Subject Benchmark Statement

Art and Design

December 2019

Contents

How can I use this document?

This document is a Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design. It defines the academic standards that can be expected of a graduate in the subject, in terms of what they might know, do and understand at the end of their studies, and describe the nature of the subject.

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) sets out the Expectations and Core practices that all providers of UK higher education are required to meet. Providers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland must also meet the Common practices in the Quality Code.

The Quality Assurance Agency for UK Higher Education (QAA) has also published a set of Advice and Guidance, divided into 12 themes, and a number of other resources that support the mandatory part of the Quality Code. Subject Benchmark Statements sit alongside these resources to help providers develop courses and refine curricula but are not part of the regulated requirements for higher education providers in the UK.

This Statement is intended to support you if you are:

- involved in the design, delivery and review of courses of study in art and design or related subjects
- a prospective student thinking about studying this subject, or a current student of the subject, to find out what may be involved
- an employer, to find out about the knowledge and skills generally expected of a graduate in this subject.

Subject Benchmark Statements provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with the course but are not intended to represent a national curriculum in a subject or to prescribe set approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation in course design within a framework agreed by the subject community.

It may be helpful to refer to the relevant Advice and Guidance when using this Statement.

Explanations of unfamiliar terms used in this Subject Benchmark Statement can be found in QAA's Glossary.

About the Statement

This Subject Benchmark Statement refers to bachelor's degrees with honours in art and design.[1]

It has been produced by a group of subject specialists drawn from, and acting on behalf of, the subject community. The process is facilitated by QAA, as is the full consultation with the wider academic community and stakeholder groups each Statement goes through.

In order to ensure the continuing currency of Subject Benchmark Statements, QAA initiates regular reviews of their content, five years after first publication, and every seven years subsequently, or in response to significant changes in the discipline.

Relationship to legislation

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

Higher education providers may need to consider other reference points in addition to this Statement in designing, delivering and reviewing courses. These may include requirements set out by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) and industry or employer expectations.

Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Subject Benchmark Statement where appropriate. individual higher education providers will decide how they use this information.

Summary of changes from the previous Subject Benchmark Statement (2016)

This version of the Statement forms its fourth edition, following initial publication of the Subject Benchmark Statement in 2002 and review and revision in 2008 and 2016.

This latest version of the Statement is the consequence of the revision to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education which was published in 2018. It has been revised to update references to the Quality Code and other minor changes within the sector. Changes have been made by QAA and confirmed by a member of the most recent review group.

There have been no revisions to the subject specific content of the Statement.

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[1] Bachelor's degrees are at level 6 in *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* and level 10 in *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland,* as published in The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies

1   Introduction

1.1   This Subject Benchmark Statement reflects the richness and diversity of art and design higher education and recognises the substantial contribution that UK graduates across this subject make to culture, society, the natural and human environments and the economy, on a global level.

1.2   The study of art and design as an academic and intellectual pursuit, develops range of cognitive abilities related to the aesthetic, ethical and social contexts of human experience. Engagement in the study of art and design is therefore a commitment to improving the quality of one's own and others' experiences, and this Statement acknowledges a responsibility towards sustainable development and to equipping students to work in a way that contributes to society, the economy and the environment, both in the present and for the future.

1.3   For the purpose of 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'. These disciplines are in a continuous state of evolution and cross fertilisation, necessitating benchmark standards that accommodate a wide spectrum of provision. In reflecting the multiplicity and interdisciplinary nature of courses covered by the subject, the review group has added an annex of typical titles for art and design bachelor's degrees with honours, as at the date of publication (Annex 1).

1.4   In addition to describing the threshold (minimum) level and typical level of achievement required by a student graduating with an honours degree in art and design, this statement also includes a brief description of an excellent standard of achievement (see Section 6).

1.5   The objective is to present a Subject Benchmark Statement that gives higher education providers the flexibility to place greater or lesser emphasis upon specific aspects of the subject. This Statement is deliberately presented to permit interpretation within the course at the local level of the specific discipline, thus allowing providers to update and innovate in terms of course design, content, learning and assessment.

1.6   'Sustainability' and 'the natural environment' are key considerations in teaching Art and Design courses today, and are mentioned throughout this statement. It is important to note that sustainability is not solely about the natural environment. It is an ongoing process of addressing social, environmental and economic concerns to create a better world. Natural environment is also a broad term but is used in this statement to refer to any biological ecosystem and the living organisms withing them – to this extent, a piece of work inspired by the natural environment may focus on a single animal, or the entire planet as an ecosystem.

1.7   Courses in art and design emphasise imagination and creativity and are designed to develop students' intellectual powers, understanding of and empathy towards human diversity and their ability to communicate a rigour in process and thought. The student experience embraces both subject-specific and generic knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills (see Section 5). Learning in art and design stimulates the development of an enquiring, analytical and creative approach, and develops entrepreneurial capabilities. It also encourages the acquisition of independent judgement and critical self-awareness. Commencing with the acquisition of an understanding of underlying principles

and appropriate knowledge and skills, students normally pursue a course of staged development progressing to increasingly independent learning.

1.8   New approaches to learning and to the form of the learning environment have been developed, both in response to the increased levels of participation in higher education, and to developments in teaching, learning and assessment in higher education. Most students work in environments supported by a wide range of technical workshops and other specialist facilities. Independent, active and peer group learning are considered to be valuable components of the student experience. These developments have also been driven by the changing nature of the disciplines, society as a whole and new technologies that are creating alternative synergies and modes of practice.

1.9   Art and design skills, particularly those in 'making', contribute to cognitive development and engage learners. Through engagement with materials, processes and ideas, 'making' develops creativity, inventiveness, problem solving and practical intelligence.

1.10   The growth of art and design higher education reflects the increasing demand for visual and physical content, rapid developments in technology, expanding public interests in the visual arts and media, and a growing awareness of what creativity and innovation can bring to communities, minority communities, society as a whole, the industrial, service and third sectors, as well as creative and cultural industries. Graduates in art and design disciplines consistently demonstrate exceptional resourcefulness, 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.

1.11   Course teams and providers aim to widen accessibility of Art and Design courses to more diverse cohorts of students by increasing the flexibility of entry requirements to account for non-standard qualifications and non-academic or career based experience. Students from diverse backgrounds and with diverse needs should have access to equitable creative, academic, financial, social and digital support to succeed on their course through the provider.

2 Defining principles

2.1   Art and design is the term widely used to embrace a complex, diverse and evolving constituency of disciplines, which share important conceptual characteristics, but which also have significant differences. While it is the very nature of this difference which contributes to its richness as an area of study and practice, the range of disciplines also share numerous defining qualities. The use of technology, exploration of materials and the challenging of existing disciplines has led to an increase in multi-disciplinary activity.

2.2   Learning in art and design:

- enhances an individual's innate capacity to be creative providing students with the tools to pursue art and design commercially
- develops an aesthetic sensibility
- encourages intellectual enquiry
- develops skills in team working
- fosters an appreciation of diversity in terms of art styles and techniques, culture, the natural world, and problem solving
- an appreciation of quality and detail
- the ability to conduct research in a variety of modes
- the quality of critically reflecting on one's own learning and development
- the ability to factor ethical and sustainability considerations into creative practice
- a sense of self, one's values, and one's power to advocate for change in small local groups and society at large
- the capacity to work independently, encouraging resilience and self-determination
- the ability to communicate in a range of formats.

2.3   These abilities vary between different art and design disciplines, and all require the development of particular cognitive attributes. The role of imagination in the creative process is essential in developing the capacities to observe and visualise - in the identifying and solving of problems, and in the making of critical and reflective judgements.

2.4   The outcomes of the study and practice of art and design in higher education contribute to the cultural development and the economic wellbeing of the individual, society, and the local and global natural environment. In both cases, an understanding of the context of the practice is essential. In the former, it enhances their intellect through critical awareness and by locating the individual in both contemporary and historical contexts. In the latter, it provides knowledge of how an individual's practice relates to that of others which informs originality and personal expression. Without such knowledge, an individual would not have any sense of the nature of their own creativity or the cultural context in which it is set. Students can also understand the broad vocational, economic, social and environmental contexts of their study and the range of professional opportunities available to them. These may include: anticipating and responding to change; knowledge and application of business processes; communication (visual, written, oral, personal and digital); distribution and dissemination of work; skills in entrepreneurship; and client/audience negotiation skills.

2.5   In learning about the contextual setting of their discipline(s), students also engage with related theories within global, historical/contemporary and

cultural/environmental settings, which inform that context and add purpose to their activity. As a consequence, students develop and may challenge their own critical disposition in relation to their discipline(s) and even the conventions of the discipline.

2.6   Experiential, active and enquiry-based learning are features of art and design in honours degrees. Through these approaches, students are encouraged to develop both the capacity for independent learning and the ability to work with others. Students not only develop the ability to solve set problems in a creative way, but they also develop the ability to identify and redefine problems, and to raise and address appropriate issues.

2.7   The outcomes of art and design practice almost always combine the conceptual, the theoretical and the practical. Along with the development of their cognitive attributes when learning, students produce outcomes that require the application of practical skills. Some of these skills may be appropriate only to specific contexts, whereas others have a generic or transferable applicability, often within a professional context.

2.8   Both artists and designers produce their work mindful of an audience, a user or a professional need. The principal forms of communication in these settings involve aesthetics, ideas and functionality through which visual skills are developed. Students also develop verbal and written communication skills as a result of interaction with their peers, tutors, professionals and practitioners, both formally and informally. They use a variety of written forms to articulate and synthesise their knowledge and understanding.

3   Nature and extent of art and design

3.1   Art and design is a subject that embraces an overlapping and changing community of many disciplines. It also engages with many other subjects, including: media and communications; the performing arts; the built or natural environment; sustainable development; information technology and computing; engineering; business; historical and contemporary sociology and cultural studies; health and healthcare; advocacy and the history of art, architecture and design. The nomenclature of disciplines changes, and discipline content may also change, to reflect this. The boundaries within art and design have become increasingly blurred, and many disciplines within the subject have become generic and interdisciplinary but less singularly focused. Interdisciplinarity and combinations of disciplines often prepare students for portfolio careers, emphasising the need for mutability in evolving, creative communities.

3.2   This erosion of traditional parameters, which were often based in part on differences in media and processes, has been fuelled by the significant impact of media and technologies that are increasingly common across disciplines, replacing some of the traditional discipline-specific skills with ones of a more generic nature. Art and design disciplines have to varying degrees, responded to, assimilated, manipulated, challenged and appropriated the creative potential of many of these technologies as they have emerged, prompting the advent of new disciplines - a process which may be expected to continue in tandem with further technological innovation.

3.3   Among the common characteristics shared by the broad range of disciplines in art and design, are the conception, production, promotion and dissemination of the outcomes that constitute our visual and material culture. The latter range from artefacts intended for intellectual and aesthetic contemplation to functional products, systems and services. The processes from conception to dissemination employ a range of predominantly visual languages to articulate concepts and ideas in two and three dimensions, while in some disciplines the time dimension, narrative, sound and interactivity are of equal importance. These are combined with the exercise of creative skills, imagination, vision and innovation.

3.4   In the education of artists and designers, the constituent disciplines emphasise the development of visual literacy. Drawing ability is regarded as a prerequisite skill for observation, recording, analysis, speculation, development, visualisation, evaluation and communication. Considerable importance is attached to the acquisition of technical skills in the use of discipline-specific materials and processes. The majority of students pursue study in art and design prior to more specialist undergraduate study. Some disciplines require a broad knowledge and understanding of aspects of art and design but do not require so much practice in conventional drawing or manipulation of materials and processes. Some other related disciplines also aim to develop visual literacy in context. They include: conservation and restoration; arts, museum and gallery management and administration; curation; design management; and publishing.

3.5   Most courses attach great importance to students' acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their disciplines. Courses employ a range of methods to engage students with the historical, theoretical, socio-political, economic and environmental dimensions of their disciplines and wider society, particularly in dimensions and subjects they care deeply or want to learn more about, and to make such dimensions

integral to and manifest in student work. In some courses these aspects are taught through discrete modules; in others they are fully integrated into studio practice. Some generic skills essential to personal development and professional practice are taught mainly through this part of the course. There is a particular focus on skills in research, critical analysis and written/oral communication.

3.6   Many art and design courses have also broadened their teaching by referring to issues such as, for example, sustainability, business, marketing, social and health issues and other professional contextualising themes. Most disciplines within art and design have been identified as major contributors to the creative industries, and this has led to national recognition of the wealth-creating and culture-enhancing achievements of art and design. Increasingly, graduates in art and design disciplines are finding employment in areas unrelated to the subject but which value and actively seek their abilities of lateral thinking and creative skills.

3.7   The art and design community acknowledged the commonalities between the disciplines that comprise the subject. These include features such as practice located in and informed by current critical debate; a shared reliance on curiosity, imagination and empathy; and a creative and speculative approach to the manipulation of ideas, materials, methods and processes.

3.8   The practice of art and design is a creative endeavour that speculates upon and challenges its own nature and purpose and that demands high levels of self-motivation, intellectual curiosity, speculative enquiry, imagination, and divergent thinking skills. Students learn to recognise the interactive relationship: between materials, media, processes and sustainable development; between ideas and issues; and between producer, mediator and audience. Similarly, art and design practice demands the ability to position the individual's practice within an appropriate contextual framework.

3.9   Artists and designers also address practical and theoretical concerns through a broad spectrum of two-dimensional, three-dimensional and time-based media, materials and processes. This is an activity of creative reasoning that is dependent upon flexibility of ideas and methodologies informed by an awareness of current critical debates. This ranges between the expressive and the functional and may be, for example, stylistically driven or socially motivated or mediated. It is also an iterative process based upon evaluation and modification. Some areas of art and design are reliant upon evolving dialogue and negotiation between the practitioner (working individually or within teams as proactive collaborator/mediator) and the client, manufacturer, audience, user, customer, participant or recipient.

3.10   The increasing diversity of art and design education is reflected in a similarly wide variety of careers that graduates pursue in contexts that include employment in the creative and cultural industries and also research, education and management. Graduates may continue their practice and support this through the sale of their work, commissions, grants and residencies, and/or other employment. Some find an application for their learning through, for example, community work, curating, management and administration, or within other areas of the creative industries including advertising, film and video production, software design, or as a self-employed artist or designer/maker.

3.11   Art and design also involves both analysis and synthesis, and is frequently solution-focused, culminating in the creation of design outcomes as prototypes, models or

proposals. There is no single definition or methodological approach to the subject, and there are no limitations in terms of interdisciplinary relationships. Art and design covers aspects of decision making in relation to the aesthetic, ethical, functional and commercial characteristics of artefacts and systems.

4   Knowledge, understanding and skills

4.1   The principal aim of undergraduate education in art and design is to facilitate acquisition of appropriate knowledge and understanding, development of the necessary personal attributes, and application of the skills which equip and prepare students for continuing personal development and professional practice. An honours degree in an art and design discipline also confirms that the holder, in conjunction with conceptual knowledge and understanding, has acquired relevant technical knowledge and practical skills.

4.2   The emphasis given to the following learning outcomes vary according to the main discipline(s) studied and the aims of the specific course, while individual levels of achievement are reflected in the classification of the award. These learning outcomes are considered to be fundamental to the study and practice of the student's chosen discipline(s). Many are also transferable to other contexts.

4.3   The knowledge, understanding and skills inherent to art and design education are usually related to a contemporary context and generally take account of current sustainable technological trends in terms of the technical, communication and entrepreneurial skills, which are set out in Section 5.

4.4   Students graduating with an honours degree in art and design are able to:

- employ materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies and tools associated with the discipline(s) studied with skill and imagination while observing sound, sustainable and ethical working practices, and professional/legal responsibilities relating to the subject
- articulate, synthesise and generate knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills in effective ways in the contexts of creative practice, employability and enterprise, preparation for further study, research and personal development
- demonstrate an understanding of the role and impact of intellectual property (IP) within art and design subjects
- apply, consolidate and extend learning in different contexts and situations, both within and beyond the field of art and design
- Understand the intersection between art and design and sustainability and socio-political themes, including responsible resource use and the role of art in expressing shared challenges and advocating for change
- Appreciate the full breadth and diversity of Art and Design as disciplines, understanding the unique cultural, political, historical and socio-economic contexts that have shaped them

4.5   Threshold, Typical and Excellent Standards are set out in Section 6. These include descriptions of generic and subject-specific skills that a student has acquired during their studies.

5   Teaching, learning and assessment

5.1   Art and design provision is characterised by the diversity of disciplines available to students (see Section 3) and employs a wide range of approaches to teaching, learning and assessment based on an appropriate physical resource and the learning/teaching needs of students and staff. Drawing upon well-established contacts with creative industries in the UK and abroad, professional development is emphasised and practical studies are underpinned by socio-political, environmental, cultural and professional awareness. Courses are directly informed and their currency maintained by the research, scholarly activity and professional practice of staff. Creative practitioners, alongside industry professionals, make valuable contributions as part-time and visiting tutors, expanding students' understanding of the broad range of career opportunities and transferability of their knowledge and skills. Students regularly practise their subject outside formal taught sessions and, at such times, require support from a range of staff. The contribution of technicians, demonstrators and library/learning resources staff in this context is highly important.

5.2   Learning environments for art and design disciplines take a variety of forms, including virtual, to support online delivery, and both internal (institutional) and external (location) physical space. In most disciplines the physical learning environment is intrinsic to art and design pedagogy. The holistic approach to teaching and learning is predicated upon access to appropriate space, high-quality infrastructure and resources. This generally takes the form of sustainably run studio and workshop spaces with integrated sustainable and accessible digital technologies, which mirrors the context of professional practice and enables students to work in an iterative manner to generate solutions. In addition to accessing equipment that supports traditional processes and production, students also require access to technologies employed in industry to produce contemporary, innovative and relevant solutions.

5.3   Students should receive teaching from professionals with a range of social, cultural, health, and global backgrounds to further widen their scope of understanding of art and design throughout different histories and cultures, its role as a vessel between people and communities during these periods and cultures, and its role as a vessel for communicating these periods and cultures to society today. Decolonisation of the curriculum can engender a more inclusive approach to art and design which acknowledges ways in which knowledge and methods have been constructed and how this has oppressed groups within society. Decolonisation can be a sensitive theme that may generate uncomfortable and challenging conversations, but it is valuable in developing an inclusive perspective which acknowledges the relevance of historically oppressed communities and begins to represent and include them respectfully in the production and presentation of art and design today.

5.4   Art and design courses are designed to support individual development as creative practitioners as well as the progressive acquisition of independent learning skills and system-thinking to support sustainable development. Course coherence is achieved through modules or units, with specified learning outcomes articulating progression at each level. Generally, there may be core components, optional study and pre-requisites, supported by academic guidance. Some courses include the opportunity to undertake placements, internships or work-based experience.

5.5   All courses provide the opportunity to develop subject-specific knowledge, skills and understanding. In practice-based courses this includes the acquisition of technical, digital skills and understanding. Subject learning is supplemented by a theoretical knowledge and understanding of the wide variety of contexts in which creative practitioners operate. For example, historical, cultural, environmental – both human and natural, socio-political and professional elements are integral to the development of the creative practitioner. These elements are delivered as integrated parts of projects, or as discrete units of study.

5.6   In addition, courses are designed to encourage the development of a range of generic skills considered essential in the successful creative practitioner. These include, not exclusively, personal innovation, risk-taking, independent enquiry, effective communication, negotiation, interpersonal, management, presentation, organisational, self-management, critical engagement, team working, social, communication and research skills. These skills are developed incrementally and as an integrated part of modules or units.

5.7   The pedagogic approach to art and design education is essentially integrative and holistic, enabling students to draw upon all their learning to identify and solve complex problems. The primary delivery mode is through projects and assignments of varying length. Generally, these are tutor-led initially, becoming increasingly student initiated as learning develops and requiring sustained periods of independent study. Students take increasing responsibility for the content and direction of their creative work, though all relevant accessibility provisions and reasonable adjustments remain in place to support students to succeed independently culminating in a significant piece of work in the latter stages of the course. Because of this pedagogic approach, art and design courses often deliver curricula through large modules or units of study.

5.8   Studio-based activity is a significant feature of art and design education, providing locations for both individual and group tuition. In an effective learning environment, staff and students create an inclusive community of practice as partners in the process of learning. The pedagogy is discursive with an emphasis on student presentations, peer group learning, workshops and group critique. Both individual and group tutorials are an important approach, providing a supportive environment for the student and encouraging reflective learning which incorporates and values the perspectives of individuals with different and diverse experiences from one's self. Digital platforms and virtual learning environments are commonly employed as a means to develop this creative community and deliver curricula. In addition, some delivery is through lectures, seminars, demonstrations and presentations.

5.9   For art and design courses, showing work to peers and in the public domain is a signature pedagogic practice. This takes various forms including the use of digital platforms, group peer critique, interim exhibitions, and graduate show exhibitions, fashion shows and film screenings. It enables students to introduce their work to a wider audience, engage in public/peer review and situate their practice in a professional environment.

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

5.11   Students' broader understanding of global contexts is developed through a that embraces international cultural, economic and environmental perspectives. Traditionally introduced through study visits, student exchange and placement, this is supplemented by increasing numbers of international partnerships, staff exchanges and international students.

5.12   The development of students' independent learning skills is promoted through self-directed and self-initiated study, which may be formalised through individually negotiated learning agreements. Such personal and professional development is generally expressed in a range of forms, including sketchbooks, reflective journals, blogs and personal development records.

5.13   Formative and summative assessment are regarded as positive learning tools. Feedback and feed forward are core to students' learning and offers students clear guidance with regard to future development. Although art and design has a strong tradition of providing students with comprehensive oral feedback through tutorials, feedback is delivered in both written and verbal forms, increasingly using online, audio and video methods.

5.14   Assessment strategies support students' understanding of their learning processes and are designed to foster a deep approach to learning. Strategies also promote autonomous learning and self-evaluation as vital elements within the overall learning process. Self and peer-evaluation constitute an important part of formative assessment and, on occasion, of the formal summative assessment process. Assessment criteria accommodate the speculative enquiry common to most disciplines in art and design and provide fair and accurate assessment of individual and group contributions to the overall outcome of projects.

5.15   Art and design courses are inclusive. Research indicates that dyslexia is prevalent among students of art and design and most higher education providers have well-established support systems. Support systems at institutional and discipline levels identify individualised student needs, providing relevant help and advice for both academic and pastoral matters. Support systems at institutions should also actively engage with the impact of economic inequality amongst students and must consider institutions' role in ensuring students are able to afford materials for their work as well as education- and career-focused opportunities organised, offered or promoted by the institution.

6   Benchmark standards

6.1   This section includes threshold, typical and excellent standards. They are articulated as learning outcomes which provide a reference point that enables providers to continue to develop diverse and innovative courses.

Threshold standards for honours degrees

6.2   The threshold standard is the minimum requirement that is reached by graduates of a bachelor's degree with honours in art and design. The standard is intentionally phrased in broad terms to provide scope for the variations in emphasis and interpretation that individual courses rightly wish to place upon them according to the nature of the discipline and their institutional mission and context.

6.3   At the threshold standard, an honours degree in art and design confirms that the holder has acquired technical knowledge and practical skills. The graduate is able to use materials, media, techniques, methods, technologies and tools associated with the discipline(s) studied and is familiar with sustainable, ethical working practices.

Subject-specific knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills

6.4   Graduates are able to:

i   present evidence that demonstrates some ability to generate ideas independently and/or as self-initiated activity and/or in response to set briefs
ii   demonstrate proficiency in observation, investigation, enquiry, visualisation and/or making
iii   develop ideas through to outcomes that confirm the student's ability to select and use sustainable materials, processes and environments
iv   make connections between intention, process, outcome, context and methods of dissemination

6.5   5 A graduate's work is informed by aspects of professional practice in their discipline(s). This is evidenced by some knowledge and understanding of:

i   the broad critical and contextual dimensions of the student's discipline(s)
ii   the issues which arise from the creative practitioner's relationship with a variety of specific audiences, clients, markets, environments, users, consumers, participants, social movements, and/or the global and local environment
iii   major developments in current and emerging media and technologies in their discipline(s) and some awareness of major developments in related subjects
iv   the significance of the work of other practitioners in their discipline(s)
v   the role and impact of intellectual property

Generic and graduate skills

6.6   Graduates have demonstrated that they have some ability in the following skills.

Self-management
i   exercise self-management skills in managing workloads and meeting deadlines
ii   accommodate change and uncertainty.

i   analyse information and experiences, and formulate reasoned arguments

ii   benefit from the critical judgements of others and recognise their personal strengths and needs.

Group/team working and social skills

i   apply interpersonal, social and negotiation skills in interaction with others.

Skills in communication and presentation

i   communicate ideas and information in visual, oral and written forms

ii   present ideas and work to their audiences.

Research and information skills

i   navigate, retrieve and manage information from a variety of sources

ii   select and employ communication and information technologies

iii   the ability to identify IP issues, prevent infringements of other's IP rights and take the appropriate steps to safeguard the innovation and commercialisation processes.

Typical standard for honours degrees

6.7   Graduates in art and design have developed skills in communication and expression through visual and material forms and are able to use visual languages to investigate, analyse, interpret, develop and articulate ideas and information. At least some of their work will be informed by ideas and practice at the forefront of their discipline.

Subject-specific knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills

6.8   At the typical level of achievement, the graduate demonstrates in a body of work the ability to:

i   generate ideas, concepts, proposals, solutions or arguments independently and/or collaboratively as self-initiated activity and/or in response to set briefs

ii   employ both convergent and divergent thinking in the processes of observation, investigation, speculative enquiry, visualisation and/or making

iii   select, experiment with and make appropriate use of materials, processes, technologies and environments showing understanding of quality standards, sustainability and environmental concerns and attention to detail

iv   show judgement and self-critique in the development ideas through to outcomes, for example, images, artefacts, environments, products, systems and processes, or texts

v   manage and make appropriate use of the interaction between intention, process, outcome, context and the methods of dissemination

vi   be resourceful, ethical and entrepreneurial, and aware of the direct and indirect environmental, social and cultural impact of work.

6.9   The graduate's understanding is informed by research, practice and theory in their discipline(s), including:

i   the critical, contextual, historical, conceptual, economic, social environmental and ethical dimensions of the student's discipline in particular, and art and design in general

ii   the creative practitioner's relationship with audiences, clients, markets, environments, users, consumers, participants, social movements, co-workers and co-creators within a professional environment

iii   the implications and potential for their discipline(s) as a creative industry and an agent of social change presented by the key developments of current and emerging media and technologies, and of inter and multi-disciplinary approaches to contemporary practice in art and design

iv   knowledge and understanding of the role and impact of IP within the art and design practice

Generic and graduate skills

6.10   Generic and graduate skills have applications in a wide range of contexts. Holders of an honours degree in an art and design discipline(s) have demonstrated the following skills.

Self-management

i   study independently, set goals, manage workloads and meet deadlines

ii   anticipate and accommodate change, and work within contexts of ambiguity, uncertainty and unfamiliarity.

Critical engagement

i   analyse information and experiences, and formulate independent judgements

ii   articulate reasoned arguments through reflection

iii   question, review and evaluate

iv   use the views of others in the development or enhancement of their work

v   identify personal strengths and needs, and reflect on personal development.

Group/team working and social skills

i   interact effectively with others, for example, through collaboration, collective endeavour and negotiation

ii   articulate ideas and information comprehensibly in visual, oral and written forms

iii   communicate and present ideas and work to audiences of various knowledge levels, ages and backgrounds in a range of situations.

Research and information skills

i   source and research relevant material, assimilating and articulating relevant findings

ii   navigate, select, retrieve, evaluate, manipulate and manage information from a variety of sources

iii   select and employ communication and information technologies

iv   innovation, creativity and enterprise: the ability to generate, develop and communicate ideas; manage and exploit IP; gain support and deliver successful outcomes.

i   enquire into their discipline, their place within that discipline, and the
        motivation to advance it

ii   apply ethical principles and personal values to their work.

Excellent standard for honours degrees

6.11   Art and design graduates who have attained an excellent standard demonstrate to a higher level the capabilities and skills listed in Section 6. They show evidence of extensive independent practice, creativity, innovation, and in-depth understanding. Excellent work displays comprehensive knowledge of the subject and its application in distinctive and imaginative ways, including its relationship with wider society and the natural environment as well as its role as an agent of social change, persuasion, and global and local development.

Appendix 1: List of course titles

This is not an exclusive list

A:	
Applied Arts	Animation
Art	Advertising and Branding
Artist Designer: Maker	Art and Design
C:	
Communication Design	Ceramics
Computer Games Art	Computer Arts
Concept Art	Computer Games Design
Costume Design	Contemporary Arts Practice
Creative Practice	Creative Arts
D:	
Design	Decorative Arta
Design for Theatre, Performance and Events	Design Crafts
Digital Arta	Design Product
Digital Film	Digital Design
Drawing	Digital Media Arts
F:	
Fashion Accessory Design	Fine Art
Fashion Design	Fashion Communication
Fashion Management	Fashion and Textiles Design
Fashion Styling and Production	Fashion Marketing
Film and Television	Film Production
Furniture Design	Footwear Design
G:	
Games Design	Games Art
Graphic Arts	Glass and Ceramics
Graphic Design	Graphic Communication
I:	
Industrial Design	Illustration
Interactive Multimedia	Interaction Design
Interior and Spatial Design	Interior Design
J:	Jewellery and Metal Design
L:	Lighting Design
M:	
Motion Graphics Design	Model Design

P:	
Performance	Photojournalism and Documentary Photography
Photography	Photography and Video Art
Product Design	Props Making
Painting and Drawing	
S:	
Scenic Arts	Sculpture
Silversmithing and Jewellery Design	Sound Design
Spatial Design	Special Effects Makeup Design for TV, Film and Theatre
T:	
Textile Art	Textiles and Surface Design
Textile Design	Textiles for Fashion
Theatre Design	Three-Dimensional Design
Three Dimensional Designer Maker	Time Based Art and Design Film
V:	
Visual Arts	Visual Communication
W:	Web Design

Appendix 2: Membership of the benchmarking and review groups for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design

Membership of the review group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design (2019).

The fourth edition, published in 2019, was revised by QAA to align the content with the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education, published in 2018. Proposed revisions were checked and verified by a member of the review group of the Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design from 2016.

Chris Owen	Anglia Ruskin University
Dr Andy Smith	QAA

Membership of the review group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design (2016)

	University Campus Suffolk
David Baldry	
Rachel Dickson	University of Ulster
Professor Linda Drew (Chair)	Ravensbourne
Dr Hamish Gane	University of Wales, Trinity Saint David
Professor Judy Glasman	University of Hertfordshire, Vice Chair of CHEAD
Chris Owen	Anglia Ruskin University
Professor Sally Wade	Sheffield Hallam University, Chair GLAD

Employer representative

David Worthington	Holmes & Marchant

Student reader

Clara Teixeria Hancock	Nottingham Trent University

QAA officer

Dan Murch	QAA

Membership of the review group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design (2008)

Details provided below are published in the 2008 Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design.

Carolyn Bew	The Higher Education Academy Subject Centre for Art, Design and Media
Dr Cheryl Buckley	Northumbria University and the Design History Society
Professor David Buss	University College for the Creative Arts at Epsom, Farnham, Rochester, Canterbury and Maidstone
David Butler	Newcastle University and the Life, Work, Art (project funded by the Higher education Funding Council for England Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning Phase 4 (FDTL4))
Dr Linda Drew	Chelsea College of Art and Design
Professor Judy Glassman	University of Hertfordshire and the Art & Design: Empowering Part-tie Tutors (FDTL4)
Professor Gordon Kennedy (Chair)	Nottingham Trent University
Dr Gerard Moran	De Montford University
Christopher Raatz	Council for Higher Education in Art and Design
Brenda Sparkes	Nottingham Trent University and the Association of Fashion and Textile Courses
Andrew Stone	London Metropolitan University and the Interiors Educators
Professor Evelyn Welch	Queen Mary, University of London and the Association of Art Historians
Professor John Wood	Goldsmiths College, University of London and The Writing Purposefully in Art and Design (FDTL4)

Membership of the original benchmarking group for Art and Design (2002)

Details below appear as published in the original Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design (2002).

Ms Glenda Brindle	University of Central Lancashire
Professor David Buss (Chair)	Kent Institute of Art and Design
Mr Tim Coward	University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
Mr Allan Davies	Centre for Learning and Teaching in Art and Design, London Institute, Royal College of Art and Wimbledon School of Art
Mr Anthony Dean	The Central School of Speech and Drama, London
Ms Linda Drew	Learning and Teaching Support Network for Art, Design and Communication, University of Brighton
Mr David Henderson	The Robert Gordon University
Professor Jamie Hobson	Southampton Institute
Ms Jill Journeaux	Coventry University
Professor Terence Kavanagh	Loughborough University
Ms Joyce Palmer	London Guildhall University
Ms Sue Tuckett	Norwich School of Art and Design