

MA Contemporary Arts

Location

MMU Cheshire, Crewe Campus

Programme study

1 year full-time
2 or 3 years part-time

Location

MMU Cheshire, Crewe Campus

Entry requirements

You will normally have an honours degree in the arts with a good pass mark (2.1 or 1st) and/or will have substantial relevant professional experience.

Specific Requirements

Applicants are chosen on the basis of their application form and an interview/audition

Enquiries

Department of Contemporary Arts on 0161 247 5259
Email: b.j.buckley@mmu.ac.uk

If you require further information you can

- email the Programme Leader, Jane Linden on j.linden@mmu.ac.uk
- write to the Programme Leader, MA Contemporary Arts, Department of Contemporary Arts, MMU Cheshire, Alsager Campus, Hassall Road, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2HL

Contact Jane Linden directly if you would like to discuss the programme in relation to your specific interests and aspirations before you apply - preliminary visits and informal interviews are also available.

How we see MA Contemporary Arts (MACA)

The term 'contemporary' can mean different things to different people. At the forefront of the Masters degree in Contemporary Arts here at MMU Cheshire, is the idea that artworks act as catalysts to spark discussion and debate on today's cultures. Within the context of a rigorous exploration of our creative and critical histories - art worldly and otherwise – we encourage lively, fresh and interrogative work that draws from the student practitioner experience. There is a strong emphasis on the idea of the artist as researcher. We explore the many forms this might take in this 'imbrication' or overlapping of practice and research.

The Department houses a range of practice-based undergraduate arts degrees (Art Media Performance, Drama, Dance, Contemporary Theatre and Performance, a number of Music pathways, and Creative Writing). These programmes provide a rich arts community which encourages and supports practice that works across, or between, disciplines. The extent to which this interdisciplinary approach informs and characterises your own practice will depend on how you position yourself as an artist. So whether you are an installation maker, live artist, composer, choreographer or theatre director, for example, you will engage in projects that are inspired through a critical discourse in which the expressions of a range of arts practices are subject to shared enquiry and mutual encounter.



The Masters degree is supported by the Department's enthusiastic supervisory team with a wide-ranging expert practitioner research culture.

"The programme has consistently attracted students with excellent arts-practitioner potential, as well as students with more traditionally "academic" skills. The recent (and different) AHRC awards provide evidence of this strength"

External Examiner comments, 2005.

The Student Experience

You will be a graduate and/or a professional or emergent practitioner who wishes to develop your work within the contemporary field and who enjoys the dialogue between theory and practice. The MA is structured around a lecture-seminar series (Contemporary Arts Issues) common to all students.



Meeting once a week students will engage in a range of critical debates relating to contemporary practices and discourses. Speakers may be

from both practice and theory backgrounds and are initially selected to address the range of interests of the cohort.



You will be required to read set material before each session and engage in discussion – occasionally leading seminars and offering contributions of new material. You will also have the opportunity to invite discussion on your own practice as part of open seminar sessions with the Department's research community. The unit requires you to write a series of (un-assessed) diagnostic essays in preparation for a 3,000 word essay and finally a substantial piece of practice related 'complementary writing' or a dissertation. These assignments encourage you to consider carefully the relationship you have with your own practical work and, as such, help you develop a conceptual framework for your practice on the premise that clear writing fosters clear thinking. Several sessions are devoted to how we might develop this particular relationship or 'meta-discourse' and how we might begin to articulate it through different modes of writing.



Your practical work is supported by supervisory tutors with particular research interests and practical expertise in your subject area*. You will meet regularly at mutually convenient times to discuss the development of two major projects. Working either individually or as an ensemble your first practical project (Arts Praxis 1), will be closely supervised and/or directed by an appropriate staff member or team, and you will have access to a range of workshops and skills training to enable you to work more independently on your final project (Arts Praxis 2).



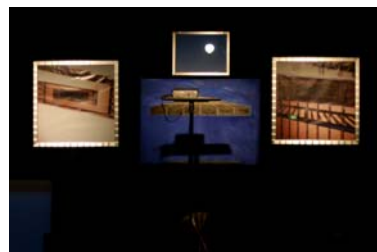
The MA gives you the opportunity to develop a line of sophisticated experimentation with one set of ideas or processes, or to explore the possibility of working with different media or disciplines. You begin by working on a Learning Agreement which becomes the contract for the work to be finally assessed. As the practice develops the Learning Agreement will go through a series of changes and finally direct the specific assessment criteria for your individual projects. Your work will be supported by critical evaluation and documentation,

which forms part of the assessment. All practical work is publicly showcased within the university



We aim to organise events and opportunities to develop skills and gain experience from working with professional artists/companies. These may include weekend workshops, research trips, and collaborative projects. As far as possible, depending on the cohort's interests, we are committed to facilitating a range of activities that help you get your work out on to the professional circuit.

Our studios are well equipped and supported by a strong technical team, and access is available until late at night. As well as occasional trips to exhibitions/events in the North West, students will also be able to see a range of exciting, innovative and challenging work on site at the professional Arts Centre www.alsagerartscenter.org.uk .





"Because many of the staff are practicing artists themselves I have been encouraged to develop external links and have gained a lot of experience working with theatre companies in Italy, Denmark and Japan as well as here in the UK"

Linda Cunningham, MACA student, 2005/7.



"For me the course has enabled my practical thinking to develop, especially in context with theory – locating a clear conceptual framework for my practice. This MA has allowed me to find my concentrated area of interest and given me the support to experiment and develop the work on a more challenging level"

Wayne Jackson, MACA student 2006/08.



* Check out the research interests of staff at the MMU Cheshire website. Key MA Contemporary Arts supervisors include: Professor Robin Nelson, Professor Allen Fisher, Fred McVittie, Vincent Cacalano, Dr Rachel Duerden, Anna Macdonald, Dr Martin Blain, Jane Linden, Nancy Reilly-McVittie, Kat Drakopoulou, Neil Mackenzie, John Deeney, Phillip Stanier, Dr Jane Turner.



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- visit the department website: www.mmu.ac.uk/dca



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Most photographs by Brian Slater