the knowledge and abilities for independent thinking, creative innovation, and professional engagement, supporting their growth as artists, designers, and creatives.

#### Teaching and learning

3.5 Art and Design employs a wide range of approaches for teaching, learning and assessment, and requires appropriate physical and digital resources to enable the students to meet learning outcomes. Activities reflect a broad spectrum of students' ways of learning and typically include a focus on studio-based learning, workshops, tutorials, reviews, peer-to-peer learning activities, study visits, lectures and seminars.

3.6 Studio-based teaching is focused primarily on enabling students to develop creative abilities, including conceptualisation, visualisation, experimentation and informed risk-taking. These abilities are complemented by technical skills to translate ideas into outcomes, and transferable skills such as problem-solving, communication and teamworking. The teaching on lecture-based modules is primarily focused on enabling students to widen and deepen their knowledge of the subject, including its historical and theoretical contexts. Project-based learning allows for a diverse range of outcomes, and mirrors professional working practices.

3.7 Teaching is supplemented by support services to ensure that students access the learning resources that enable them to meet the learning outcomes of their modules. These resources may include technical facilities and the expertise of technical demonstrators or instructors, to support students' development, build on existing techniques, experiment with individual methodologies, and achieve their independent visions.

3.8 Undergraduate courses are typically structured around credit-bearing modules and are divided into 'scheduled' and 'independent' learning. The balance between these varies by module type and level: lecture-based modules may involve more independent study, while studio-based modules often include more scheduled, collaborative activity. As students progress, learning typically becomes increasingly self-directed.

3.9 Modules at each level of study contribute to different course aims. This enables students to meet specific learning outcomes by learning new and different skills in each module and at each level, and/or build on skills developed in previous modules, ensuring that they can meet all the learning outcomes on completion of the course. Students' work is typically assessed in relation to the specific learning outcomes of each module, reflecting the aims of the module and its particular focus.

3.10 The pedagogy of Art and Design is student-centred, encouraging independent thinking, research, experimentation, making and creative development. Teaching and learning can be flexible, often incorporating optional outcomes that allow students to explore individual interests.

3.11 Subject learning is discursive and includes opportunities to develop theoretical knowledge and an understanding of cultural, industrial and commercial contexts. This learning is likely to involve activities that engage with written and visual texts, group discussion, reviews, presentations and other forms of communication, listening and problem-solving. Learning experiences are often linked to practice-based activities, and outcomes and are integral to the development of a creative practitioner.

3.12 Academic staff engage in professional practice, scholarly activity and/or research, to develop their own subject expertise and ensure that the curriculum is current. They also engage in Continuing Professional Development, to ensure that they are familiar with up-to-date teaching and assessment methods.

3.13 Teaching can take place in-person, online, or by a combination of the two. The chosen delivery method is appropriate to the learning and accessibility needs of students (see Accessibility 1.17-1.24). The teaching environment includes studios, technical workshops with analogue and digital resources, in addition to lecture theatres and classrooms. Physical facilities are supported by Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) that provide a platform to host teaching materials. Online teaching environments are increasingly dynamic, extending beyond traditional VLEs to support more interactive, adaptive, and collaborative modes of learning.

3.14 Group work and group projects offer opportunities for students to develop skills that are highly valued by employers, including: leadership; teamworking and collaboration; organisation; communication and time management. (see Employability 1.34-1.40).

3.15 Studying Art and Design offers relevant opportunities for students to work collaboratively on interdisciplinary projects that can inform theory, policy and practice. Students in Art and Design can shape, actively contribute to, and lead interdisciplinary projects across a range of different subjects using diverse and creative approaches, with a focus on contexts, narratives and identities. Participating in interdisciplinary projects also exposes Art and Design students to novel approaches, and to new ways of working and learning from others. It provides opportunities to work as part of a cross-disciplinary team, which mirrors professional working practices.

3.16 Art and Design courses include learning and teaching activities that are directly related to industry, entrepreneurship and to employability (see Employability 1.34-1.40). These activities may be part of modules that have a specific focus on professional skills and employability, or be integrated across a number of modules. Many providers offer an optional placement year, or a study abroad option, as part of an undergraduate course, enabling the development of confidence and other attributes that are highly valued by employers. Course teams liaise with industry and with the third sector to provide live projects, and students have opportunities to enter high-profile competitions, while industry professionals provide input as guest speakers, part-time lecturers, and/or mentors.

## Assessment and feedback

3.17 Assessment and feedback are critical processes which underpin student development and their learning experience. Assessments are typically designed to enable students to show that they have met learning outcomes, by evidencing the required skills, knowledge and understanding for their subject. Within Art and Design courses, the significance of process and developing individual practice requires consistent student engagement, using a variety of inclusive assessment strategies and philosophies.

### Assessment

3.18 Art and Design courses encompass a wide range of creative disciplines, requiring diverse and inclusive modes of assessment. Assessment and feedback are critical to learning. Art and Design courses use a breadth of approaches to assess and feed back to students. Many of these are unique to the disciplines.

3.19 The nature of Art and Design practice necessitates a holistic and inclusive approach to assessment. While assessment will focus on different facets of a submission, Art and Design assessment balances a holistic view of the submission while attending to the discrete components.

3.20 Recognising the diversity of student profiles (see Accessibility 1.17-1.24), assessment processes and formats of submission can be co-designed to provide students with opportunities to undertake practices of assessment that best support their creative direction.

3.21 A distinctive feature of Art and Design assessment is that it involves assessing the process and the product. The creative process can be formatively assessed as students develop their work, but it is also often summatively assessed at the end of a project, where it accompanies the final creative output, their journey being integral to the assessment process.

3.22 Assessment practice extends beyond education into careers and professional contexts. This provides opportunities to explore and experience applications of theory, practice and creative criticality, in an external and professional context. Professional projects encourage students to develop networks and collaborate with communities and peers outside their immediate subject field, replicating professional experience in the creative industries.

3.23 Self and peer assessment foster critical thinking, promote student engagement and enhance the understanding of learning outcomes, criteria and standards. Self-assessment encourages ownership of learning, developing self-reflection and evaluation skills while peer assessment promotes collaboration, communication, analysis, and opportunities to learn from each other.

3.24 It is important for Art and Design courses to respond to, and drive, new approaches to forms and practices of assessment, whilst maintaining ethical standards in relation to academic integrity. Digital and emerging technologies can be utilised within assessment strategies, along with a critical understanding of their limitations and associated challenges.

3.25 The breadth and profile of assessment combinations found in Art and Design include diverse assessment methods that support students to demonstrate critical, analytical, reflective and creative skills. The following list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.

3.25.1 Individual projects including dissertations, contextual reports on practice and

practice-based portfolios that are intended to demonstrate understanding, knowledge, critical engagement, research skills and/or creative achievement.

- 3.25.2 Objects, artefacts and products (physical and/or digital, and multimedia, including audio or video recordings of live performances, or live performances in a public setting) that are outcomes of creative/ individual practice, where conceptual, creative and technical skills can be assessed.
- 3.25.3 Collaborative and team-based projects to foster interdisciplinary working and problem-solving may be assessed through a mixture of continuous assessment, final presentation and self and peer feedback.
- 3.25.4 Critical sketchbooks, development work or reflective journals detailing conceptual development, ideas generation, creative exploration, underpinning research, development of practice and techniques, and critical evaluation. Learning logs or Personal Development Plans can be used by students to reflect on their learning during projects.
- 3.25.5 Presentations and group reviews that test communication skills in individual and group situations and allow opportunities for self-assessment and peer feedback, developing students' abilities to engage with and formulate criteria for judgement.
- 3.25.6 Individual or group-based presentations or 'pitches' to professionals, based on live briefs that develop communication skills and familiarity with professional standards and practices.
- 3.25.7 Exhibitions, events, installations or site-based outputs (community-based projects) that utilise physical location as a component of the creative or scholarly work, replicating professional contexts.
- 3.25.8 Project documentation, which may include photographs and audiovisual media, planning and production paperwork, budgets, and health and safety documentation.
- 3.25.9 Website or other online presence evidencing engagement with professional practice.
- 3.25.10 Practical time-limited examinations that replicate professional conditions, and allow students to present technical and interpretative skills in creative practice
- 3.25.11 Essays, blogs and other coursework which test students' contextual knowledge, their ability to investigate a topic in depth, organise material using relevant academic conventions, and communicate ideas.
- 3.25.12 Reports on design work, which may take the form of fieldwork or laboratory prototyping that demonstrate the students' ability to analyse and present evidence from a research project carried out in a manner appropriate to its disciplinary and/or cultural context.
- 3.25.13 Portfolios of practice and/or reports on the experiences gained and learning achieved through internships or external placements, including periods of study abroad.
- 3.25.14 Reports or commentaries on practice, which may include critical evaluation and reflection, practice-as-research methodologies, project reports, and

contextualisation of practice within artistic, technological, theoretical and/or cultural fields.

## Feedback

3.26 Feedback is integral to learning, and fundamental to effective assessment strategies that combine formative and summative feedback approaches to support incremental learning in Art and Design.

3.27 Feedback is continuous and encourages students to undertake cycles of iteration and reflection as their work progresses. This can be achieved through structured, formative assessment and feedback or informally as part of ongoing learning and teaching activities. Continuous feedback supports students in navigating the uncertainty and ambiguity of open-ended, creative projects.

3.28 Feedback is generated in a range of formal and informal contexts, including one-on-one conversations (semi-private), group tutorials (semi-public), and reviews/critiques involving external stakeholders (public). Peer feedback can be part of both formal and informal feedback structures, and is essential to building critical thinking and shared understanding amongst students.

3.29 Feedback is highly situational. As students' progress through a project/practice, feedback is typically more informal, exploratory, and generative in the early stages, becoming more formal and interpretative as the project advances. The open-ended nature of creative practice in Art and Design means feedback can be highly responsive to each student's progress and individual learning style. The timing of the feedback – whether provided immediately after an activity, or after a period has passed – can significantly influence its impact.

3.30 Students play a crucial and dynamic role as active participants in the feedback process. Rather than simply receiving feedback as a passive experience, students are engaged in a dialogue where feedback is co-constructed collaboratively with academics and peers. This collaborative approach emphasises the shared responsibility of both students and academics in shaping the feedback process.

3.31 The term 'Crit' or 'Critique' was historically embedded within the studio model of teaching Art and Design. It has recently become associated with power imbalances and negative experiences, and in some providers, it has been replaced by the term 'review'. Regardless of the term used, the design of learning environments where the critical discernment of quality is conducted inclusively and compassionately is a significant aspect of learning.

3.32 Feedback is shared in various formats, including verbal exchanges such as conversations, critiques/reviews, tutorials, audio recordings, and written comments and annotated work.

## 4. Benchmark standards

### Introduction

4.1 This Subject Benchmark Statement sets out the minimum (threshold), typical and excellent standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours degree in Art and Design. Demonstrating these standards over time will show that a student has achieved the range of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of graduates in Art and Design.

4.2 The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement will be and should refer to [Annex D in The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#). This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours - 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

4.3 Please note that minimum threshold standards are not intended to specify universal competence standards for a discipline. If a provider chooses to develop competence standards (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) as part of a programme specification these can be informed by the relevant Benchmark Statement along with any PSRB requirements. In these circumstances providers should follow the most recent guidance from the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#).

4.4 The standards set out in Table 1 are typically demonstrated in interconnected ways. The descriptors for levels of attainment set out a range of attributes and skills that build on each other incrementally. Three levels of attainment are defined across a range of outcomes: threshold, typical and excellent.

### Undergraduate degrees: threshold, typical and excellent standards

Table 1. Three levels of attainment: threshold, typical and excellent

Subject knowledge and understanding			
Attributes / Skills	Threshold	Typical	Excellent
<b>Research and inquiry</b>	Demonstrates the ability to gather and synthesise information from contextual sources and materials	Undertakes research employing appropriate methods across a broad spectrum of sources	Engages critically with diverse sources, synthesising insight and demonstrating how this supports creative development
<b>Material knowledge</b>	Applies use of materials and processes appropriate to context	Experiments with materials and processes to generate creative ideas	Engages with materials in a purposeful, explorative and imaginative way, applying them confidently to produce creative outcomes
<b>Contextual awareness</b>	Recognises key historical and current theoretical, and cultural contexts	Applies contextual understanding and key factors to shape creative practice	Integrates contextual understanding, factors and behaviours to support creative ambition



<b>Contemporary discourse and debate</b>	Identifies current debates and conversation relevant to art, design and cultural production	Engages with relevant debates and ideas to inform thinking, practice and critical reflection	Applies critical understanding of discourse to contribute to current disciplinary dialogues
<b>Analysis and realisation</b>			
<b>Analysis</b>	Recognises and interprets ideas and practices within cultural, creative, and conceptual contexts	Systematically applies analysis to inform creative practice and decision-making	Interrogates and experiments with creative possibilities through analysis and synthesis
<b>Realisation</b>	Identifies and uses suitable methods to develop and complete creative outcomes	Uses effective methods and techniques to realise imaginative creative outcomes	Consolidates and generates understanding through creating imaginative outcomes that express intent and originality
<b>Evaluation and reflection</b>			
<b>Reflection</b>	Reflects on creative decisions and outcomes, to develop self-reflection and understand strengths and weaknesses	Critically evaluates the impact of process, development and outcomes	Applies critical evaluation, self-awareness and reflection to improve future work
<b>Audience and impact</b>	Recognises how creative work conveys meaning and is open to interpretation	Considers audiences when conceiving, developing and presenting outcomes	Communicates work to ensure relevance to diverse audiences or contexts, sensitively demonstrating awareness of complexity and ambiguity
<b>Professional and transferable Skills</b>			
<b>Attributes / Skills</b>	<b>Threshold</b>	<b>Typical</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Independence and management</b>	Plans time and tasks to meet deadlines	Organises time and resources effectively to solve problems and manage projects	Works independently with initiative and resilience in sometimes uncertain contexts
<b>Communication</b>	Describes ideas, intent or experience through appropriate formats	Selects and uses appropriate communication methods to develop and share creative ideas effectively	Integrates critical and experimental approaches to purposefully communicate ideas with conviction, coherence and purpose
<b>Ethics and social responsibility</b>	Shows awareness and empathy of the creative sector's ethical and social responsibilities	Engages with ethical principles, inclusivity, access and social considerations in decision making	Applies critical practice to address inequalities of representation in the contexts in which art and design is produced and consumed
<b>Sustainability</b>	Evidences an understanding of sustainability and acknowledges the creative sector's role in	Actively considers environmental, social and economic sustainability in proposed decisions and	Integrates sustainability as a core value in creative work, showing awareness of circularity, resource impact and

	responding to environmental and social challenges	production methods	long-term value
<b>Enterprise and entrepreneurship</b>	Recognises the potential for work to be professionally presented	Develops innovative creative outputs within professional or public contexts	Devises opportunities to publicly present, exhibit, commercialise, or publish creative outputs
<b>Employability</b>	Recognises and articulates personal strengths and areas for development to establish an awareness of professional networks	Demonstrates commitment to personal development and to building a professional network	Actively seeks and capitalises on opportunities to build professional networks, demonstrate initiative, adaptability and professionalism

## Postgraduate degrees

4.5 Master's level requires higher levels of technical, critical, conceptual, and contextual understanding, in addition to meeting the benchmark standards at undergraduate level listed in Table 1.

4.6 Postgraduate courses in Art and Design include courses that focus on research, specialised/ advanced study, and professional/ practice. The holistic nature of Art and Design practice means that typical postgraduate courses include an element of all three.

4.7 Graduates of Master's Degrees in Art and Design are typically able to:

- 4.7.1 systematically and rigorously apply theoretical, practical, technical and contextual knowledge in the development of creative, academic or professional outcomes
- 4.7.2 apply materials extensively and inventively to expand making processes and introduce new approaches to creative practice
- 4.7.3 systematically develop and apply methods and methodologies to support advanced inquiry
- 4.7.4 critically and comprehensively analyse research, iteration and contextual factors to inform the advancement of practice
- 4.7.5 professionally realise practice, research, ideas and knowledge in visual, verbal and/or written forms applied within varied, complex and unpredictable contexts
- 4.7.6 undertake critical reflection upon practice in a systematic and purposeful manner to support intellectual growth and innovation
- 4.7.7 confidently apply professional working methods within a range of complex situations
- 4.7.8 deploy flexible and agile working methods to support project development and enable a creative approach to problem-solving
- 4.7.9 situate practice in a clearly defined and critically informed context,

interrogating its relationship to ethical working practices, responsibilities and implications

- 4.7.10 interpret knowledge within a clearly defined context that is sensitive to cultural, environmental, social and political contexts
- 4.7.11 apply creative strategies that centre equity and inclusion, responding to structural injustices through design or artistic intervention
- 4.7.12 apply collaborative working methods with initiative, responsiveness and leadership to realise shared goals and contribute to positive change.

## **Integrated Master's**

4.8 Integrated Master's degrees in Art and Design combine undergraduate and postgraduate study into a single, continuous programme that meets Level 7 standards. This is through progressive academic and creative development, culminating in advanced, autonomous practice.

## 5. Membership of the Advisory Group

### Membership of the Advisory Group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Art & Design 2025

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