Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	**Course Title**	MA Advertising and Branding MA Advertising and Branding with Professional Placement
2	**Course Code**	PT1891 PT1892 PT1898
3	**Awarding Institution**	Birmingham City University
4	**Teaching Institution(s)**	N/A
5	**Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation** (if applicable)	N/A

6	**Course Description**
	Great advertising doesn't just sell products. It shapes culture, changes perceptions and creates meaningful connections between brands and people. The MA Advertising and Branding is designed for ambitious creatives who want to develop the strategic insight, creative confidence and professional expertise needed to lead in today's communications industry. This challenging and highly practical course will take you from research and audience understanding to the creation of original concepts, brand strategies and fully integrated campaigns. You'll learn how ideas move from insight to execution, creating work that engages, entertains, informs and persuades across an increasingly complex media landscape. Working across digital, social, print, motion, experiential, outdoor and emerging platforms, you'll develop the creative and technical skills needed to respond to real-world challenges. Through live industry briefs, collaborative projects and creative experimentation, you'll explore how powerful advertising and branding can influence behaviour, build trust and create lasting value for organisations and audiences alike. The course combines creative practice with strategic thinking, helping you develop expertise in concept development, copywriting, art direction, creative strategy, campaign planning, audience research and brand storytelling. Alongside practical skills, you'll explore the cultural, social, commercial and technological forces shaping contemporary communications, enabling you to produce work that is both creatively compelling and strategically effective. Learning is structured to support your development as both a practitioner and a thinker. During the Postgraduate Certificate stage, you'll investigate how research, insight and consumer understanding inform successful advertising and branding strategies. The Postgraduate Diploma builds on this foundation, enabling you to collaborate on innovative campaigns and brand solutions that address complex client challenges. The Master's Project offers the opportunity to define your own direction, explore specialist interests and produce a substantial body of work that reflects your creative ambitions and professional goals. As part of the University's School of Art, you'll learn within a vibrant creative community supported by industry-active academics and experienced practitioners. Strong connections with

	agencies, consultancies, media organisations and creative businesses provide opportunities to engage with guest speakers, workshops, networking events, competitions, live briefs and collaborative projects that bring professional practice into the studio. Throughout your studies, you'll be encouraged to challenge conventions, think critically and develop an individual creative voice. Ethical practice, sustainability, entrepreneurship and cultural awareness are embedded throughout the course, ensuring your work reflects the responsibilities as well as the opportunities of contemporary communications. Whether your ambition is to work in a leading agency, launch your own creative venture or shape the future of brand communication, the MA Advertising and Branding will equip you with the vision, skills and confidence to make ideas matter.

7	**Course Awards**		
7a	**Name of Final Award**	**Level**	**Credits Awarded**
	Master of Arts Advertising and Branding	7	180
	Master of Arts Advertising and Branding with Professional Placement	7	240
7b	**Exit Awards and Credits Awarded**		
	Postgraduate Certificate Advertising & Branding *Postgraduate Diploma Advertising & Branding*	*7* *7*	*60* *120*

8	**Variation from the University Regulations**
	Not applicable

9	**Delivery Patterns**			
Mode(s) of Study		**Location(s) of Study**	**Duration of Study**	**Code(s)**
Full Time		City Centre	1 year	PT1891
Full Time with Professional Placement		City Centre (and Placement provider)	1 year 6 months	PT1892
Part Time		City Centre	2 years	PT1898

10	**Entry Requirements**
	The admission requirements for this course are stated on the course page of the BCU website at https://www.bcu.ac.uk , or may be found by searching for the course entry profile located on the UCAS website.

11	**Course Aims**
	MA Advertising & Branding facilitates the academic and professional progression of postgraduate students who want to optimise their credentials and personal development sustainably into emerging media trends in creative, commercial, and corporate communications careers. During postgraduate certificate, for example, students learn how research informs advertising and brand strategy: this helps students use new knowledge to articulate creative ideas authoritatively. In the diploma, students put their knowledge into action: collaboratively and innovatively creating adverting campaigns and brand strategies. In the master's project, students further consolidate knowledge, unlocking personal and professional potential, autonomously making strategic decisions about their progression, exploring specialisms and experimenting with career options. The core purpose of advertising and branding is to sell products or utilities to people in a way that engages, entertains, informs, and persuades through transmedia storytelling and addressing clients' commercial objectives, showcasing creative effectiveness, and promoting the values and benefits that surround the product or brand. The main educational aims of the course are to: • Allow students to develop their creative skills within a framework of creativity, support, and opportunity. • To develop technical/practical creative skills necessary for the effective realisation of creative advertising. • To engender an understanding of the broad contexts in which advertising and branding operate in contemporary national and international cultures. • To develop students' knowledge and creativity in order that they develop high-quality advertising and branding concepts and strategies. • Provide a diverse programme of study supported by inspirational talks, industry workshops, studio sessions, agency visits, live briefs and placement opportunities. • Encourage students to engage with resources & 'network' beyond the course to further their inquiry into the subject. • To develop analytical thinking and critical judgement and abilities in independent learning • Understand the necessity & importance of teamworking, collaboration and research. To develop the intellectual potential and appropriate creative skills of students in preparation for employment and as part of general education for life in society.

12	**Course Learning Outcomes**
	Knowledge and Understanding
1	Methodically evaluates appropriate marketing and/or communications theories, ideas, concepts and debates to address corporate, advertising and branding communications challenges.
2	Critically analyses research data for robust information, insight and ideas to formulate strategic and systematic proposals in brand communications and/or advertising campaigns.
3	Implements sustainability methodologies and directives in the design and development of advertising media communications projects and/or activities and their activation/implementation.
4	Uses interpersonal, team and networking skill sets, and advanced project management techniques to measurably support self and others' performance through collaborative practice.
5	Generates expertise in content creation through the successful production of creative assets / visualisations to meet the complex demands of a creative brief.
	Skills and Other Attributes
6	Systematically applies awareness of ethical, regulatory and professional values and codes of conduct in all advertising and brand communications activity.
7	Challenges bias by actively promoting and demonstrably ensuring best practice equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is always present in self, others, institutions and technologies.
8	Autonomously learns specialist expertise in media and communications through personal or professional interests aligned to opportunities in course curriculum or school collaborations.
9	Creates collaborative relationships with internal and/or external practitioners in the sector to facilitate mentorship and enable contextual learning.
10	Designs advanced specialist projects and/or activities to strategically enhance own and/or others learning, work or practice within unpredictably complex contexts.

13	**Level Learning Outcomes**
	Upon completion of 60 credits at Level 7 / the PG Cert, students will be able to:
1	Critically evaluate current research techniques, models, methods and advanced scholarship in advertising, and branding communications.
2	Take ownership and responsibility for leading the systematic and critical evaluation of own and others' capabilities, performance and development e.g. peer assessment.
3	Formulate innovative proposals to address strategic issues or opportunities in complex advertising and brand communications contexts.
4	Systematically explain advertising and/or brand communications campaign recommendations to critical and unpredictable audiences.
	Upon completion of 120 credits at Level 7 / the PG Dip, students will be able to:
1	Innovate in the application of knowledge, through critical awareness of current problems or new insights in media trends, advertising and the branding communications sector.
2	Use advanced project management skills through collaborative practice in complex client and/or competition driven challenges.
3	Create effective content by using appropriate production resources and technologies to visualise measurable media communications.
4	Demonstrate self-direction, in solving complex creative and strategic problems; acting autonomously to plan and implement theoretical and practical actions at professional levels.

14	**Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**
	MA Advertising & Branding teaching and assessment strategy is rooted in the University's practice-led, theory-applied, teaching philosophy, and the teaching alignments described by Gerald Jones in *Gatekeepers, Midwives and Fellow Travellers: The Craft and Artistry of the Adult Educator,* (2005). In these alignments, the teaching team and students actively move from linear teaching relationships in classes, through shared dialogue and enablement in seminars and tutorials, towards self-directed and autonomous learning and experimentation in communities of practice. All classes and interactions are face-to-face and teaching strategies including investigation, acquisition, discussion, practice, collaboration and production methods appropriate to the aims and Level 7 learning outcomes in each phase of the course. Although the modules appear to be distinct, engagement with the course is holistic and fluid. Industry partners from client-side and agency-side professional practice in creative and end-to-end communications companies contribute to the teaching and learning experience: in classes, forums and crucially as mentors, selected by students to add unique and bespoke insight that aligns to their personal and professional development. The learning and teaching strategies include: • face-to-face lectures (provide an in-depth understanding of the topic). • professional guest speakers (providing industry insight and opportunity to network). • studio practice (professional disciplines in audio, video, photography and radio spaces). • workshops (hands-on training in idea generation, creative thinking, research, strategy, brand identity & development). • group projects (for teamworking and collaborative skills). • seminars (designed to encourage dialogue and interactivity around a topic). • field trips (places course teaching and learning in the professional, industry context). • E-content (module specific webinars, videos and lecture slides). • networking with our industry partners through agency & alumni visits (another chance to network). • Live projects and competition briefs. **Assessment:** Assessment is formative and summative. The work presented for the assessment will demonstrate the extent to which a student is currently fulfilling or has fulfilled the learning outcomes for the module. **Formative Assessment** In all modules there are opportunities for formative feedback and feedforward in the form of tutorials which provide verbal and/or written feedback. All of these, together with opportunities for students to engage in peer learning and assessment, provide opportunities for the student to attain a higher level of performance in the final summative assessment. **Summative Assessment** This final assessment giving the mark for the module, is known as a summative assessment. An evaluation of achievement is identified through specified assessment criteria aligned to each of the module learning outcomes. The assessment of submitted work is carried out by staff teaching on the modules. Students receive written feedback for each summative assessment.

15	Course Requirements
15a	**Level 7:** ***To complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 160 credits):***

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ART7925	Discovery and Design	40
ART7919	Research Through Practice	20
ART7926	Strategy and Activation	40
ART7929	Professional Project	60

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least 20 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules.

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ADM7017	Industry Project	20
ADM7018	Independent Creative Entrepreneur	20
ADM7001	Work Placement	20

In order to qualify for the award of MA Advertising and Branding with Professional Placement, a student must successfully complete all of the Level 7 modules listed above as well as the following Level 6 module:

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
PLA6003	Professional Placement	60

15b	Structure Diagram

Level 7

Please note list of optional modules is indicative only. Students' choice will not be guaranteed for optional modules but a fair and transparent process will be adopted and shared with students.

Course Structure: FULL TIME									
Year 1									
Cohort	S1 wks 1-4	S1 wks 5-8	S1 wks 9-12	S2 wks 1-4	S2 wks 5-8	S2 wks 9-12	S3 wks 1-4	S3 wks 5-8	S3 wks 9-12
September Full-Time	Module: Discovery & Design (40 Credits)			Module: Strategy & Activation (40 Credits)			Module: Professional Project (60 credits)		
	Module: Research Through Practice (20 Credits)			Module: School Module (20 Credits)					

Course Structure: PART TIME									
Year 1									
Cohort	S1 wks 1-4	S1 wks 5-8	S1 wks 9-12	S2 wks 1-4	S2 wks 5-8	S2 wks 9-12	S3 wks 1-4	S3 wks 5-8	S3 wks 9-12
September Part-Time 1	Module: Discovery & Design (40 Credits)			Module: Strategy & Activation (40 Credits)			**S3 Summer Break in Studies**		

Course Structure: PART TIME									
Year 2									
Cohort	S1 wks 1-4	S1 wks 5-8	S1 wks 9-12	S2 wks 1-4	S2 wks 5-8	S2 wks 9-12	S3 wks 1-4	S3 wks 5-8	S3 wks 9-12
September Part-Time 2				Module: Professional Project (60 credits)			**Professional Project** (continues)		
	Module: Research Through Practice (20 Credits)			Module: School Module (20 Credits)					

16	Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment

Overall student *workload* consists of class contact hours, independent learning and assessment activity, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 10 hours. While actual contact hours may depend on the optional modules selected, the following information gives an indication of how much time students will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

- *Scheduled Learning* includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, contact time specified in timetable
- *Directed Learning* includes placements, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning
- *Private Study* includes preparation for exams

The *balance of assessment* by mode of assessment (e.g. coursework, exam and in-person) depends to some extent on the optional modules chosen by students. The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework, exam and in-person is shown below.

Level 7

Workload

8.3% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	**360**
Directed Learning	1080
Private Study	360
Total Hours	**1800**

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	
Coursework	80%
In-Person	20%