

FdA in Art & Design

Coleg Menai
Fulltime
Validation:

Foundation Degree in Art and Design

1 INTRODUCTION

In line with the QAA Foundation Degree Benchmark statements, the FdA programmes have a strong vocational and academic ethos and aim to ensure that students, on completion of their studies, have a range of vocationally relevant skills. Integral to this ethos is the responsibility to ensure that Art and Design graduates have a portfolio of abilities and attributes which will enable them to thrive and flourish in 21st Century workplace.

The FdA programme provides Students with a uniquely broad base of skills at level 4 which, when combined with the specialism at level 5, produces versatile Artists and Designers.

The Foundation Degree in Art and Design provides opportunities for undergraduate students to study a broad range of Art and Design disciplines before specialising in their chosen area in Level 5. This multidiscipline experience combined with vocationally relevant and career related commissions, competitions and live projects provides students with the necessary skills to be confident practitioners in their chosen field.

This interdisciplinary element encourages students to have a desire to experiment, be flexible, work across a variety of media and work collaboratively with others.

Foundation degrees are intended to “*increase access and widen participation into higher education*” QAA Foundation Degree Benchmark 2004.

The FdA in Art and Design offers students a general art and design experience in level 4, with modules covering all of the three main disciplines: Fine Art, Design Communications and Applied Arts. This acts both as a grounding in art and design practice and also as a diagnostic experience to enable students to specialise in an appropriate area for their level 5 specialised study. The uniqueness of such a general Level 4 experience generates a confidence within the students to engage with interdisciplinary practice and produces a wider frame of reference for creative problem solving. These skills are important for future employment.

Aims of the programme: FdA in Art and Design

To provide a stimulating/caring and supportive teaching and learning environment within which students are able to fulfil their own creative potential as well as academically, professionally and personally through a programme which enables creative thinking, subject knowledge and academic skills in analysis, evaluation and synthesis alongside high levels of practical studio/workshop skill.

By completing all programme modules satisfactorily the student will be able:

- To respond to and provide for the employment needs of the local, regional and national economy.
- To help students develop an understanding and comprehension of key areas within Art and Design
- To ensure that students develop a good understanding of the key principles of design

- To develop in the students the skills and confidence to explore imaginative ideas and innovate with a methodical and systematic approach
- Manage concept development and the acquisition of relevant knowledge
- To give the Students opportunity to gather vocational experiences relevant to their career plans

The Foundation Degree in Art & Design at Coleg Menai was the first Foundation Degree to be run at Coleg Menai and was validated in 2006 with the first cohort enrolled in 06/07. The FdA has developed a strong vocational identity within the department, with students experiencing a range of art and design processes over the two years of the course.

When the course was first validated there were three other Higher Education courses running on the Coleg Menai site; HND Crafts, BA Design and BA Fine Art, and it was envisaged that FdA Level 5 students would work alongside other Level 5 students in specialist areas of Applied Arts, Fine Art and Graphic Communication. This was the case for the first two years, however, as the HND Crafts and BA Design course were phased out at Coleg Menai, the FdA Art & Design became a standalone course. With these changes the FdA course has accommodated students at level 5 specialising in the three main disciplines as a *discrete group*. The students work in diverse specialisms across different workshop areas, yet share a common studio space. This promotes a cross-fertilisation of ideas and processes and imaginative experimentation across these creative disciplines.

The changes above, coupled with the recent change in studio space has proved a very positive development in terms of student experience. This is reflected in student verbal feedback to External Examiner Vicky Shaw in June 2010.

Course numbers have grown year on year, with students progressing onto level 6 courses at Coleg Menai and Glyndwr University. This year there have been more applications to destinations across the UK, with students entering Level 5 at MMU and UWIC in Textiles and Graphic Design. Approximately a third of the students choose not to continue to ‘top-up’ to a full BA Honours, instead seeking freelance work. The links they form during Work Placements on the course prove valuable springboards in this regard, giving students the confidence and skills necessary to compete in the art & design jobs market.

The FdA Art & Design has instigated and developed links with partner organizations to form relationships which can provide students with work experience placements year on year.

This has resulted in students getting opportunities in placements with high quality relevant organizations, live briefs, competitions and exhibitions. Relationships with industry are continually developing, with students working on briefs and projects set by outside agencies in the form of freelance projects and events. These organizations also contribute in setting project briefs, tracking and Assessment Feedback and this collaborative approach is seen as a means of ensuring the course is providing relevant skills for creative industries.

“Appropriate and relevant experience has been put in place such as student led exhibitions, virtual projects and links with local practitioners and artists” – External Examiner 07/08

In 2010, for example, students were given placements by View Creative (graphic design) and Movix Ltd (3D Illustration) and Mike Lees Glass; all companies who hosted students in 07-08 and who were happy to continue the relationship with different cohort FdA students in 09-10. This continued involvement is seen as a valuable support in student industry practice.

Visiting lecturers/practitioners throughout the year also bring experience and expertise, providing valuable links with business, the arts; local, national and international opportunities. For example, Studio Managers at Wiss, Viewcreative, Movix and Glynllifon have also been actively involved in portfolio surgeries with Level 4 students before providing placement/exhibition opportunities at Level 5.

External Links & Recent Projects undertaken by FdA students

- **Glynllifon Crafts Centre** – exhibition of Level 5 work and student placement / apprenticeship
- **Technium CAST** – exhibition of Level 5 work in collaboration with northern bloc
- **View Creative** –student placements 07 & 09
- **Movix Media** – Student Placements 07 & 09
- **Greenland Design** – freelance graphic design projects for Level 5 students
- **Wiss Ltd** – Level 5 Student placement and portfolio surgeries 09
- **Mike Lees Glass** – Student Placements 07 & 09
- **BBC Wales** – Student Placement 07
- **Conwy County Council** – Helfa Gelf – open studios 09
- **Bangor Homeless Hostel** – site specific work by Level 5 student 08
- **Rockpool Kayaks** – student Placement 08
- **Castlevalley Films** – student Placement 07 & 09

2. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE & SEQUENCE OF DELIVERY

Students are required to complete 120 credits per level at both levels 4 and 5. A student will be able to exit with a Certificate of Higher Education in their named route if they have successfully gained 120 credits at Level 4 as specified on each programme structure

This Foundation Degree is intended to provide the knowledge and skills that are necessary to enable employees to be versatile and adaptable in progressing to and within work. Employability is a key aspect in Foundation Degree programmes and its inclusion will equip and assist learners to enhance their employment opportunities, and/or allow them to prepare for a career change.

The programme provides vocationally relevant experiences to develop students understanding of the subject in context and in the latter part, encourages negotiation of project content to test comprehension and competency. The QAA suggest: “*(40) Students can have an important part in negotiating programmes of study to meet their own learning needs in both the work and academic learning environments.*”

The FdA is required to offer defined progression and is located in the numerical HE levels as described by QAA below:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/foundationdegree/benchmark/fdqbs.asp>

“(Foundation Degrees are located within the Intermediate level of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and are recognised as an award that would be generally equivalent to level 5 (of 8) within the National Qualification Framework (September 2004 version). Foundation Degrees do not however, represent an end of first cycle higher education qualification in terms of the Bologna declaration; further study and assessments are required to complete the first cycle, which in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is typically represented by the award of a bachelors degree with honours.”

A student successfully completing the programme is not required to progress to further studies but will be prepared to do so if this is a career decision, or an alternative to being available for employment within the subject discipline. This will enable the student to attain the end of the first cycle (as defined in Bologna declaration).

Progression for students possessing a Foundation Degree in one of the three named routes onto an appropriate Level 6 of the BA awards offered is possible, and has been successfully achieved through out the time of the current FdA provision. Progression routes offered within Glyndŵr University are BA(Hons) Design: Communication, BA(Hons) Design: Creative Media, BA(Hons) Design: Applied Arts, BA(Hons) Fine Art,

This is via a portfolio interview.

A student wishing to progress on to Level 6 study should have successfully gained a Research Methods module prior to the commencement of studies.

This can be provided as a bridging Module if required.

Table of shared and discrete modules.

All modules follow the University template of 20 credits. Indicative Full time delivery schedule

FdA in Art and Design**Level 4****Semester 1**

Design Principles)
Peter Haveland

Introduction to Visual Research
Jane Parry

Applied Arts Design Practice
Angela Evans

Semester 2

Creative Futures 1
(Module common with BA programmes)
Jane Parry

Ideas & Concepts
Jane Parry

Studio Practice
Alison Mercer

Students successfully completing these
modules can exit with Certificate of HE in
Art and Design

FdA in Art and Design

Level 5

Semester 1

Contextualising Design
Peter Haveland

The Message
Jane Parry

Extending practice
Alison Mercer

Semester 2

Creative Futures 2
Jane Parry

Industry practice 2
Jane Parry

Exhibition Assignment
Angela Evans

5 ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Assessment procedures are designed to facilitate the nature and pace by which students produce work and to encourage efficient management and effective planning of time and resources.

Assessment may include a variety of formal and informal, formative and summative techniques, provided that they are all capable of rigorous testing and independent verification. In regard to franchise provision assessment teams comprise staff from Glyndŵr University and franchise partner staff at summative assessment. In addition to this, cross site internal moderation ensure parity of assessment decisions and contribute towards staff development. In line with all validated programmes, assessment decisions will be externally examined.

“The assessment process has been carried out fairly in relation to the programme and the intended learning outcomes. Internal moderation has taken place across all sites in both semesters.” – External Examiner report 08/09

Where possible, employers will be involved in the assessment of work-based learning, but will not make the final assessment decision. This decision will be made by the assessment team led by an academic member of staff. In cases where employers are involved in the support of the learner and in their assessment it may be necessary to provide support in the form of mentoring or other types of professional development.

Assessment Types and Formats

There are varied formats of assessment to encourage student learning:

- **Seminars** can be tutor or student led. Seminars encourage students to make presentations on specific elements of their subject study and have proved important in assessing research skills, methods of design, ability to organise and present an argument and clarity of presentation in other programmes. They are also a good example of peer group interaction and in developing the use of professional terminology and descriptive language.
- **Critiques** require students to produce and present a body of work for critical discussion within an atmosphere of informed, positive criticism. These help students to understand the assessment criteria in relation to their practice and are used to determine marks and grades at the formative stage of assessment.
- **Tutorials** are an important part of monitoring a student's progress and in providing periodic feedback on their performance as they progress through the programme. These can be individual, or in groups which has an advantage in peer learning. **Focus groups** have also been developed and are seen as an important part of the formative experience, particularly with regard to peer assessment. However, one to one tutorials are considered an essential mechanism in managing student learning successfully and in helping students to understand the nature of assessment decisions.

Assessment Strategy

Assessment is continuous and relates to all aspects of the modules' learning outcomes and the programme it comprises. The student will be assessed at the predetermined assessment points in the academic calendar and will be required to be ready to present evidence of learning to an assessment team. A module may contain more than one assignment in order to visit the full range of learning outcomes.

Formative assessment takes place at suitable points throughout the year and includes reviews of work at key points before Christmas and Easter. This dispenses with students worrying over impending assessments during vacation periods and instead provides time for them to reflect on their progress and prepare for future assignments. The vacation periods are regarded as natural breaks between students completing 'blocks' of work and enables them to work more logically through the year, providing them with feedback more crucially before Christmas and Easter with a summative assessment point at year end.

Formative assessment feedback forms have been useful in helping students to learn about the assessment criteria and learning outcomes as they progress and become used to the assessment process. They will acquire responsibility for tracking and recording their learning and assessment against the same learning outcomes introduced at the start of the assignment, and the PDP file will be central to this. Assessment feedback also helps students plan their next body of work in negotiation with their tutors. Students are encouraged to provide written evaluations at the end of modules which consolidates the learning in the mind of the student. This is particularly important for final year students in developing their critical analysis and readiness for the workplace.

Details of assessment are provided to students in their programme handbooks. Grids provide students with descriptive statements explaining how assessment decisions are arrived at under the main criteria. Glyndŵr University rules and regulations on assessment and procedures can also be found on the student intranet.

Assessment criteria are directly linked to individual module learning outcomes and are presented to students at the start of the module through key lectures. Defined aims, assessment requirements and learning outcomes are detailed in each module leaflet and made explicit on assignment sheets.

The Subject Team holds mid year assessment monitoring meetings to discuss student progression, consider how best to support their progress, share good practice, identify problems and take any remedial action that may be necessary before summative assessments. These monitoring meetings also ensure parity and equivalence of assessment across the awards in each subject area through samples and moderation.

The Assessment Process

1. The assessment process is developed in a variety of ways and is seen as an integral part of the learning process. All modules are assessed by a minimum of two members of staff and marks recorded for moderation and external examination. In due course finalised marks for each module will be recorded for each enrolled

student (subject to Assessment Board approval). There are two major forms of assessment; Formative and Summative.

Formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to help students to learn more effectively by giving students feedback on your performance and on how it can be improved and/or maintained. Reflective practice by students sometimes contributes to formative assessment.

Summative assessment is used to indicate the extent of students' success in meeting the assessment criteria set out in the module you are studying and the assessment is used to gauge attainment of the intended learning outcomes of a module or programme.

Assignment work for each module is graded with a percentage mark and the assessment criteria for percentage marks are clearly defined on the formative assessment sheets and in the programme handbook.

2. Students are made aware of the procedure if they are unable to hand in work by a deadline or have mitigating circumstances. Pro-forma is available for them to complete from the school offices and copies are also provided in their handbooks.
3. During formative assessment, students receive verbal feedback on their performance with pointers on areas of good practice, areas that need further work etc. This is followed by tutorials where students may explore detailed feedback, a summary of which is recorded in a student file. This file contains the assessment and tutorial appertaining to each student and is retained by the programme leader. At summative assessment current students tell us that verbal feedback sessions with tutors are more helpful than simply receiving a transcript of marks. This practice will continue.
4. External evaluation of work undertaken within industry or other outside context is sought after vocational experience. This will be through pro-forma that evaluates student performance by a professional from an organisation/design studio. Students keep a diary of any work undertaken away from the school, which records their own evaluations of work experience and they also take responsibility to ask companies to write evaluative letters reflecting the learning outcomes of the module. These are taken into consideration at the assessment, although the assessment decision will be based on the evidence of attainment of learning outcomes decided by the programme assessors to ensure consistency and comparability in grading.
5. Peer assessment has also been developed within the school, which encourages critical understanding and ownership of learning processes, particularly within team assignments. This assessment tactic provides higher levels of professional skills and promotes a supportive group culture.

Summative assessment is the calibration, recognition and recording of a student's attainment whilst permitting assessors to review both a complete level of module results for an individual student and for an entire cohort of students.

This is a key point for assessors to moderate results prior to external examination.

Grading:

The learner will also have their level of attainment graded. They will be given an indication of grade at both Formative and Summative assessment points. Their work will be graded using a letter code according to the scales published in the assessment level descriptor.

Foundation Degrees are graded as follows:

Fail	compensation	Pass	Merit	Distinction
00-34	35-39	40-59	60-69	70-100

The grades will be calculated based on the module brief assessment criteria which will clearly identify how marks will be allocated. The assessment criteria will comprise 5 areas of learning in line with QAA benchmarks for the subject:

- Critical and Theoretical Development Skills
- Research and Conceptual Skills
- Visual Communication Skills
- Practical and Material Skills
- Professional Practise

Each learning outcome for the module will relate to one of the 5 criteria above, and will be graded according to attainment levels. These areas of learning reflect the National Qualification Framework.

Assessment Criteria

By presenting the assessment criteria as an integral aspect of the introduction of a module brief, the learner can make informed decisions with regard to their management of tasks, resources and management of time in achieving their objectives. The teaching team believe this promotes ownership of learning and facilitates a clearer relationship of assessment to studio practice.

Assessment of Team Assignments

Peer and tutor assessed seminars will evaluate team assignments, with written personal evaluations (contributing to the students PDP) and documentation of participation will be presented in evidence of learning by each team member.

Module leaders will closely relate the assessment process to the module learning outcomes. The module descriptor identifies the outcomes and processes for the module leader to be incorporated into the assignment(s) introduced to the learners. This process of mapping should help the learner to identify the working processes for assessment, giving them opportunity to prepare well for assessment points. The assessment team will normally comprise of the module leader and another member of academic staff. There will be moderation of the marking across the two collaborating sites to ensure consistency of grading.

Indicative Module Assessment Schedule.
Full time Students
FdA in Art and Design Programme YEAR 2010/11

SEMESTER ONE				SEMESTER TWO			
Level 4		Level 5		Level 4		Level 5	
Module	Formative Assessment	Module	Formative Assessment	Module	Formative Assessment	Module	Formative Assessment
Introduction to Visual Research	Week beginning 13 th Dec.2010	Contextualising Design	12 th Nov.2010 Assignment one 2,000 word	Ideas and Concepts	Week beginning 31 st Jan. 2011	Exhibition Assignment	Week beginning 18 th April 2011
Design Practice (Applied Arts)	Week beginning 13 th Dec.2010	..	13 th Dec. 2010 Assignment two	Studio Practice (Fine Art)	Week beginning 14 th March. 2011	Industry Practice 2	Week beginning 18 th April 2011
Design Principles	19 th Nov. 2010 Group Project presentation	The Message	Week beginning 13 th Dec. 2010	Creative Futures 1	Week beginning 21 st April. 2011	Creative futures 2	
Design Principles	13 th Dec. 2010 1000 – 1500 word essay	Extending practice	Week beginning 13 th Dec. 2010				
				SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	w/b 16 th May	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	w/b 23 rd May

6 LEARNING RESOURCES

All newly recruited students at FdA Art & Design Coleg Menai engage in induction activity. This is particularly important for students working across sites. The students are made familiar with the dedicated spaces and programme timetables, members of staff and their own peer group. Induction will iterate the importance of Coleg Menai infrastructure in the support of learning, including library and related services, academic office and student support

Induction will also introduce the regulatory mechanisms of Coleg Menai and Glyndŵr University through the programme handbook as a guide to the learning experiences and opportunities available. It will be distributed and discussed in the presence of programme staff. Induction commences a week before continuing students return to studies.

Support continues throughout their studies: Students will be directed to draw on institutional support that includes skills sessions and career development sessions.

Several members of the Programme teams also run their own business practices outside of their work at Coleg Menai and exhibit nationally and internationally.

Their input, coupled with links to industry placement providers, creates contextualisation of theory and practice within the course curriculum and provides insight and opportunities for students' professional practice.

The Programme Team hold regular team meetings. Students enrolled on the programme are able to elect representatives who will be invited to attend the regular Staff / Student forums held across the School which provide students with a regular opportunity to raise issues, and feedback on their experiences to senior staff. Student Rep's will be invited to represent student views in Board meetings. This also enables monitoring of programmes delivered at dual sites to ensure consistency of experiences.

Formal reporting structures are explained to students so that they are aware how to report problems that have not been resolved at local level. This is explained by staff when introducing the student handbook. Students are also encouraged to feedback to their tutors during the regular Staff / Student discussions that are a feature of the community of learning within the course.

7 MARKETING & RECRUITMENT

The Foundation Degree Art & Design at Coleg Menai recruits internally to all Further Education courses within the Art & Design department at Parc Menai and a large proportion of students progress internally to the FdA from the following courses:

- Access to HE in Art & Design
- WJEC Foundation Diploma Art & Design
- National Diploma in Design

There are ten students graduating in July 2010, and 13 students progressing to Level 5 for 2010-2011. Interest in the course continues to grow, with 15 applications for intake 2010-2011. The recent changes in the UCAS listings have also resulted in applications through this route.

Students are also actively involved in the design of promotional materials, notably exhibition catalogue and website, which can be viewed here:

<http://fda.menai.ac.uk/09>

<http://fda.menai.ac.uk/10>

8 PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATION

Programme Team consists of:

Jane Parry –Programme Leader, Fine Art, Design Communication, Industry Practice

Helen Jones / Peter Haveland – Critical Contextual Studies

Mary Hughes / Alison Mercer – Applied Arts Fashion & Textiles

Pea Restall / Nesta Pritchard / Angela Evans – Applied Arts 3D Design