

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES AT ALL LEVELS



THE UNIVERSITY OF
BUCKINGHAM

Name of Programme:	MA Luxury Brand Strategy & Business		
Final Award:	Master's Degree	Programme Code(s):	XX
Awarding Institution/Body:	The University of Buckingham	Teaching Institution:	Condé Nast College of Fashion & Design
School of Study:		Parent Department:	N/A
Programme Length:	12 Months – Full time 24 months – Part time	Location:	CNC Campus
Professional Body Accreditation:	N/A	Relevant Subject Benchmark Statement (SBS):	There is no specific benchmark for the MA Luxury Brand Strategy & Business
Admission Criteria:	2:2 (Hons) degree or equivalent. IELTS 6.5;	Applicable Cohort(s):	From January 2021 intake
FHEQ Level:	7	UCAS Code:	

Summary of Programme

The MA Luxury Brand Strategy & Business programme that will introduce students to luxury brands, and strategic and business models specific to the luxury industry. The programme offers students from varied backgrounds and disciplines the opportunity to be introduced to the luxury industry at postgraduate level, utilising and honing their existing transferable skills whilst attaining valuable knowledge in line with their career aspirations to work in the luxury industry.

The first term of this new MA programme explores audience research and investigates shifts in the culture of luxury while also facilitating the development of branding, marketing and communication skills. The knowledge and skills acquired will support and underpin continued study by providing valuable context and awareness of the luxury industry. The second term aims to engage each student's aptitude for business thinking and industry foresight – they are asked to investigate a luxury business, questioning what business model they utilise and how they have pivoted their model to adjust with global consumer demands. The third term develops collaborative skills and ingenuity with the introduction of an industry focused project and also examines and explores some of the complex issues faced by the luxury industry at any given time. A key element of the learning experience is for each student to question their own potential role in the luxury industry and reflect on what and how they can make a positive impact or contribution via their chosen specialist field. The final term consolidates key aspects of previous study whilst enabling the student to develop their own themes, ideas and luxury business, branding or marketing concepts within their chosen luxury sector. The Final Masters Project presents an opportunity for the student to present a body of work supported by a thesis that demonstrates their academic ability, independent thinking, and creative prowess.

With reference to QAA's Masters' Degree Characteristics Statement, the programme is a 'Category 2' specialised Masters' degree that aims to prepare students for a career in the luxury fashion, or lifestyle industries.

The programme offers options for full or part-time study in order to cater for differing groups of students:

- Graduates from different backgrounds that have not previously studied luxury, fashion or traditionally business-related subjects but have a genuine, proven interest in the field and are seeking a career in the luxury industry. They are likely to be keen to explore opportunities and be exposed to a variety of project types and career options.
- Graduates with qualifications in relevant fields such as business studies, communication, marketing, fashion, or various forms of design that are looking to focus their existing skills and knowledge and specialise in luxury in a way that their undergraduate degree did not accommodate. They are likely to be looking to explore the luxury industry in more depth and identify ways to apply their existing skill sets to a career in the luxury industries.
- Those currently working in other creative fields looking to progress their careers in a new and relevant direction within the luxury industry.

The course will draw upon the expertise of Condé Nast Publications and its wider network of industry partners in fashion and luxury. Students will be supported to engage with relevant professionals and organisations within the fashion and luxury industries. The primary programme focus is on luxury brands and businesses that create and sell luxury products and services (e.g. on Condé advertisers rather than on creating magazine content). The programme will combine independent research with taught academic content and talks/master-classes from leading industry professionals. Technical support will be provided to support and develop skills in Adobe creative suite, enhancing the creative communication and exchange of

ideas.

Although it is expected that most graduates will focus on industry employment, the programme is also suitable as a route to higher level academic study and further, more in-depth practice-led research.

Educational Aims of the Programme

The core aim of the programme is to provide opportunities for students to become effective practitioners in luxury business and communication, to be able to understand the business models and communication channels used by luxury brands and the ways in which those business models and communication channels can be utilised most creatively and effectively by implementing effective strategic solutions.

In line with the QAA's Master's Degree Characteristics Statement, the programme aims to ensure that graduates are given the opportunity to demonstrate:

- Critical awareness of current issues and developments in the luxury industries
- The effective application of critical thinking skills
- Knowledge and understanding of professional and business responsibility, integrity and ethics
- The ability to reflect on their own progress as a learner and professional practitioner

The aim is to support an effective transition from study to employment, clearly connecting theoretical topics and academic study to contemporary industry practice. Students will become familiar with life-long learning approaches that will allow them to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding and develop new skills to a high level after graduation.

The Condé Nast College of Fashion & Design has a strong focus on preparation for industry. The course will explore distinct career opportunities within the luxury industries, appealing to a range of students from different backgrounds. In recent years, technological developments have driven new opportunities in the sector and the course will focus on global and future thinking. The focus of the MA is also relevant to an increasingly broad range of job opportunities driven by growth in the luxury and luxury experience sectors.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

On successful completion of the programme, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and critical awareness of historical and contemporary luxury/business and branding theory.
2. Demonstrate a comprehensive awareness and understanding of existing, new and emerging luxury business practices, business models and strategies.
3. Analyse the development of luxury brands in relation to consumer culture, luxury environments and the rise of the experience economy.
4. Demonstrate awareness of ethical issues and responsibility in luxury business, brand strategy, and marketing practices.
5. Research and analyse the evolution of the luxury market and its consumers from past to present and consider its anticipated future both locally and globally.

Teaching/Learning Strategy

> Knowledge and understanding will be acquired through a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, workshops and seminars. Practical workshops will utilise case studies, group work and industry-relevant tasks, often facilitated by industry professionals. Student-centred seminars will encourage active participation in learning and develop critical thinking skills.

Classroom-based tuition will be further enhanced by guided self-study and the development of higher-level study skills. Modules will be supported by relevant sessions and activities intended to promote essential skills for effective academic practice, reflexivity and professional development.

The programme will include regular talks by industry professionals, visits to relevant exhibitions or events, and planned visits and taught sessions taking place in both Condé Nast Britain and Condé Nast International headquarters.

The Final Masters Project will provide an opportunity for students to apply the knowledge acquired during the course and demonstrate advanced understanding of a specific area of study, allowing them to both utilise and enhance existing skillsets and knowledge.

Canvas, the college VLE will be used to support learning by providing access to study material, key college and course information, and channel for communicating with students and staff.

	<p><u>Assessment Strategy</u></p> <p>> Written Work: will assess knowledge and understanding of the course material / the syllabus of each module, as well as the ability to write clear, well-reasoned arguments.</p> <p>Individual Projects: will assess the ability to apply theoretical knowledge to industry problems and produce appropriate creative and/or strategic business outcomes.</p> <p>Group Projects: will assess the ability to apply knowledge to, and work with others on, specific projects, providing a cohesive and informed team response to industry challenges and set tasks.</p> <p>Presentations: will assess the ability to pitch ideas, explain proposals and respond to set tasks using clear and concise verbal communication skills to present well-reasoned arguments that demonstrate knowledge and understanding of module topics.</p> <p>Research and development logs / Reflective journals: will assess working practices, project management skills and the ability to critically reflect on progress in relation to acquired knowledge.</p> <p>Across all forms of assessment, students should be able to show originality in the application of their knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the relevant discipline</p>
<p><u>Cognitive Skills</u></p> <p>Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, applying creative thinking to projects and/or strategic industry questions. 2. Undertake primary and secondary research, critically analysing and applying findings to project work and solution-finding. 3. Collect, evaluate and apply qualitative and quantitative data, including (when necessary) making sound, informed judgments in the absence of entirely complete data sets. 4. Critically evaluate current practice, research and advanced scholarship in luxury business, strategy, and related disciplines, recognising the most relevant theories, concepts and perspectives. 5. Evaluate and critique research and practice-based methodologies and where appropriate, propose new hypotheses. 	<p><u>Teaching/Learning Strategy</u></p> <p>> As well as the pedagogical model described above, the acquisition of the cognitive skills listed will be supported by individual and small group tutorials.</p> <p>Seminars will focus on the critical scrutiny of industry practice and relevant theories, with a view to promoting discussion and debate.</p> <p>Peer to peer reviews and critiques will provide further insight and opportunity to explore the varied skills of the student group whilst sharing best practice, idea development and creative interpretation of the subject.</p> <p>Study groups and directed group tasks will enhance cognition, assisting students from varied backgrounds and providing support and assistance amongst peers.</p> <p>Guided independent study, including preparatory reading and practical research tasks, will support the development of cognitive/thinking skills throughout the course.</p> <p>A 'Critical Research' module is included at the start of the course and will provide instruction in relevant primary and secondary research methods, including quantitative and qualitative techniques.</p>
	<p><u>Assessment Strategy</u></p> <p>> The assessment methods noted above can all be utilised to evaluate how effectively the cognitive skills listed have been demonstrated. Where the cognitive skills being assessed are more complex in nature, they will be principally articulated through sustained intellectual engagement in the form of academic essays and reports.</p> <p>For practical and group assignments, students at Condé</p>

Nast College use research and development books to log the progress of their projects and demonstrate the application of research and individual responsibilities, engagement and participation in the project. These documents provide a comprehensive overview of the process and thinking behind each practical outcome.

In presentations, students will be required to justify their choices, provide industry examples and demonstrate the thinking behind their conclusions and outcomes. Students will be expected to choose and deliver appropriate content in a method that is most suited to the module requirements; or as stipulated in the brief.

<p><u>Practical/Transferable Skills</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate findings, conclusions, and proposals to specialist and non-specialist audiences, verbally, visually and/or in writing across a range of media. 2. Utilise design software to present information and project outcomes to a professional standard, as appropriate to the discipline. 3. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level. 4. Work effectively as part of a team to provide cohesive responses to industry challenges and set tasks. 5. Engage in reflective practice, including consideration of own ability to: exercise initiative, accept personal responsibility, identify areas for development, and make effective decisions in response to complex and/or changeable circumstances. 6. Demonstrate the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development. 	<p><u>Teaching/Learning Strategy</u></p> <p>> All practical and transferable skills will be embedded into modules across the course, allowing them to be developed continuously throughout.</p> <p>Communication skills (1) will be developed formatively and informally throughout the course when students feedback on class-based activities. The type of communication skills given the most focus will be dependent on the assessment outcomes stipulated by the module brief. The relevant amount and level of workshops required is incorporated into the course of study.</p> <p>The use of design software (2) will be a significant requirement throughout the course. Regular workshops will ensure all students are given the opportunity to develop the digital design skills that will allow their work to be presented to a professional standard.</p> <p>Group activities (4) will be introduced to classes and workshops where students will be set both informal and formally assessed group tasks during the course. The Live Luxury Project in the third term requires students to work as a team, simulating industry practice through partnered / team activities and tasks.</p> <p>Self-direction, autonomy and independent learning (3&6) are key features at Master's level and the assessed project work will require and encourage students to seek out original approaches that build on what is covered in taught sessions. Students will be encouraged to be self-sufficient learners, with tutors using Socratic questioning to encourage students to solve their own problems and engage in reflective inquiry.</p> <p>Students will be required to critically reflect (5) on project work at interim/formative and summative stages. The final project/thesis module also provides an opportunity to undertake a work placement as part of the research for the final project.</p>
	<p><u>Assessment Strategy</u></p> <p>> In order to support deeper learning, the programme utilises project-based learning and a project-based assessment strategy. Project-based learning is used throughout the course in order to provide realistic, industry-led experiences, ensuring that these are underpinned with robust academic practice. This approach encourages and allows the development of the practical/transferrable skills listed.</p> <p>The practical/transferable skills are embedded in the assessed project work across the programme.</p> <p>Research & Development Logs / Reflective Journals are an effective method for assessing 3-6 when considered in relation to practical outcomes. Other methods used will be verbal and visual reflection through digital media and or via a presentation.</p> <p>Practical assessments, presentations and written work are used to assess most of the practical / transferrable skills listed and feature significantly throughout the assessment of the course. The combination and weighting will be determined by the nature and focus of the module studied; distributed appropriately and as required by the subject and focus of the module. EG: Point 2 is assessed based on the</p>

	<p>course work and final practical outcomes of assignments.</p> <p>The final project/thesis, which accounts for one third of the academic credit required for the MA, is a self-directed module. It allows students to simultaneously utilise existing skills, developed during the taught modules, and develop their practical/transferable skills further.</p>
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External Reference Points	
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/quality-code-A1.aspx ● QAA Master’s Degree Characteristics Statement (2015)
http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=2977#.Wc96Y62ZMch | |
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<p>Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each course unit/module can be found in the departmental or programme handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed annually by the University of Buckingham and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency.</p>	
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Date of Production:	June 2020
Date approved by School Learning and Teaching Committee:	
Date approved by School Board of Study:	
Date approved by University Learning and Teaching Committee:	
Date of Annual Review:	

PROGRAMME STRUCTURES

FULL TIME

<i>Term 1 / 2</i>		
Term 1	<p>Brand Communication & Marketing Strategy <i>[30 units]</i></p> <p><i>(This module is shared with MA Fashion Communication & MA Fashion Entrepreneurship 'Brand Communication & Marketing Strategy' module)</i></p>	<p>Critical Research: Understanding Audiences <i>[30 units]</i></p> <p><i>(Module is CORE for ALL MA courses)</i></p>
Term 2	<p>The Business of Luxury <i>[30 units]</i></p>	
<i>Term 3 / 4</i>		
Term 3	<p>Luxury Innovation & Futures: Live Luxury Project <i>[30 units]</i></p>	<p>Final Masters Project</p> <p><i>(Preparatory Research and development of final project proposal)</i></p>
Term 4	<p>Final Masters Project <i>[60 units]</i></p>	

PART TIME YEAR 1

Year 1 - Term 1&2	
1	Critical Research: Fashion Markets & Creative Industries <i>[30 units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students. Module runs over Terms 1 & 2 for ALL MA students)</i>
2	Critical Research: Fashion Markets & Creative Industries <i>[30 units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students. Module runs over Terms 1 & 2 for ALL MA students)</i>
Year 1 - Term 3&4	
3	Luxury Innovation & Futures: Live Luxury Project <i>[30 Units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students.</i>
4	Final Masters Project (Preparation & Research) <i>[60 units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students, but the part time students will only be working on the initial preparatory proposal at this stage)</i>

PART TIME YEAR 2

Year 2 - Term 1&2	
5	Brand Communication & Marketing Strategy <i>[30 units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students.</i>
6	The Business of Luxury <i>[30 units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students.</i>
Year 2 - Term 3&4	
7	Final Masters Project <i>[Continued: 60 units]</i> <i>Aligned with delivery of the same module for full time students, part time students will already have had the proposal agreed which they can now develop into the final project outcomes and thesis. They have had time to respond to feedback since doing the proposal in Term 4 last year.</i>
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NOTE: The part time structure has been designed to ensure that the part time students do not have to work on more than 1 module at any point throughout the 2 years of study.