Programme Specification

for BA Film

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| **1. Programme title** | Film |
| **2. Awarding institution** | Middlesex University |
| **3. Teaching institution** | Middlesex University |
| **4. Programme accredited by** | Middlesex University |
| **5. Final qualification** | BA (Hons) |
| **6. Academic year** | 2012 -13 |
| **7. Language of study** | English |
| **8. Mode of study** | Full Time/Part Time |

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| **9. Criteria for admission to the programme**  We welcome applications from those who are able to demonstrate prior learning in the area of Film, Photography, Art and Design or Media Studies. Preferred candidates will be those with a substantial background in Film in their prior studies and able to demonstrate clear evidence of achievement, either in (digital) filmmaking or in film studies or both. Preferred candidates will also be able to demonstrate a clear sense of purpose and an enthusiasm for Film.  For those who without prior experience, we recommend applicants undertaking the 12 week intensive Foundation in Digital Arts (iFDA) at Middlesex University, developed to help students with no or limited practical experience, progress into the field of digital media.  The normal UCAS requirement will be 280 points. After going through the UCAS process, applicants will be asked to submit a portfolio of work in support of their application. Further to this, in some instances, applicants will be called for interview. Guidance will be given following application.  Overseas applicants will be required to have an IELT 6.0 qualification in **each** category.  There are no restrictions to admission to the programme based on disability – and students with disabilities will be supported (see 17 below)  Top-up arrangements (direct entry to Level 2 or 3) will often be formalised through Articulation Agreements with partner institutions. Individuals applying to transfer from another institution will only be able to do so at the beginning of each academic year and their level of entry will be determined by their prior specialist subject experience and achievement. We also welcome individuals applying for “Advanced Standing” based on their employment may be considered for direct entry to Level 2, but not Level 3, given the balance of the programme between practical and academic study. |

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| **10. Aims of the programme** |
| The programme aims to:   1. develop the creativity, professionalism and employability of each student in the broad area of moving image work; 2. produce graduates who excel in key aspects of (digital) film production and whose work demonstrates an engagement with intellectual and historical currents in film theory-practice;   foster a critical engagement with contemporary media and a strong sensitivity to ethical, political and social dimensions of film making work and its location within the cultural sector. |

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| **11. Programme outcomes** | |
| **A. Knowledge and understanding**  On completion of this programme the successful student will have knowledge and understanding of :  (A1) factors involved in filmmaking from pre-production through to post-production, including practical and procedural processes (such as copyright clearance);  (A2) film poetics and the creative process;  (A3) how audiences respond to films and factors that determine this response, especially those consequent upon the choices made by the filmmaker;  (A4) some of the key issues and major theoretical perspectives that underpin Film as an academic subject and the application of these in developing the reflective practitioner;  (A5) aspects of the history of Film and related art forms, especially as these inform an appreciation of contemporary film and digital media practice. | **Teaching/learning methods**  Students gain knowledge and understanding through  framing their studies within module outlines, each of which includes specialist reading and viewing lists, and other tutor directed reading and viewing;  practical digital filmmaking workshops, developing professional-level skills in the use of digital filmmaking technologies;  working to briefs which require the demonstration of skills and their application;  lectures and seminars that explore the relationship between production practices and film communication and between the formal properties of film and the audience experience;  lectures and workshop sessions delivered by industry professionals;  the above also explored through practical work, including team work, leading to experiential learning;  workshops and tutorials which interrogate the relationship between work produced and the contexts out of which this work has emerged – including theoretical and historical influences  peer and tutor feedback, encouraging the development of the reflective practitioner  taught research skills enabling the development of the student as an independent and self-directed learner.  **Assessment Method**  Students’ knowledge and understanding is assessed by   * Short and long written assignments * Oral presentations * Portfolios of preparatory work * Self-reflective blogs * Practical Work   Written and oral commentary / analysis of practical work |
| **B. Cognitive (thinking) skills**  On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:  (B1) think creatively and in a filmic way – the ways in which image and sound may be deployed to create meaning and affect;  (B2) think analytically, researching and problem solving in both practical and intellectual contexts, developing distinctive skills as a practitioner-theorist;  (B3) evaluate and analyse their own work and that of their peers with reflexivity and consideration. | **Teaching/learning methods**  Students learn cognitive skills through  exploring the film medium, specifically close analysis of macro and micro features  exploring digital film technology in workshops, seminars and group practical activities;  being challenged with both practical and theoretical problems in the form of briefs, essay questions and then engaging in individual and group activities to solve these problems;  engaging in written and oral activities requiring analysis and reflection on their own work and that of others, learning through experience and receiving feedback on the effectiveness of their own critical communication;  **Assessment Method**  Students’ cognitive skills are assessed by   * the quality of argument and critical engagement in short and long written assignments * the quality of thinking in oral presentations * evidence of process, including problem solving in portfolios of preparatory work and in blogs * evidence of the embodiment of cognitive skills in achieved practical work and in written and oral analysis of that work |
| **C. Practical skills**  On completion of the programme the successful student will be able to:  (C1) make film work to an increasingly professional standard using digital media technologies competently and appropriately;  (C2)locate films and filmmaking within a broad range of contexts: practical, ethical, intellectual and affective;  (C3) research effectively and apply that research productively in practice-based and written work, ensuring that work is not open to accusations of plagiarism;  (C4) using the Personal Development Portfolio as an effective working tool for academic and career development and reflection. | **Teaching/learning methods**  Students learn practical skills through  practical digital filmmaking workshops, developing professional-level skills in the use of filmmaking equipment;  working to briefs which require the demonstration of skills and their application;  peer and tutor feedback, encouraging the reflective practitioner;  taught research skills enabling the independent and self-directed student to develop, using citation and bibliography standards as appropriate;  workshops in developing and presenting the PDP effectively.  **Assessment Method**  Students’ practical skills are assessed by   * Practical filmmaking exercises and short films produced in response to briefs * Portfolios of preparatory work * Self-reflective blogs * Written and oral commentary / analysis of practical work * The quality of citations and bibliographical information in work produced |
| **D. Graduate Skills**  On completion of this programme the successful student will be able to:  (D1) relate their studies to career and personal development  (D2) demonstrate the ability to function as an effective self-directed learner, using the range of resources available responsibly and ethically;  (D3) communicate effectively in written and oral work, as well as through the medium of film;  (D4) demonstrate the characteristics of a good team player  (D5) use and apply information technology, both hardware and software, effectively in support of their studies and in their creative work  (D6) demonstrate as appropriate competence in number – specifically in (a) financial and (b) technical calculations | **Teaching/learning methods**  Students acquire graduate skills throughtheir embedding in teaching / learning methods listed in A – C above.  **Assessment method**  Students’ graduate skills are assessed by   * The Professional Development Portfolio * Written and Practical Work listed in A – C above |
| **12. Programme structure (levels, modules, credits and progression requirements)** | |
| **12. 1 Overall structure of the programme** | |
| The structure is a simple one with no option modules at either Level 1 or Level 3. At Level 2 students choose two modules from three options, and take one double-weighted compulsory module.  The normal duration of the programme is three years full time and five years part-time, as follows:  **Full Time**  (120 credits per year)  f/t Year Onefour modules, each 30 credits:  **MDA1300, MDA1400**  **MDA1700, MDA1800**  f/t Year Two  two modules, each 30 credits, from choice of three:  **MDA2100, MDA2200, MDA2300**  One module of 60 credits:  **MDA2900**  f/t Year Three  three modules, two of 30 credits and the last of 60 credits:  **MDA3200, MDA3300, MDA3400**  -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------  **Part Time**  (60 credits per year, years 1, 2 & 4; 90 credits per year, years 3 &5)  p/t Year One: **MDA1300, MDA1400**  p/t Year Two: **MDA1700, MDA1800**  p/t Year Three  One of the following:**MDA2100, MDA2200, MDA2300**  And:**MDA2900**  p/t Year Four  One of the following:**MDA2100, MDA2200, MDA2300**  And:**MDA3200**  p/t Year Five  **MDA3300, MDA3400**  120 credits are required for the award of the CertHE, 240 for the DipHE, 300 for an “Ordinary” degree and 360 for an Honours degree.  Direct entry to the second year and to the third year is possible.  At Level 1 modules can be differentiated according to the development of creative or critical knowledge and skills. Thereafter most modules combine elements of both, and the individual student may, explicitly or implicitly, nominate a specific pathway in the choices the make and in the process develop a specialism. There are three pathways embedded in the programme as a whole. For each student the Level 3 Dissertation-Project (MDA3400) will confirm their evolving pathway / specialisation.  Three pathways are:  Filmmaking:  Students develop skills at Level 4, moving from small-scale-briefs to the making of a complete short film (3-4 min). At this stage students are also introduced to ethical and legal issues – such as copyright.  At Level 5 skills are developed through particular areas of focus (two from: Screenwriting: The Short Film, Documentary Film, Film and Innovation) and work from one of these is taken into a follow-up module, Producing and Directing: Form and Practice. In this part of the programme, the emphasis is less on completing a whole piece of work than in building up a portfolio of perfectly realised short sequences in which the filmmaking craft is prioritised. Simultaneously, Producing and Directing addresses very practical issues in managing a film project. At Level 6 the Film Dissertation Project will be a significant film project with the expectation that it will achieve professional production standards and be a “calling card” for progressing into employment.  Screenwriting:  Students developing skills in screenwriting will also take the introductory production modules – thus anchoring their writing practice in an understanding of the filmmaking process. At Level 4 students will look quite broadly at varieties of storytelling within human culture and relate this specifically to screen storytelling. At this level synopses and treatments will be produced. At Level 5 screenwriting will be developed with a particular focus on the short film. Again, the praxis of writing for the screen will be addressed through practical consideration of the filmmaking issues in moving from script to screen. At Level 6 the Dissertation Project will be a significant screenwriting work that could be developed further after graduation as a feature-length script.  Critical Studies:  Students develop their critical understanding of film at Level 4 as much through participation in the production modules as through the “film studies” modules. Throughout the programme the emphasis is on poetics which “studies the finished work as the result of a process of construction – a process that involves a craft component, the more general principles by which the work is composed, and its functions, effects and uses.” In other words critical work is very much rooted in studying the practice of filmmakers and the filmic ‘tools’ at their disposal. It also considers how the deployment of these tools impacts on an audience. Through Level 5 the theory-practice focus will be maintained while also developing an historical dimension and introducing a variety of theoretical ideas those are significant in critical work on Film.  At Level 6 the Dissertation Project is likely to be a well-researched and scholarly investigation of some specialist area of interest. This dissertation can be used as a “calling card” for progression to Masters level study.  Some students will prefer not to identify themselves closely with any of the above pathways but rather use BA Film as a means of gaining an excellent all-round education in the theory-practice of film. For all students, whether more or less specialised in their participation on the programme, the strong emphasis on inter-connectedness between the pathways will be of great benefit as they progress to employment in an increasingly fluid media / film industry requiring a multi-skilled, highly adaptable work force.  While work experience and short work placements are encouraged, these are not compulsory and no credit value is given to these activities as such. However, credit is awarded in specific modules for career project work – and one way the student has of demonstrating their learning is to produce a report of their work experience.  Running through the entire programme is the Personal Development Portfolio. Using a technology such as *PebblePad*, the student will record their learning and reflect upon it. By the final year of the programme, the PDP will be both a sophisticated live working document and a record of the student’s development. | |

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| **12.2 Levels and modules**  **Starting in academic year 2010/11 the University is changing the way it references modules to state the level of study in which these are delivered. This is to comply with the national Framework for Higher Education Qualifications. This implementation will be a gradual process whilst records are updated. Therefore the old coding is bracketed below.** | | |
| Level 4 (1) | | |
| COMPULSORY | OPTIONAL | PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS |
| Students must take all of the following 30 credit modules:  MDA1300  MDA1400  MDA1700  MDA1800 | none | Students are required to pass MDA1300 to progress to Year Two and to have 90 credits in total – with a 30 credit deficit permitted which must be made good before prog-ression to Level 6. |
| Level 5 (2) | | |
| COMPULSORY | OPTIONAL | PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS |
| MDA2900 (60 credits) | Students must choose **2** from the following 30 credit modules:  MDA2100  MDA2200  MDA2300 | Students are required to have 90 credits at Level 4 to progress to Level 5 - with a 30 credit deficit permitted which must be made good by the end of the programme. |
| Level 6 (3) | | |
| COMPULSORY | OPTIONAL | PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS |
| Students must take all of the following:  MDA3200 (30 credits)  MDA3300 (30 credits)  MDA3400 (60 credits) | none | MDA3400 cannot be compensated – so this module must be passed for the award of BA Honours. |

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| ***12.3 Non-compensatable modules (note statement in 12.2 regarding FHEQ levels)*** | |
| ***Module level*** | ***Module code*** |
| *Level 4* | *MDA1300* |
| *Level 6* | *MDA3400* |

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| **13. A curriculum map relating learning outcomes to modules** |
| **See Curriculum Map attached** |

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| **14. Information about assessment regulations** |
| **Assessment regulations**  Middlesex University Regulations apply.  All modules are assessed through coursework. Students are directed to read module narratives carefully in relation to any compensation that may be possible for ‘minor’ assessment components.  Students are not allowed to self-defer on any module. Students wishing to defer should consult with the module tutor and with the Assessment Officer.  The CertHE and DipHE exit awards are not classified. |

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| **15. Placement opportunities, requirements and support (if applicable)** |
| All work experience, both that organised through the University and that organised independently, will be recorded and reflected upon in the Personal Development Profile. Work placements are not directly assessed on your BA Film programme. However, if a student undertakes a work placement, they will record and reflect on their experience in the Personal Development Portfolio. The portfolio as a whole is assessed in the final year (MDA3300 Film Research and Context). The scope of the personal development project over the entire duration of the degree programme will be assessed – and this may include one or more placements. Students who have not had work experience are able to fulfil the assessment requirement by conducting research into aspects of the contemporary film / media industry and its professional practices.  Work placements are supported across the University by a network of School placement offices who work closely with your academic staff. Together with the Careers Service, they will offer workshops and one-to-one advice on writing CVs, cover letters and application forms; offer password protected access to the placement website; help arrange interviews and where possible create links with employers. |

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| **16. Future careers (if applicable)** |
| We expect to build on our already excellent record in progressing our graduates into media industry careers, often having exhibited their work at prestigious festivals such as Cannes. Our students have gone on to work at major institutions such as the BBC, while others have set up their own small businesses, attracting both commercial work and funded commissions. Some have become music video producers and others are freelancers representing a range of special professions within production and post-production.  This degree programme has been designed to bring into productive working relationships students with different interests and talents across the broad field of Film. One of the intentions of the programme is to encourage the kind of collaboration, creativity and problem solving that are highly valued assets when seeking employment. In addition, assessment enables the cumulative development of a portfolio of work that will be extremely valuable in the job market, as is the emphasis throughout the programme in developing high-level interpersonal skills and confident self-presentation.  Students will be encouraged to submit film work to festivals and competitions and to take whatever opportunities are available to promote themselves and their work. This will build on our already excellent record in gaining exposure for our students’ work and in supporting students in seeking film commissions. We have an expanding network of connections with media companies and are putting in place the technical means for enabling industry professionals to identify talent by accessing our student work online and reading student CVs. Students will also be encouraged to engage in short periods of work experience (see 15 above) that is a proven route into employment.  In addition to a focus on working in the film / moving image sector, the degree opens up a broader range of employment opportunities within the cultural sector. Progression to the PGCE is also an option, leading to a teaching career.  Students are very well placed to progress to postgraduate study, either at Middlesex University or elsewhere |

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| **17. Particular support for learning (if applicable)** |
| All students are provided with an induction to the programme and specific induction in the use of specialist equipment.  In association with the Learning Development Unit, diagnostic testing of all students takes place in the first week of the course. Students in need of learning support are identified and invited to attend sessions organised by the LDU.  Media Arts degree programmes have always worked closely with both Technical Resources (the Digital Media Workshop) and Learning Resources (the Library). This will continue with technicians and librarians working in collaboration with academic staff in supporting students.  There is no restriction to the programme based on disability – as stated in 9 (above). Specialist support will be made available by the University for students as required by the Equality Act (2010). A needs assessor will work with a student to establish the precise support required. There may be some situations in which students with specific physical disabilities may not be able to use film equipment but all “reasonable adjustments’ will be made to accommodate students across the full range of learning and teaching activities included within the programme. |

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| **18. JACS code (or other relevant coding system)** | W600, W610, W612 |
| **19. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)** | Benchmark statements, 2008 for:  - Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies  - Art and Design  - History of Art, Architecture and Design  - English |

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| **20. Reference points**  This Programme Specification has been written with reference to the following:   * relevant QAA subject benchmarks (see 19 above) * QAA *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications* * QAA *Code of Practice*   Middlesex University Quality Enhancement Handbook |

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| **21. Other information** |
| BA Film is taught by experienced and distinguished practitioners in purpose-built accommodation at the Hendon Campus of Middlesex University. It shares this accommodation and some specialist facilities with a suite of Television degree programmes: BA Television Production, BA Film and Television Technical Arts and BA Television Journalism. Across the Film – Television spectrum there are many opportunities for students in both areas to work collaboratively and to develop informal networks. In addition, there will be a common programme of special events, including speakers from the industry. Film and Television collectively constitute the Middlesex Skillset Media Academy – one of 23 recognised centres of excellence for Higher Education moving image training in the country.  In addition, BA Film is located in close proximity to BA Creative Media Writing, BA Animation, BA Photography and BA Fine Art. There are further rich opportunities for students to develop productive working relationships with students in these subject areas.  BA Film teaching staffs have a record for distinctive and innovative research and for business and community activities.  Central London offers an excellent range of resources for Film students – from the concentration of specialist cinemas to the British Film Institute Library offering the most extensive specialist resource for Film Studies in Europe. There are also many opportunities for gaining work experience.  Closer to the Hendon Campus is the Phoenix Cinema in East Finchley, one of the oldest working cinemas in the world. Middlesex and the Phoenix Cinema collaborate on educational projects and the intention is to develop this relationship further. The Arts Depot in North Finchley is a modern, purpose-built centre for the performing arts.  Here too, there is a strong working relationship with Middlesex and the venue is used to showcase student video work. |

Please note programme specifications provide a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information about the programme can be found in the student programme handbook and the University Regulations.