Programme Specification
Postgraduate Programmes

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Awarding Body/Institution	University of London
Teaching Institution	Goldsmiths, University of London
Name of Final Award and Programme Title	MA Cultural Studies
Name of Interim Award(s)	N/A
Duration of Study/Period of Registration	1 year full-time / 2 years part-time
UCAS Code(s)	N/A
HECos Code(s)	(101233) Cultural Studies
QAA Benchmark Group	N/A
FHEQ Level of Award	Level 7
Programme Accredited by	N/A
Date Programme Specification last updated/approved	August 2017
Primary Department/Institute	Media, Communications & Cultural Studies

Departments which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme
Anthropology, Computing, Confucius Institute for Dance & Performance, English & Comparative Literature, History, Institute for Creative & Cultural Entrepreneurship, Politics, Sociology,

Programme overview

The MA Cultural Studies offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of contemporary culture. Students are introduced to a variety of perspectives and traditions as well as to the creative interface between such disciplines. The programme addresses art and the city, the culture industries, politics and globalisation, and media in the information age, as central themes. It incorporates the basic themes and leading figures of classical Cultural Studies as well as the latest developments in Cultural Studies and Cultural Theory.

Programme entry requirements

This Masters course is aimed at graduates with an interest in working in Global Cultural Studies widely defined. Some candidates may come via the traditional academic route, while others will have experience of working within the cultural field in some way prior to undertaking the course. Candidates will normally have an undergraduate degree in the humanities or social sciences. An upper second class honours degree or its equivalent in a relevant discipline is normally required. Non-native speakers will normally have to satisfy the University of London requirements of IELTS (6.5).

Aims of the programme

Specifically, the MA Cultural Studies aims to enable students:

•to engage critically with the most advanced cultural theory;
•to consider the political context of the operations of global culture and cultural industries;
•to understand the relationship between text and image within a range of Cultural Studies contexts;
•to understand the methodological issues surrounding the production of innovative research in Cultural Studies;
•to pursue and consolidate their particular areas of interest through the choice of options offered on the programme;

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•via the dissertation, to pursue an in-depth exploration of one particular issue in contemporary culture in relation to the broader Cultural Studies field as studied in core and option courses.

What you will be expected to achieve

Students who successfully complete the programme will be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding		Taught by the following modules
A1	demonstrate conceptual awareness of the contours of advanced cultural theory in the context of contemporary cultural practice;	all modules
A2	show awareness of the dynamic relationship between text and image in cultural theory and practice within a Cultural Studies context;	all modules
A3	show understanding of a range of methodological issues surrounding the production of innovative research in Cultural Studies;	all modules
A4	have furthered their understanding of related subject areas in which they have an interest through the choice of options offered on the programme;	all modules
A5	demonstrate, via the dissertation, an in-depth, critical understanding of one particular issue in contemporary culture in relation to the broader Cultural Studies field studied in core and option courses;	all modules

Cognitive and Thinking Skills		Taught by the following modules
B1	critically analyze the political context of the operations of global culture and cultural industries;	all modules
B2	critically analyse the complex interaction of theory and cultural practice;	all modules
B3	systematically and creatively engage in debates relating to cultural theory and relate these to contemporary cultural issues, e.g. within cultural policy, practice or activism in original and imaginative ways;	all modules

Subject Specific Skills and Professional Behaviours and Attitudes		Taught by the following modules
C1	debate salient academic, ethical and technical issues relevant to research methods, and draw on this awareness in designing an effective research project (dissertation);	all modules
C2	demonstrate that they can produce an extended piece of written work of a high academic standard (i.e. adequately researched, planned and structured, clearly written, well- presented and following academic conventions);	all modules
C3	show that they can make convincing use of secondary data (library-based, fieldwork-based or statistical data) to develop a critical and coherent argument, and/or conduct original primary	all modules

	research.	
C4	design, formulate and conduct small-scale research on a range of topics relevant to theory, policy, practice or activism;	all modules

Transferable Skills		**Taught by the following modules**
D1	communicate ideas and present arguments clearly in speech and writing;	all modules
D2	adapt concepts and methods studied and employed flexibly and imaginatively to pursue future specific aims (e. g. professional, political, artistic, academic) within the cultural field;	all modules
D3	confidently design and carry out research on a broad range of topics in the future within the cultural field and/or in academic areas related to cultural studies;	all modules
D4	exercise initiative and personal responsibility in effective independent work with the attendant skills of work organisation, time planning, independent decision-making and keeping to deadlines;	all modules
D5	systematically and creatively engage in debates around culture, relating cultural theory and research to cultural issues arising in a range of contexts	all modules

How you will learn

Knowledge and understanding [K1(a-d)] are developed through recognised protocols of lectures and seminars, in which the development of understanding is reinforced and monitored through student presentations and group discussion. Seminars also foster skills in critical thinking, debate and oral communication [K2(a-c), K3(a), K4(e)]. Students are encouraged to study independently and to make use of the many excellent libraries available to all University of London students [K3(c), K4(d)].

Guidance and support for independent study are provided through individual tutorials. Tutorials are also a means of supporting the planning and production of written assignments, in particular the dissertation [K1(e), K3(d), K4(c)].

Students are strongly encouraged to enhance knowledge and understanding by attending many of the wide range of relevant lectures, seminars and workshops taking place throughout the University of London and beyond [K(a-d)]. Events of particular interest to this cohort are publicised through the noticeboard in the department, the Events listings on the department and college websites, and via an e-mail list.

How you will be assessed

Typically a 30 CAT module will be assessed by a 5-6,000 word essay, sometimes a practical project

MC71205A
Dissertation
(Methodology and Research) Total 60 CATS
- 2000 word critical analysis of research methods (20% weighting).
- Dissertation, completed Summer term: 10-12,000 word Dissertation, end of August (80% weighting)

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Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate a high level of knowledge and critical understanding of selected key theoretical texts in the fields of cultural studies and related fields.

To show critical analytical skills in exploring and/or applying concepts in written work

To demonstrate convincing use and engagement with relevant data and source materials

To survey and select appropriate primary and secondary sources for written work using library facilities.

Marking criteria

Mark	Descriptor	Specific Marking Criteria
80-100%	Distinction (Outstanding/Exceptional)	Marks above 80 are awarded for work that not only meets all the criteria for a 70-79% mark, but displays exceptional standards of scholarship and originality. Such work is considered outstanding, and of publishable quality.
70-79%	Distinction	Awarded when candidates show evidence of extensive relevant reading and relevant cultural phenomena. Candidate shows an outstanding grasp of current major issues in the field. This knowledge will have been reviewed critically with insight and independence of thought. Arguments and the presentation of evidence will demonstrate sophisticated reasoning and be exceptionally clear, focused and cogent. Where work in electronic media has been used in conjunction with written material as part of course assessment, this work must be distinguished and thoroughly integrated with the central theses of the written material.
60-69%	Merit	Awarded when candidates show consistency and fluency in discussing and evaluating cultural phenomena and theories drawn from a wide range of sources. They will demonstrate an ability to relate this reading to their topic, and will clearly have understood and assimilated the relevant literature. Where work in electronic media has been used in conjunction with written material as part of course assessment, this work must be competent and well-integrated with the content of the written material.
50-59%	Pass	Awarded where there is clear evidence of knowledge and understanding, but there may be limited development of ideas, critical comment or methodology. There will be reference to relevant reading and cultural phenomena, though not necessarily critical evaluation. Within these limitations there will be indication that the candidate has grasped fundamental concepts and procedures in the field. Where work in electronic media has been used in conjunction with written material as part of course assessment, this work is poorly integrated with the content of the written material.
30-49%	Fail	A fail grade indicates that a candidate has not satisfied the examiners that they have read and understood the essential texts of the course and that there is inadequate organisation of the work. Research involved in the writing of the coursework or the dissertation may be poorly

		organised and inadequately discussed. There may be confusion and incoherence and unfocused comment on literature. Where work in electronic media has been used in conjunction with written material as part of course assessment, this work is poorly integrated with the content of the written material.
10-29%	Bad fail	Represents a significant overall failure to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes.
1-9%	Very bad fail	A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.
0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.

How the programme is structured

The MA consists of a combination of compulsory and option modules and a dissertation (for which teaching in research methods is provided). Students are required to accumulate 180 CATS to graduate - the equivalent of 4 x 30 CATS and a dissertation (including methods) valued at 60 CATS.

Variations to the standard part-time route:
Students may be permitted, at the discretion of the module convenor, to vary the way their optional modules are spread across the two years. The standard route set out below is balanced, in that it allows students to complete modules with a value of 90 CATS each year, yet there may be other equally viable routes. In recognition of the fact that students taking the programme on a part-time basis may have variable professional working patterns and other commitments over the two years, as much flexibility as possible is offered in terms of when they the optional courses are taken. For example, students may choose to take one of their 30 CATS (or 2 x 15 CATS) options in Term 2, Year 2 instead of Term 1, Year 1 or Term 1, Year 2. This would maintain a fairly even workload across all terms. Other variations might lead to a near-full-time workload in one term while substantially freeing up another.

In all cases where a student wishes to deviate from the standard route the programme convenor should be satisfied that (a) the route they are choosing is the most viable, taking into account both the requirements of the programme and their external (e.g. working) commitments; (b) they are able to cope adequately with any extra workload that will result from the variation to the recommended standard route.

Core modules must normally be completed within the framework set out below, since the completion of Cultural Theory and Crisis and Critique are progression requirements for entering year 2, and the completion of all other modules (to a total value of 120 CATS) is a normal requirement in order to be permitted to submit the dissertation.

Academic Year of Study 1: MA CULTURAL STUDIES (Full -Time)

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Cultural Studies and Capitalism	MC71222A	30	7	Core	1
Doing Cultural Studies	MC71225A	30	7	Core	2
Dissertation (Methodology and Research)	MC71025A	60	7	Core	1-3
Optional modules equal to the value of 60 credits, chosen from an approved list published annually		60	7	Optional	1-2

Academic Year of Study 1: MA CULTURAL STUDIES (Part -Time)

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Cultural Studies and Capitalism	MC71222A	30	7	Core	1
Doing Cultural Studies	MC71225A	30	7	Core	2
Optional modules equal to the value of 30 credits, chosen from an approved list published annually		30	7	Core	1-2

Academic Year of Study 2: MA CULTURAL STUDIES (Part -Time)

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Status	Term
Optional modules equal to the value of 30 credits, chosen from an approved list published annually		30	7	Core	1-2
Dissertation (Methodology and Research)	MC71025A	60	7	Core	2-3

Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in number of ways by departments and College support services who work collaboratively to ensure students get the right help to reach their best potential both academically and personally.

Students are allocated a personal tutor and a Senior Tutor in each department who has overall responsibility progress and welfare. Departments arrange regular communication to students in the form of mailings and meetings as well as regular progress reports and feedback on coursework and assignments. This is in addition to scheduled seminars, tutorials and lectures/workshops.

Every student is assigned a personal tutor who will meet with their student twice a year either face-to-face, as part of a group and/or electronically, the first of which normally takes place within the first few weeks of the first term. Personal tutors are also available to students throughout the year of study. These meetings aim to discuss progress on modules, discussion of the academic discipline and reports from previous years if available (for continuing students). This way progress, attendance, essay/coursework/assessment marks can be reviewed, and an informed discussion can be about how to strengthen learning and success.

Students are sent information about learning resources in the Library and on the VLE so that they have access to programme handbooks, programme information and support related information and guidance. Timetables are sent in advance of the start of term so that students can begin to manage their preparation and planning.

Taught sessions and lectures provide overviews of coursework themes, which students are encouraged to complement with intensive reading for presentation and discussion with peers at seminars. Coursework essays build on lectures and seminars, so students are encouraged to attend all taught sessions to build knowledge and their own understanding of their chosen discipline.

In depth feedback is provided for written assignments and essays via written feedback forms and formative feedback with module tutors/leads is provided to ensure that students' work is on the right track. Feedback comes in many forms and not only as a result of written comments on a marked essay. Students are given feedback on developing projects and practice as they attend workshops and placements.

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Students may be referred to specialist student services by department staff or they may access support services independently. Information about support services is clearly provided on the College Website and for new students through new starter information and induction/Welcome Week. Any support recommendations that are made are agreed with the student and communicated to the department so that adjustments to learning and teaching are able to be implemented at a department level and students can be reassured that arrangements are in place. Opportunities are provided for students to review their support arrangements should their circumstances change. The Inclusion and Learning Support and Wellbeing Teams maintain case loads of students and provide on-going support.

The Careers Service provides central support for skills enhancement, running the Gold Award Scheme and other co-curricular activities that are accredited via the higher education achievement report (HEAR).

The Academic Skills Centre works with academic departments offering bespoke academic literacy sessions. It also provides a programme of academic skills workshops and one-to-one provision throughout the year, which students can access directly at gold.ac.uk/asc/.

Links with employers, placement opportunities and career prospects

Careers
The programme has had very favourable reports from external examiners and students have gone on to take advantage of the generalist versatility of the degree to gain work in cultural industries, media, NGOs, voluntary organizations and political groups.

Around half of students completing this programme progress to PhD level, and others go into practical work – in the creative industries and in NGOs in a great number of countries.
Skills

High-level knowledge of cultural research; transferable skills within social and critical theory, aesthetics and performance, communication and multimedia; ethnography skills; critical appreciation of current debates in the media, the culture industries and the wider contemporary cultural environment.

The requirements of a Goldsmiths degree

All Master's degrees at Goldsmiths have a minimum value of 180 credits. Programmes are composed of modules which have individual credit values. In order to be eligible for the award of a Master's degree students must have passed all modules on the programme.

Intermediate Exit Points
Some programmes incorporate intermediate exit points of Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma, which may be awarded on the successful completion of modules to the value of 60 credits or 120 credits respectively. Individual programmes may specify which, if any, combination of courses are required in order to be eligible for the award of these qualifications. The awards are made without classification.

Final Classification
There are four possible categories of final classification for Master's degrees: Distinction, Merit, Pass and Fail.

For further information, please refer to the Regulations for Postgraduate Taught Students, which may be found here: www.gold.ac.uk/governance/studentregulations/

Programme-specific rules and facts

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Programme costs

General Costs

In addition to your tuition fees, you will be responsible for meeting standard costs associated with your study. Find out more information here: https://www.gold.ac.uk/programme-costs

How teaching quality will be monitored

Goldsmiths employs a number of methods to ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching on its programmes.

Programmes and modules must be formally approved against national standards and are monitored throughout the year in departmental staff / student forums and through the completion of module evaluation questionnaires. Every programme also has at least one External Examiner who produces an annual report which comments on the standards of awards and student achievement.

This output is considered with other relevant data in the process of Annual Programme Review, to which all programmes are subject, and which aims to identify both good practice and issues which require resolution.

Every six years all programmes within a department are also subject to a broader periodic review. This aims to ensure that they remain current, that the procedures to maintain the standards of the awards are working effectively and the quality of the learning opportunities and information provided to students and applicants is appropriate.

Detailed information on all of these procedures are published on the webpages of the Quality Office (http://www.gold.ac.uk/quality/).

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