

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Arts, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Documentary**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2020**.

The aims of the programme are:

- to develop and deepen students understanding of the nature of multi genre, multi-platform documentary production;
- to develop students ability to produce and direct their documentary projects to a professional level;
- to provide students with the tools to evaluate their own and their peers' work;
- to provide students with a grounding in the business aspects of documentary production– proposal writing, budgeting, legal matters, and an awareness of the international documentary market so that they are more equipped to conceive, produce and sell their work;
- to give students greater context to their ideas and work through exposure to a wide range of media material, principally other films, but also art works, non-fiction VR, podcasts, books etc.;
- to develop research skills and broaden the critical context of their practice as documentary directors , and in so doing to deepen students aesthetic awareness of visual, immersive and aural forms of non-fiction storytelling, so that these then translate into their work;
- to provide the opportunity for students to develop their craft and technical skills working with industry compatible facilities which will offer them a strong foundation for a professional practice as a documentary Director and harness them with more skills to work in the industry should they so wish.

The programme explores and develops the practice of documentary storytelling and gives students the opportunity to specialise more deeply in their chosen field and offers teaching and guidance in a range of practical production skills from the conception of a project, directing, sound recording, editing, shooting, budgeting and pitching, marketing through to cinematography and editing.

The Masters programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks). It has three elements and students are examined in all three. The brief outline of the programme is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the Department. Whilst being a self-contained degree in its own right, the programme provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to PhD study in the same or a closely related field.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at

any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- an understanding of documentary genre and its changing boundaries;
- advanced understanding of the changing technologies and the impact on documentary production;
- advanced understanding of the processes of making a documentary project from initial concept to final form;
- advanced understanding of the various stages of production and where appropriate the technological developments that are driving them i.e. research, shooting, editing, sound work, 360 camera, Unity etc;
- an awareness of the institutions and mechanisms of multi-platform documentary, from cinema, to podcasts and immersive storytelling ;
- a critical knowledge of the current and changing platforms for documentary storytelling
- Understand more effectively the workings of the creative industries.

Skills and other attributes

Students following the programme will gain the ability to:

- research and develop ideas for documentary projects;*
- research their own ideas more effectively;*
- translate concepts into audio visual compositions;
- develop and execute production strategies;*
- work with computer based technologies to achieve their creative ambitions;*
- work with digital video cameras, smartphones, 360 cameras, zoom recorders and VR to realise their creative ambitions;
- to develop their compositional skills – visual and audio as part of a wider aesthetic awareness;*
- analyse their own work in terms of a range of aesthetic criteria;*
- to be able to more critically and effectively evaluate other work, their own and their peers;
- discuss and debate their work within a public forum;*
- to be able to effectively analyse and reflect intellectually on their work within a verbal presentation exploring developments in their practice;*
- to develop their skills in the writing of proposals for ideas and programmes that best present their concepts;*
- to be able to design and produce a website to market and promote their film portfolio and professional skillset

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning is mostly by means of development lab days, oral presentations, tutorials, technical classes, guided independent research, practice work projects, evaluation of those projects and a practical dissertation. The strategy is for a balanced programme that both makes students aware of a grammar within the form and showing them how to work within it, whilst encouraging research and creativity that produces work that is innovative and appropriate to a Master's programme.

Assessment of knowledge, understanding and development is typically by the making of practical work (either a film, an audio only or 360/VR project), supported by a portfolio, oral presentation and the production of a Director's website. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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For students first registered in or after September 2020

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Details of the programme structure(s)

The full-time programme lasts 52 weeks, beginning in September. It has three elements and students are examined in all three. The brief outline of the programme is shown below; however students can obtain further details from the [Department](#).

Credits are indicated in brackets, and indicate proportional weighting towards the MA, PGDip and PGCert classification grade.

Students must take the following **mandatory** courses:

- (i) MA5301 Documentary Authorship (50 credits)
- (ii) MA5303 The Innovation Lab (50 credits)
- (iii) MA5304 Major Documentary Production/Dissertation (80 credits)

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Progression and award requirements

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in oral presentations, contributions to seminar discussion and coursework.

Please note that if you hold a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

To pass the **Masters** programme a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in courses which constitute up to a maximum of 40 credits, provided that the overall weighted average is at least 50.00%, but a failure mark (i.e. below 50%) in the dissertation cannot be condoned.

The Master's degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Master's degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any course of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Diploma** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50% *and* has either chosen not to proceed to the dissertation, or has failed the dissertation on either the first or second attempt. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not usually condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, but if they are, such condoned fails would be in courses which do not constitute more than 40 credits.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any course. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

The **Postgraduate Certificate** may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any taught course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks in the region 40-49% are not usually condoned for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate.

The Postgraduate Certificate with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 60.00% or above, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Postgraduate Certificate with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any course which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any course. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

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Student support and guidance

- The Programme Director meets with the students on a regular basis to advise on academic, pastoral and welfare issues. The Programme Director acts as a point of contact for any questions about the programme throughout the year.
- Course coordinators, tutors and dissertation supervisors provide a back-up system of academic, pastoral and welfare advice.
- All students are allocated a Personal Adviser, with whom they meet at least once a term, and more regularly if required, to discuss all matters relating to their programme and for pastoral support.
- Induction programmes for orientation and introduction to the Department and College occur at the beginning of each academic year.
- All staff are available and accessible through an office-hour system.
- Representation on the Student-Staff Committee.
- Detailed MA handbook and course booklets.
- Extensive supporting materials and learning resources in College and University libraries, as well as the Computer Centre.
- Computing facilities, studio, cameras, sound, editing, and technical support available in Egham.
- College Careers Service and Departmental Employability Lead officer.
- Access to all College and University support services, including Student Counselling Service, Health Centre, Students' Union and students with additional learning needs also have access to Disability and Dyslexia Services (DDS).

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Admission requirements

For details of admissions requirements please refer to the [Course Finder](#).

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Further learning and career opportunities

The Media Arts department is developing a strong research culture and has a growing number of Practice-based MPhil and PhD students. Further study to research degree level, ultimately leading to a PhD, is therefore one option. Advancement in the film and television industries in areas of directing, producing research, editing and camera work would be likely. The transferable skills of the programme mean students can work in a wide range of areas such as IT, research, archives, and visually related fields. The programmes' Foundations of Production course is also vocationally targeted to equip students with the wide range of skills which may enable them to form their own production companies. In addition, the College has a Careers Advisory Service at Egham which is open to any students during normal College working hours, or by email at any time. The Department also has a careers

adviser. For more details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers & Employability Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF 2014) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The scoring system for the REF 2014 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour and 3* indicating research that is internationally excellent. 81% of the College's research profile was deemed to be within the 4* or 3* categories, an increase of over 20% since 2008. This result placed Royal Holloway 31st overall in the UK for 4* and 3* research and 33rd based on an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) score.

The Department of Media Arts is ranked 8th in the UK for research for 4* research. Staff are leading writers in their academic fields, and several maintain professional media careers as directors and screenwriters. Staff are frequently called upon to serve on national bodies including the HEFCE, AHRC, Skillset, UK Film Council and BFI advisory committees etc.

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List of programmes with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation

The Masters programme is taught by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London and visiting speakers, and leads to an award of the University of London. The Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate lead to awards of Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The programme is not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The Banner programme code is given in parentheses.

Master of Arts Programme in Documentary by Practice

MA in Digital Documentary (3545)

Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Documentary (3546)

Postgraduate Certificate in Digital Documentary (3547)

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