

Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	Course Title	BA (Hons) Fine Art
2	Course Code	US1209 BA (Hons) Fine Art US1211 BA (Hons) Fine Art with Professional Placement Year
3	Awarding Institution	Birmingham City University
4	Teaching Institution(s) (if different from point 3)	N/A
5	Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation (if applicable)	N/A

6	Course Description
	<p>Through the skilful manipulation of materials, processes, and ideas, you, as an artist, will be able to offer creative insights that shape who you are and how you exist in the world around you. These are valuable skills in the fast-changing and interconnected web of ecological, political, socio-economic, and philosophical contexts.</p> <p>The BA (Hons) Fine Art course will help you embrace important traditional making skills such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, installation, digital media, and performance, while also encouraging you to fuse these with new developments in creative practice. This will be framed within a professional working context to improve your employability. This hybrid approach, along with discipline-specific studios and specialist workshops, will equip you to navigate the evolving landscape of the Creative Industries into the future.</p> <p>The course is based on four key principles: Making Skills, Making Public, Making Communities, and Making a Living.</p> <p>Making Skills will be developed through purpose-built studio spaces, allowing you to explore materials and processes in painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, digital media, and performance. You'll acquire and apply technical skills in workshops and through collaboration with fabricators from across Birmingham and beyond. These skills will become the foundation for you to test, interrogate, and transform your art practice both conceptually and aesthetically.</p> <p>Making Public will encourage you to explore art practice in the public realm. This includes expanded ideas of exhibiting and sharing your outcomes in ways that generate participation with broad audiences. You'll benefit from live projects and our close links with high-profile establishments, including Eastside Projects, Grand Union, Ikon Gallery, and Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. These opportunities will help you develop your thinking about the process of making your work public.</p> <p>Making with Communities will ask you to consider ways to build and sustain meaningful relationships between your art practice and society. You will form Communities of Practice through studio groups and engage with local, national, and international organisations, gaining cultural and global perspectives and experiences. This valuable experience will help you define the future direction of your practice.</p>

	<p>Making a Living will focus on your personal development and the various ways you can build and grow a successful creative career. You'll establish a professional context for your work by gaining a situated knowledge of the art sector. The advancement of the digital world has provided artists with numerous opportunities to thrive in a creative environment, and you'll be taught the new skills and behaviours necessary to face the exciting challenges awaiting you in the world of employment after your studies.</p> <p>Professional Placement Year Students joining BA (Hons) Fine Art or BA (Hons) Fine Art with Foundation Year will have the opportunity to do a year-long Professional Placement. They can apply directly to this as a course route or they can opt in/ out by May of the previous year. The University wide professional placement year has been developed in recognition that extended working within the industry/ sector has benefits to both employers and students. The Professional Placement is 40-weeks long and takes place between level 5 and 6. Student must have passed 120 L4 and 120 L5 credits before the placement begins and are responsible for sourcing their placement (which can be paid or unpaid), the course and Careers+ teams will assist and offer students support in sourcing placement. The Professional Placement is awarded a pass/fail mark only.</p>
--	---

7	Course Awards		
7a	Name of Final Award	Level	Credits Awarded
	Bachelor of Arts with Honours Fine Art	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>360 credits</i>
	Bachelor of Arts with Honours Fine Art with Professional Placement Year		<i>480 credits</i>
7b	Exit Awards and Credits Awarded		
	Certificate of Higher Education Fine Art	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>120</i>
	Diploma of Higher Education Fine Art	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>240</i>
	Bachelor of Arts	<i>Level 6</i>	<i>300</i>

8	Derogation from the University Regulations		
	Not applicable		

9	Delivery Patterns			
	Mode(s) of Study	Location(s) of Study	Duration of Study	Code(s)
	Full Time	Margaret Street	3 years	US1209
	Full time with Professional Placement year	Margaret Street	4 years	US1211

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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support and encourage an experimental and active enquiry-based creative art practice • To facilitate the acquisition of skills (practical and theoretical, knowledge and understanding) appropriate to contemporary art practice • To inculcate high standards of making through the acquisition of technical skills • To introduce students to a range of visual research methodologies in order to understand research as an essential part of the artistic process • To develop culturally and critically aware graduates who are responsive problem solvers • To enhance students' capacities to develop professional attributes • To develop skilled graduates able to position themselves and work within the creative sector in order to make a living • To create a significant awareness of the local and international context for contemporary art production and reception • To develop links and networks with local, national and international communities • To recognise making and thinking in the context of social and political contexts

12	Course Learning Outcomes <i>On completion of the course, students will be able to;</i>
KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING	
MAKING SKILLS <i>Subject specific practical skills: knowledge and understanding (technical)</i>	
1	Work in an iterative manner, experimenting to generate solutions and speculative approaches in the production of art.
2	Initiate, identify, develop and sustain a self-generated working practice to evidence a commitment to art making.
3	Successfully employ materials, processes, media and environments relevant to the discipline with proficiency and skill in a safe and responsible manner.
MAKING COMMUNITIES <i>Knowledge (theoretical), understanding (intellectual), cognitive (thinking) and subject specific (research)</i>	
4	Apply ethical principles and personal values to working with others in order to understand the relationship between art and society.
5	Synthesise information from a range of contemporary, historical and theoretical sources to situate your practice in a critical context.
6	Utilise effective communication strategies to evaluate and position your practice in relation to the concerns of others.
SKILLS & OTHER ATTRIBUTES	
MAKING A LIVING <i>Personal attributes: professional behaviours, (attitudes, self-management) and key transferrable skills</i>	
7	Work independently and with others, actively participating in a range of relevant contexts to develop and sustain a professional practice.
8	Create and continually update documentation of your work to a professional standard, utilising digital literacy in relation to the skills essential for making a living.
9	Demonstrate how the knowledge and skill you have acquired can be transferable across a range of industries.
MAKING PUBLIC <i>Cognitive (communication), social (group working) and application (presentation) skills</i>	

10	Articulate your ideas to specialist or general audiences by locating the cultural, social and ethical factors which inform how artwork is made and shown.
11	Demonstrate negotiation, organisation, time management and presentation skills to realise work to a professional standard.
12	Show analytical and critical judgement from development to outcome when positioning your practice in relation to the broad field of contemporary art.

13	Level Learning Outcomes
	<i>Upon completion of Level 4 / the Certificate of Higher Education, students will be able to:</i>
	MAKING SKILLS <i>Subject specific practical skills: knowledge and understanding (technical)</i>
1	Form an understanding of the relationship between materials and concepts through an investigation of materials, techniques and processes.
2	Explore modes of communicating your ideas through the production of art.
	MAKING COMMUNITIES <i>Knowledge (theoretical), understanding (intellectual), cognitive (thinking) and subject specific (research)</i>
3	Use research methods in order to develop your ideas and begin to relate them to contemporary and historical contexts.
4	Reflect on your contribution to and value of working with others.
	MAKING A LIVING <i>Personal attributes: professional behaviours, (attitudes, self-management) and key transferrable skills</i>
5	Present and document your work in an organised and coherent way using digital technologies.
6	Reflect on the development of your artistic language and its relationship to professional art practice contexts.
	MAKING PUBLIC <i>Cognitive (communication), social (group working) and application (presentation) skills</i>
7	Engage in professional working practices in the production and presentation of your public facing artworks.
8	Discuss and present your work in a way which confidently communicates ideas to an audience.

	<i>Upon completion of Level 5 / the Diploma of Higher Education, students will be able to:</i>
	MAKING SKILLS <i>Subject specific practical skills: knowledge and understanding (technical)</i>
1	Establish a self-directed practice using iterative making approaches to solve creative problems.
2	Use specialist knowledge and skills relevant to your discipline in the production of your practice.
	MAKING COMMUNITIES <i>Knowledge (theoretical), understanding (intellectual), cognitive (thinking) and subject specific (research)</i>
3	Locate the cultural, social and historical contexts relevant to your practice in considering how contemporary art relates to wider social contexts.
4	Employ research methodologies informed by an awareness of historical and current critical debates.

	MAKING A LIVING <i>Personal attributes: professional behaviours, (attitudes, self-management) and key transferrable skills</i>
5	Chart your ongoing critical reflection, organisation and planning activities in order to sustain self-directed study.
6	Employ discipline specific and transferable skills in the realisation of external facing outputs through interacting effectively with others.
	MAKING PUBLIC <i>Cognitive (communication), social (group working) and application (presentation) skills</i>
7	Use visual languages to articulate ideas and information in a way which engages with external audiences or participants to consider new contexts for your work.
8	Engage in self-reflection and analysis of ideas in the public dissemination of your practice.

Upon completion of 60 credits at Level 6 / the Bachelors Degree, students will be able to:	
	MAKING SKILLS <i>Subject specific practical skills: knowledge and understanding (technical)</i>
1	Practice professionally in a community appropriate to your ideas, skills and context of your work, adhering to health and safety and ethical considerations.
2	Work speculatively and creatively to make effective use of processes and materials in the resolution and communication of your ideas.
	MAKING COMMUNITIES <i>Knowledge (theoretical), understanding (intellectual), cognitive (thinking) and subject specific (research)</i>
3	Position your own practice as one that engages with broader questions of research, production, site, audience, engagement and society.
4	Synthesise research to develop and articulate ideas in practical, written and verbal forms responding to a diverse range of contemporary art practices and debates.
	MAKING A LIVING <i>Personal attributes: professional behaviours, (attitudes, self-management) and key transferrable skills</i>
5	Assume personal responsibility and decision-making in career planning; recognising your skills and attributes.
6	Synthesise knowledge and attributes in effective ways to enable you to take on future challenges in a variety of contexts.
	MAKING PUBLIC <i>Cognitive (communication), social (group working) and application (presentation) skills</i>
7	Through independent planning, present work to identified audiences in a range of situations in a coherent and professional manner.
8	Articulate your ideas and outcomes comprehensively through application of practical research, making and communication skills.

14 Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy
Teaching and Learning Strategies

The BA (Hons) Fine Art course teaching and learning strategy is informed by a four pillar structure. The course and is underpinned by the School of Art Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy which sets out the school's principle aims and ways in which learning and teaching is enhanced. The School has a commitment to continually developing educational approaches that support and promote diverse learning styles, inclusivity in its subjects and encourages lifelong learning for a diverse student community.

The BA (Hons) Fine Art course, from the second year (level 5) aligns learning to discipline specific studios that frame the course as a flexible and fluid pathway model in order to support the acquisition of highly accomplished technical and practical making skills. This discipline specific studio approach is underpinned by the four-pillar structure (*Making Skills, Making with Communities, Making Public and Making a Living*) where public facing, community building and employability skills are interwoven at every stage.

Birmingham is a city of making, the BA (Hons) Fine Art course celebrates and embeds this history at its core with a focus on technical, material and process-based fabrication skills. The BA (Hons) Fine Art learning community benefits from a flexible blend of taught activities, which consists of directed sessions delivered in the school's specialist workshops and purpose designed discipline specific studio spaces; supporting the acquisition of digital, technical and transferable skills. The course also places a focus on live event-based learning to support students in their engagement with critical and professional contexts by working with diverse communities to create symbiotic relationships with the city and the people that live here. Students learn in the city and the wider community through the external facing live projects with local, national and global industry and academic partners to support student outcomes and learning gains. At its core the course enable students to gain valuable networks, experiences and skills establishing them as graduates ready for employment in the creative industries or for a flexible 'portfolio career'.

Students are integrated into the workshops and the technical and academic staff co-delivery of key making workshops ensures a holistic learning experience between the workshop and the studio. Alongside studio and workshop-based learning, E-learning supported by a range of technologies, is used to complement on site-activities through a blended learning approach. Students develop and extend their making skills through open working, encouraging creativity and innovation, they establish both traditional art practice skills whilst exploring collaborative and innovative STEAM methods of working.

The course is delivered through the integration of theory and practice. Scaffolded learning of practical and critical skills is incorporated at all levels and to ensure the progression of learning supported by transition activities (from level 4, to 5 to 6). All staff on the BA (Hons) Fine Art course are active practitioners and/or researchers who, through their own professional and academic practices enact the principle of practice-led teaching and learning. Actively working to challenge the traditional canon, students are exposed to practices and artists that reflect the diverse nature of our student body. The communities of practice that the students engage with, and collectively establish, will offer support in acquiring the tools to think critically through making, and develop the skills to shape a creative process to shift the parameters of theory, and practice in the public sphere. Students are encouraged to become aware of ethical and inclusive practices and how this may shape their contributions to the creative and cultural sectors in the region, and beyond.

The BA (Hons) Fine Art course delivers an intellectually stimulating curriculum that emphasises skills that cannot be replaced by automation and developments in AI. An extensive range of independent learning activities tailored to individuals' particular learning objectives support the successful outcomes of students to enable personal transformation through a structure that supports different learning styles. Methods of teaching and learning, include:

- Workshop skills sessions
- Studio skills sessions
- Supported studio production sessions
- Pastoral Tutorials
- Group Tutorials / Crits
- Lectures
- Seminars
- Reading groups
- Research method workshops
- Academic Skills Sessions
- Presentations
- Work in Progress Exhibitions
- External facing/ live projects
- Visits/ Trips
- E-learning
- Graduate plus activities
- Self-directed study (including studio, workshop, library access)

Assessments

The BA (Hons) Fine Art course fosters a culture of 'assessment *for* learning'. Pedagogy, curricula and assessment practices have the potential to mitigate or sustain social inequalities; the learning outcomes, marking criteria and transparency of the assessment process (which avoids a focus on holistic judgements and perceived subjectivity) aims to go some way in supporting the attainment of all students by being transparent and accessible in the language used. The Learning Outcomes reflect the practical focus of the course and the ethos of streamlining language. There will be ongoing consultation with the student cohort about the usability of these documents. The course staircases learning through outcomes, mapped to the four pillars of the course, that develop, enhance and activate skills as students progress through the levels.

The BA (Hons) Fine Art course uses both formative and summative feedback, with an understanding that both forms of assessment play a key role in informing ongoing learning. These forms of feedback are central to the studio learning experience in art practice, giving students rich dialogic experiences in which to become active participants in their own development. Based on a socio-constructive paradigm, feedback is often facilitative in that it involves provision of comments and suggestions to enable students to make their own revisions; through dialogue feedback helps students to gain new understandings without dictating what those understandings will be. The course has multiple assessment points to ensure continuity of learning. Mid-module formative and end of module summative assessments use a feed forwards philosophy; Students are also encouraged to review their own and each other's work and to engage in a dialogue on how to improve work moving forward. Level 4 has a focus on providing opportunities for students to engage in effective peer assessment activities as a mechanism to support their transition into independent learning and to support the exchange of prior knowledge, skills and understanding from the diverse range of experiences students join the course with.

Feedback mechanisms within the course include:

- Formative assessment points
- One-on-one formative tutorials
- Group critiques
- Peer-review
- Summative assessment feed-forward
- Written feedback

The methods of assessment are entirely coursework based and alongside negotiated submissions, relevant to students' individual practices and relevant to the needs of the ever-evolving creative industry sector. BA (hons) Fine Art embraces and actively promotes alternative coursework assessment methods in order to empower an inclusive and individual learning journey and to ensure students have relevant future-fit skills to support their progress. This is applied through flexible and open assessment briefs which allow creative approaches to problem solving and application of knowledge in appropriate, individual ways.

Forms of submission include:

- Process Books (digital logs of development of ideas, material and contextual research and regular reflection)
- Skills Portfolios
- Body of work (portfolio, website, PDF, studio display)
- Essays
- Critical Evaluations
- Reports
- Exhibitions
- Organised workshops / collaborative outputs
- Publications/ Zines / Podcasts/ Radio broadcasts (alternative practice research submissions)
- Live and recorded verbal and visual presentations
- Portfolios of individual practice documenting work (painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, performance, animation, video, sound, sculpture, installation, textiles, creative writing etc).
- Blogs/ vlogs
- Websites

15	Course Requirements																																											
15a	<p><i>Individual levels below to be deleted where not applicable.</i></p> <p>Level 4:</p> <p><i>In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Code</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Name</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Credit Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ART4232</td> <td>Making Studio</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ART4233</td> <td>Making a Living 1: Developing Skills</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ART4234</td> <td>Making Meanings</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ART4235</td> <td>Making Public</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Level 5:</p> <p><i>In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 100 credits):</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Code</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Name</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Credit Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ART5143</td> <td>Making Critical</td> <td>40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ART5144</td> <td>Making a Living 2: With Communities</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ART5142</td> <td>Making Practice</td> <td>40</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least 20 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules.</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Code</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Name</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Credit Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ADM5001</td> <td>Live Project</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ADM5000</td> <td>Work Placement</td> <td>20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><u>Level 5:</u></p> <p><u>In order to qualify for the awards with Professional Placement, a student must successfully complete all of the modules listed above as well as the following Level 5 module (totalling 120 credits):</u></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Code</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Module Name</th> <th style="background-color: #ffff00;">Credit Value</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>PPY5003</td> <td>Professional Placement</td> <td>120</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value	ART4232	Making Studio	40	ART4233	Making a Living 1: Developing Skills	20	ART4234	Making Meanings	40	ART4235	Making Public	20	Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value	ART5143	Making Critical	40	ART5144	Making a Living 2: With Communities	20	ART5142	Making Practice	40	Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value	ADM5001	Live Project	20	ADM5000	Work Placement	20	Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value	PPY5003	Professional Placement	120
Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value																																										
ART4232	Making Studio	40																																										
ART4233	Making a Living 1: Developing Skills	20																																										
ART4234	Making Meanings	40																																										
ART4235	Making Public	20																																										
Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value																																										
ART5143	Making Critical	40																																										
ART5144	Making a Living 2: With Communities	20																																										
ART5142	Making Practice	40																																										
Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value																																										
ADM5001	Live Project	20																																										
ADM5000	Work Placement	20																																										
Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value																																										
PPY5003	Professional Placement	120																																										

Level 6:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
ART6146	Making Research	40
ART6139	Making a Living 3: Professional Practice	20
ART6138	Making Exhibitions	60

15b Structure Diagram

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.

Level 4

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Making Studio 40 credits Core	Making Meanings 40 credits Core
Making a Living 1: Developing Skills 20 credits Core	Making Public 20 credits Core

Level 5

Making Critical 40 credits Core	Making Practice 40 credits Core
Making a Living 2: With Communities 20 credits Core	<i>Optional</i> ADM5000: Work Placement (20 credits) ADM5001: Live Project (20 credits)

Professional Placement Year (optional)

Optional
Professional Placement Year
(120 credits)

Level 6

<p>Making Research 40 credits Core</p>	<p>Making Exhibitions 60 credits Core</p>
<p>Making a Living 3: Professional Practice 20 credits Core</p>	

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 4

Workload

XX% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	240
Directed Learning	600
Private Study	360
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	100%
Exam	0%
In-Person	0%

Level 5

Workload

XX% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	216
Directed Learning	568
Private Study	416
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	100%

Exam	0%
In-Person	0%

Level 6

Workload

XX% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	192
Directed Learning	618
Private Study	391
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	100%
Exam	0%
In-Person	0%