

Programme Title: MA in Documentary Practice



## Programme Specification (PG)

Awarding body / institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Teaching institution:	Queen Mary University of London
Name of final award and programme title:	MA in Documentary Practice
Name of interim award(s):	N/A
Duration of study / period of registration:	One Calendar Year: full-time or Two Calendar Years: Part-time
QMUL programme code(s):	P3Q1 P3Q2
QAA Benchmark Group:	Communication, media, film and cultural studies
FHEQ Level of Award:	Level 7
Programme accredited by:	N/A
Date Programme Specification approved:	
Responsible School / Institute:	School of Languages, Linguistics & Film

Schools / Institutes which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:

Collaborative institution(s) / organisation(s) involved in delivering the programme:

UCL, Goldsmith, SOAS, Birkbeck and King's (pending update of intercollegiate agreement for King's)

### Programme outline

The MA in Documentary Practice, hosted by the department of Film Studies at Queen Mary, investigates, articulates, questions and challenges issues of individual, social, political and ideological importance. It utilizes documentary production as a professional creative skill and as a practice-based research tool to create work of sophisticated, intellectual and critical enquiry.

The specialist modules for the programme are Documentary Film: Theory and Practice, Documentary Production Project and the Film Studies Research Project. All of these modules involve critical enquiry and research into documentary production and also result in creative production work to a professional standard. There is the opportunity for elective, optional modules during the course and this will be from a range of Film Studies modules that have both a documentary and fiction component; Auteur Direction, History, Fiction, Memory in French Cinema, and 9/11 and American Film. Students are also able to take intercollegiate optional modules at intercollegiate institutions.

As a London based college of international reputation Queen Mary benefits from its environment in terms of both academic and creative activity. The MA in Documentary Practice develops its own specialization and knowledge but it is also a part of a wider and shared intellectual and creative community at Queen Mary.

Students graduating from the programme will have practical, theoretical and research skills which are suitable for the development of industry-based careers, art work and also academic research development through PhD study.

### Aims of the programme

To enable students to develop knowledge, intellectual, critical understanding and insight into current documentary practices, which are informed by the forefront of professional practice and also through established and cutting edge academic research.

To enable students to study the forms, aesthetics and production methods of documentary practice as they have developed historically and in a contemporary context. To frame this study with a theoretical engagement with questions of representation, culture and ideology, while maintaining a strong theoretical and practical sense of the political and ethical.

To enable students to obtain a comprehensive understanding of research techniques applicable to their own work in terms of both written, research-based and practice-based outputs.

To develop practice-based abilities both in technical and in terms of production roles for documentary making, which will be in line with professional production standards in the broadcast industries.

To enable students to demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level

To enable students to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively and communicate clearly through their research to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

To enable students to employ initiative, personal responsibility and decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations.

To enable students to reach a standard where they are suitable to undertake high level and/or undertake work in academic research or in documentary production to a standard of excellence.

### What will you be expected to achieve?

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in terms of academic and discipline content and transferable skills. The programme outcomes are referenced to the relevant QAA benchmark descriptor(s) (see above) and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (2008), and relate to the typical student. Additionally, the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Further and Higher Education 2003 and Queen Mary Statement of Graduate Attributes have been used as a guiding framework for curriculum design.

#### Academic Content:

A 1	A critical and engaged understanding of documentary practice and relevant film theory informed by a range of current research issues, which will include ethical and personal responsibility
A 2	A sophisticated knowledge of documentary practice supported by a highly developed understanding of practice-based documentary production techniques and skills
A 3	A comprehensive understanding of research techniques in relation to outputs for both specialist and non-specialist audiences.
A 4	A sophisticated understanding of group and team work, production planning, research and problem-solving skills, enabling the production of work to a standard of both professional and academic excellence.

#### Disciplinary Skills - able to:

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B 1	Engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others within the field of documentary and film theory.
B 2	Apply knowledge and to interpret knowledge within the discipline
B 3	Critically evaluate current research and advanced scholarship in the shared disciplines of documentary and film theory
B 4	Evaluate new methodologies, develop critiques of them and where appropriate propose new hypothesis and practices.
B 5	Continue and advance knowledge and understanding and to develop new skills to a high level.

Attributes:	
C 1	Demonstrate the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility, decision-making and problem-solving in complex and unpredictable situations and the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.
C 2	Clarify a group task and lead, work with or work within a group towards a defined outcome. Be able to negotiate and handle conflict with confidence.
C 3	Produce work to a professional standard in both written and audio-visual communication
C 4	The ability to plan and produce work, both written and practice-based to a high level academic standard and to a high professional standard.
C 5	The ability to undertake independent high quality research and produce work which can communicate to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
C 6	The ability to plan, schedule and complete complex tasks, when working individually or as part of a group.

### How will you learn?

The MA in Documentary Practice will involve the following teaching strategies:

Lectures  
Screenings  
Seminars  
Case studies  
Practical skills training  
Research skills training  
Production tutorials  
Project work  
Team and group work

### How will you be assessed?

The MA in Documentary Practice will involve the following assessment strategies:

Essays  
Practical production work  
Outputs from research: Dissertation  
Outputs from research: Project Work and Project Reports

### How is the programme structured?

Please specify the structure of the programme diets for all variants of the programme (e.g. full-time, part-time - if applicable). The description should be sufficiently detailed to fully define the structure of the diet.

#### Full Time Students:

Students take two compulsory modules (30 credits each) one in each semester: Documentary Film: Theory and Practice and Documentary Production Project.

Students take the core Final Project module (60 credits) in semester 3.

Students have 60 credits of optional modules to select. These can be selected from:

- Level 7 Documentary Practice or Film Studies Optional Modules
- Up to 30 credits may be selected from Level 7 intercollegiate optional modules from agreed intercollegiate institutions
- Up to 30 credits may be selected from Level 7 versions of Level 6 Film Studies modules.

#### Part-time Students:

##### YEAR 1:

Students take the two compulsory modules: Documentary Film: Theory and Practice and Documentary Production Project (30 credits each)

##### YEAR 2:

Students select 60 credits of optional modules from:

- Level 7 Documentary Practice or Film Studies Optional Modules
- Up to 30 credits may be selected from Level 7 intercollegiate optional modules from agreed intercollegiate institutions
- Up to 30 credits may be selected from Level 7 versions of Level 6 Film Studies modules.

Students take the core Final Project module (60 credits) in semester 3.

### Academic Year of Study

Module Title	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Selection Status	Academic Year of Study	Semester

### What are the entry requirements?

Graduates with a humanities or creative arts degree at 2.1 or above will be eligible to apply for the programme. Applicants will be subject to an informal interview on application in order to assess their suitability and interest in the practice-based Documentary in Practice programme. Graduates from non-humanities disciplines may apply, but will be subject to a written assignment in order to assess their suitability for the programme. This written assignment will be assessed in relation to an open and transparent set of criteria in relation to the graduate abilities needed for the programme. International student will be required to have the required competence in terms of IELTS (minimum 7.0 plus 7.0 in writing) or equivalent TOEFL scores.

### How will the quality of the programme be managed and enhanced? How do we listen to and act on your feedback?

The Staff-Student Liaison Committee provides a formal means of communication and discussion between schools/institutes and its students. The committee consists of student representatives from each year in the school/institute together with appropriate

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representation from staff within the school/institute. It is designed to respond to the needs of students, as well as act as a forum for discussing programme and module developments. Staff-Student Liaison Committees meet regularly throughout the year.

Each school/institute operates a Learning and Teaching Committee, or equivalent, which advises the School/Institute Director of Taught Programmes on all matters relating to the delivery of taught programmes at school level including monitoring the application of relevant QMUL policies and reviewing all proposals for module and programme approval and amendment before submission to Taught Programmes Board. Student views are incorporated in the committee's work in a number of ways, such as through student membership, or consideration of student surveys.

All schools/institutes operate an Annual Programme Review of their taught undergraduate and postgraduate provision. APR is a continuous process of reflection and action planning which is owned by those responsible for programme delivery; the main document of reference for this process is the Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) which is the summary of the school/institute's work throughout the year to monitor academic standards and to improve the student experience. Students' views are considered in this process through analysis of the NSS and module evaluations.

### What academic support is available?

In addition to the huge range of support for students provided by the college (the Dean and Deputy Dean for Students; the Student Finance and Bursary Officer; Queen Mary Advice and Counselling Service; Occupational Health Service; Student Health Service; Careers Service; Library Services; Disability and Dyslexia Service; Students' Union; Westfield Nursery; Chaplaincy, etc.), all MA students are supported by their individual advisors.

### Programme-specific rules and facts

N/A

### Specific support for disabled students

Queen Mary has a central Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) that offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues. The DDS supports all Queen Mary students: full-time, part-time, undergraduate, postgraduate, UK and international at all campuses and all sites.

Students can access advice, guidance and support in the following areas:

- Finding out if you have a specific learning difficulty like dyslexia
- Applying for funding through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)
- Arranging DSA assessments of need
- Special arrangements in examinations
- Accessing loaned equipment (e.g. digital recorders)
- Specialist one-to-one study skills tuition
- Ensuring access to course materials in alternative formats (e.g. Braille)
- Providing educational support workers (e.g. note-takers, readers, library assistants)
- Access to specialist mentoring support for students with mental health issues and Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

### Links with employers, placement opportunities and transferable skills

The MA in Documentary Practice focuses on students finding their own voice as a filmmaker through the three practice based modules on the programme. There are asked to interrogate their work in terms of an academic framework and in terms of how it sits in the current documentary climate, by exposure to current films and debates. The programme engages with current

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platforms – BFI Film Festival; DOCHOUSE; RECLAIMING THE FRAME at Genesis. Relevant platforms are researched each year so as the programme stays current. 100 pounds has been made available for each student. These funds support the extra curriculum work of the programme that places students at the heart of current industry debate.

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## Programme Specification Approval

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**Person completing Programme Specification:**

**Person responsible for management of programme:**

**Date Programme Specification produced / amended by  
School / Institute Learning and Teaching Committee:**

**Date Programme Specification approved by Taught  
Programmes Board:**