QAA

Subject Benchmark Statement

Art and Design: Draft for consultation

April 2016

Contents

How can I use this document?

This document is a Subject Benchmark Statement for Art and Design that defines what 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.

You may want to read this document if you are:

- involved in the design, delivery and review of programmes of study in Art and Design or related subjects
- a prospective student thinking about studying Art and Design, 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 Art and Design.

Explanations of unfamiliar terms used in this Subject Benchmark Statement can be found in the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's (QAA's) glossary.[1]

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[1] The QAA glossary is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary.

About Subject Benchmark Statements

Subject Benchmark Statements form part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) which sets out the Expectations that all providers of UK higher education reviewed by QAA are required to meet.[2] They are a component of Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, which includes the Expectation that higher education providers 'consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements' in order to secure threshold academic standards.[3]

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas, and in respect of particular qualifications. They provide a picture of what graduates in a particular subject might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their programme of study.

Subject Benchmark Statements are used as reference points in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes. They provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with the programme 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 programme design within a framework agreed by the subject community. Further guidance about programme design, development and approval, learning and teaching, assessment of students, and programme monitoring and review is available in Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality of the Quality Code in the following Chapters:[4]

Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval
Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching
Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning
Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review.

For some subject areas, higher education providers may need to consider other reference points in addition to the Subject Benchmark Statement in designing, delivering and reviewing programmes. These may include requirements set out by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, national occupational standards and industry or employer expectations. In such cases, the Subject Benchmark Statement may provide additional guidance around academic standards not covered by these requirements.[5] The relationship between academic and professional or regulatory requirements is made clear within individual statements, but it is the responsibility of individual higher education providers to decide how they use this information. The responsibility for academic standards remains with the higher education provider who awards the degree.

Subject Benchmark Statements are written and maintained by subject specialists drawn from and acting on behalf of the subject community. The process is facilitated by QAA. 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.

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[2] The Quality Code, available at www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code, aligns with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, available at: www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ESG_endorsed-with-changed-foreword.pdf
[3] Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-a
[4] Individual Chapters are available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b.
[5] See further Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-a.

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. The Quality Code does not interpret legislation nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements. Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Subject Benchmark Statement where appropriate. Higher education providers are responsible for how they use these resources.[6]

Equality and diversity

The Quality Code embeds consideration of equality and diversity matters throughout. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in, and a responsibility for, promoting equality.

Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary.

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[6] See further the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education: General Introduction*, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=181.

About this Subject Benchmark Statement

This Subject Benchmark Statement refers to bachelor's degrees in Art and Design.[7]

This version of the statement forms its third edition, following initial publication of the Subject Benchmark Statement in 2002 and review and revision in 2007.[8]

Note on alignment with higher education sector coding systems

Programmes of study which use this Subject Benchmark Statement as a reference point are generally classified under the following codes in the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS).[9]

W100 (Fine Art)
W110 (Drawing)
W120 (Painting)
W130 (Sculpture)
W140 (Printmaking)
W150 (Calligraphy)
W160 (Fine art conservation)
W190 (Fine art not elsewhere classified)
W200 (Design studies)
W210 (Graphic design)
W211 (Typography)
W220 (Illustration)
W230 (Clothing/fashion design)
W240 (Industrial/product design)
W250 (Interior design)
W260 (Furniture design)
W270 (Ceramics design)
W280 (Interactive & electronic design)
W290 (Design studies not elsewhere classified)
W600 (Cinematics &photography)
W640 (Photography)
W700 (Crafts)

Summary of changes from the previous Subject Benchmark Statement (2008)

Art and design, as a subject, has not changed very much since the previous Statement was published.

The most immediately obvious difference from the 2008 version of the Art and Design Subject Benchmark Statement is that it is no longer under the same front cover as the History of Art, Architecture and Design. Although this has happened, there still is a strong, inherent link between the two subjects.

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[7] 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*, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications.

[8] Further information is available in the *Recognition scheme for Subject Benchmark Statements*, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=190.

[9] Further information about JACS is available at: www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1776/649.

The Statement has been updated to reflect the changing technological and commercial landscapes in which the provision of Art and Design honours degrees now exists. The review group also decided to add an Excellent Level of attainment to the Standards section in order to depict what skills and attributes such a graduate demonstrates.

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 and the economy, on a global level.

1.2   The study of Art and Design as an academic and intellectual pursuit develops a 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 programmes 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   The review group decided that 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, a brief statement of an excellent standard of achievement is also be included (see Section 6).

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

1.6   Programmes in art and design emphasise imagination and creativity, and are designed to develop students' intellectual powers and their ability to communicate. 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 programme of staged development progressing to increasingly independent learning.

1.7   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 and new technologies that are creating alternative synergies and modes of practice.

1.8   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.

1.9   The growth of Art and Design higher education reflects the increasing demand for visual 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 the industrial and service 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.

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. However, the use of technology, exploration of materials and the challenging of existing disciplines has led an increase in multi-disciplinary activity.

2.2   Learning in Art and Design develops:

- the capacity to be creative
- an aesthetic sensibility
- intellectual enquiry
- skills in team working
- an appreciation of diversity
- the ability to conduct research in a variety of modes
- the quality of critically reflecting on one's own learning and development
- 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 well-being of the individual and of society. 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 also understand the broad vocational, economic and social contexts within which their study sits and the range of professional opportunities available to them. These may include; anticipating and responding to change; knowledge and application of business processes; communication (both 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 appropriate related theories within global, historical, contemporary and cultural 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, 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 professional need. The principal forms of communication in these settings involve aesthetics and functionality through which visual presentation skills are developed. Students also develop verbal and written communication skills as a result of interaction with their peers and tutors, 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 environment; information technology and computing; engineering; business; and the history of art, architecture and design. The nomenclature of disciplines changes and discipline content may 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 skills of a more generic nature. Art and design disciplines have to varying degrees responded to, assimilated, manipulated 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 encompass 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 programmes attach great importance to students' acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the cultural context of their disciplines. Programmes employ a range of methods to engage students with the historical, theoretical, socio-political and environmental dimensions of their disciplines, and to make such dimensions integral to and manifest in student work: In some programmes 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 programme. There is a particular focus on skills in research, critical analysis and written/oral communication.

3.6   Many art and design programmes 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 acknowledges the commonalities between the disciplines which 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 which 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 and processes, 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 which 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 discipline, and there are no limitations in terms of interdisciplinary relationships. Art and design covers aspects of decision making in relation to the aesthetic, operational, user, market, production 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 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 programme, 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 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 good working practices, and professional/legal responsibilities relating to the subject
- articulate and synthesise knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills in effective ways in the contexts of creative practice, employability, preparation for further study, research and personal development
- apply, consolidate and extend learning in different contexts and situations, both within and beyond the field of art and design.

4.5　Threshold, Typical and Excellent Standards are set out in Section 5. 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. 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. Programmes 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 physical space both internal (institutional) and external (location). 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 studio and workshop spaces with integrated 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 Art and Design programmes are designed to support individual development as creative practitioners as well as the progressive acquisition of independent learning skills. Programme 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 programmes include the opportunity to undertake placements, internships or work-based experience.

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

5.5 In addition, programmes 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.

5.6 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 culminating with a significant piece of work in the latter stages of the programme. Because of this pedagogic approach Art and Design programmes often deliver curricula through large modules or units of study.

5.7   Studio-based activity is a significant feature of art and design education, providing loci for both individual and group tuition. In an effective learning environment, staff and students create a community of practice as partners in the process of learning.
The pedagogy is discursive with an emphasis on student presentations, peergroup learning and group critique. Both individual and group tutorials are an important approach, providing a supportive environment for the student and encouraging reflective learning. 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.

5.8   For Art and Design programmes 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.

5.9   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 programmes. In addition, many programmes encourage partnership and third-sector engagement, which serves to expand students' awareness of contemporary contexts and issues.

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

5.11   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 reflective journals, blogs and personal development records.

5.12   Formative and summative assessment are regarded as positive learning tools. Feedback on assessed work is an important feature of 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.

5.13   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 team contributions to the overall outcome of projects.

5.14   Distinctively, Art and Design programmes 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 student needs, providing relevant help and advice for both academic and pastoral matters.

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 programmes.

Threshold standard 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 programmes 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 good 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 materials, processes and environments
iv   make connections between intention, process, outcome, context and methods of dissemination.

6.5   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 audiences, clients, markets, users, consumers, and/or participants
iii   major developments in current and emerging media and technologies in their
iv   discipline(s)
v   the significance of the work of other practitioners in their discipline(s).

Generic and graduate skills

6.6   Graduates have demonstrated that they have some ability to:

Self-management:

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

Critical engagement:

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 and social 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.

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 and environments
iv   develop 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 and entrepreneurial.

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

i   the critical, contextual, historical, conceptual 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, users, consumers, participants, co-workers and co-creators within a professional environment
iii the implications and potential for their discipline(s) 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.

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 ability to:

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   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
iii   articulate ideas and information comprehensibly in visual, oral and written forms
iv   communicate and present ideas and work to audiences 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.

Personal qualities:

i   enquire into their discipline and the motivation to sustain it.

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 wide-ranging knowledge of the subject and its application in distinctive and imaginative ways.

Appendix 1: List of programme titles

This is not an exclusive list.

A:	Animation
Applied Arts	Advertising and Branding
Art	Art and Design
Artist Designer: Maker	
C:	Ceramics
Communication Design	Computer Arts
Computer Games Art	Computer Games Design
Concept Art	Contemporary Arts Practice
Costume Design	Creative Arts
Creative Practice	
D:	Decorative Arts
Design	Design Crafts
Design for Theatre, Performance and Events	Design Product
Digital Arts	Digital Design
Digital Film	Digital Media Arts
Drawing	
F:	Fine Art
Fashion Accessory Design	Fashion Communication
Fashion Design	Fashion and Textiles Design
Fashion Management	Fashion Marketing
Fashion Styling and Production	Film Production
Film and Television	Footwear Design
Furniture Design	
G:	Games Art
Games Design	Glass and Ceramics
Graphic Arts	Graphic Communication
Graphic Design	
I:	Illustration
Industrial Design	Interaction Design
Interactive Multimedia	Interior Design
Interior and Spatial Design	
J:	Jewellery and Metal Design
L:	
Lighting Design	
M:	Model Design
Motion Graphics Design	
P:	Painting and Drawing
Performance	Photojournalism & Documentary Photography
Photography	Photography and Video Art
Product Design	Props Making
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 Digital 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 (2016)

David Baldry   University Campus Suffolk
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 CHEAD
Professor 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   Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

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 Epson, 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 Glasman   University of Hertfordshire and the Art & Design: Empowering Part-time Tutors (FDTL4)
Professor Gordon Kennedy (Chair)   Nottingham Trent University
Dr Gerard Moran   De Montfort University
Christoph 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 & 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