

Programme Specification

A Programme Specification provides a concise summary of the main features of a programme and its intended learning outcomes. It is intended to be used by prospective students, current students, academic staff and potential employers.

Programme Title:	
MA Advertising	
Programme (AOS) Code(s):	MA1ADV9
UCAS Code:	
Name of Final Award:	Master of Arts, MA
Level of Qualification:	Level 7
Regime of Delivery:	Flexible & Distributed Learning: Blended Learning
Mode(s) of Delivery:	Full Time
Typical Length of Study (Years):	1 year
Professional Body Recognition / Accreditation (including specific requirements where applicable):	N/A

Brief Description of the Programme

Advertising should be a tool for making the world a better place. Brands need be more sustainable. Advertising can create a more socially aware consumer and promote more ethical social awareness.

The future of branding, marketing and advertising is to help businesses grow with the promotion of sustainable lifestyles, making brands appeal to diverse customers, and promote products in way that show the good they do for society and the world.

MA Advertising will show how to harness the creative and strategic strengths of advertising to drive behavioural change for good. It will combine strategy with creativity. It focuses on developing the knowledge and skills required for the successful generation of effective, creative, innovative, and engaging marketing communications in a 21st Century global advertising industry context.

The course has been developed to mirror today's industry, by working closely with professionals to make sure the course helps students to develop the skills and knowledge the industry is looking for.

This MA will build upon the work that students have done on the BA course but can also be enjoyed by anyone who has a burning desire to change the world through the power of clever thinking and a dramatic relevant idea.

The creative practice developed here equips students to become part of the future of advertising, the communication they create will help them shape the more socially aware and culturally important world of creative communication, turning them into a valuable asset to any 21st century communications company.

Programme Aims

1	Bridge the divide between theory and practice and produce industry-ready graduates equipped for a changing Advertising, Branding and Marketing industry, able to identify their future role within it and with the ability to perform to the level expected.
2	Provide students a viable and alternative route into industry to the traditional graduate training programmes by integrating a critical approach to creativity, strategy and branding into a more dynamic mix
3	Stimulate and encourage in students an integrated and critically aware understanding of the advanced study of Advertising and the changing context within industry.
4	Stimulate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level.
5	Prepare the students to take part in these industries and contribute a modern approach to their role, equipped with an individual perspective on the future of the industry.

Programme Learning

The Bucks Graduate Attributes focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens. The attributes are developed through the programme.

ID	Learning Outcome
On successful completion of the programme a graduate will be able to:	
Graduate Attribute: Knowledge and its application (K)	
K1	Demonstrate a sound grasp of the contexts for modern advertising – including a critical capacity for the analysis of advertising its ability to link to strategy and culture to be able to communicate successfully within the confines of a changing society
K2	Evidence advanced skills in primary research and the ability to critically identify insights and turn them into propositions and strategies.
K3	Demonstrate the application of advanced methods of organisation and time management to facilitate the managing of complex workloads
Graduate Attribute: Creativity (C)	
C1	Deliver quality creative outcomes in verbal and visual form, consistent with standards expected in industry
C2	Demonstrate a developed ability to apply creativity to all areas of analysis, problem solving and communication.
C3	Fully understand and evaluate the impact of communication channels available today and apply this knowledge to create campaigns that fully utilise the diverse opportunities available
Graduate Attribute: Social and ethical awareness and responsibility (S)	
S1	Demonstrate an ability to understand the social codes and mores of today's consumers and consumer society that must be observed when working in 21 st century communications.
S2	Realise and enhance the social responsibility that advertising, and branding has to have to communicate in everyday life and critically assess how well the ideas are addressing the social trends.
S3	Understand and display the correct attributes needed to use creative communication for social good

Graduate Attribute: Leadership and self-development (L)

L1	Motivate, inspire and lead - including the ability to communicate persuasively with personnel at all levels.
L2	Present under pressure, a well-organized critical argument as would be expected in a pitch or client presentation
L3	To echo the University's new sustainable and inclusive educational practise and higher employability goals.

Programme Structure

Programmes are structured in stages. The number of stages will vary depending on the mode (e.g. full-time, part-time), duration and location of study which will be detailed in the Programme Handbook.

Modules are set at a specific academic level and listed as either core (compulsory) or optional. The level indicates the relative academic difficulty which will increase through the programme. Passing modules will reward you with academic credit. The amount of credits will depend on the complexity of the module and the level of effort required, which is measured in 'notional learning hours'.

Our [Academic Advice webpages](#) provide more information on the structure of taught awards offered by the University.

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to sector developments.

Level Seven

Code	Module Title	Credit	Core / Option	Compensable (Normally Yes)
AD740	Campaign	20	Core	Yes
AD741	Creative Planning	20	Core	Yes
AD742	Sustainable Marketing	40	Core	Yes
AD743	The Big Idea (Dissertation)	40	Core	No
AD744	Portfolio Academy (FMP)	60	Core	No

Learning and Teaching Activities

Please see the [Academic Advice pages](#) for a description of learning and teaching activities that are recognised by the University. Detailed information on this specific programme is outlined below:

This course will be a blended learning experience, with many lectures taking place online, providing flexibility for both course related work-based placements or to help students pursue their own and industry opportunities. With the breadth of diverse projects and industry influences this is essential for personal and professional development. The course assumes an integrated and gradual learning experience throughout which the various teaching methods, experiences and industry exposure contribute to the stated Programme Outcomes. All taught subjects are translated into practical brief-led projects, which are then contextualised in industry through regular workshops. Students are learning and gaining feedback from a host of different sources which enables them to create contacts, links, and opportunities to gain entry into the real world of advertising at every stage of the course.

However, from the outset, even before they join the course, students are encouraged to develop their own contacts in industry, which then feed into their ongoing projects and research.

Advertising Briefs – Briefs are set as part of the ongoing teaching strategy and are a feature of programmes containing creative elements. Any problem-solving session, be it creative or otherwise, will commence with a brief. A benefit of working so closely with industry is the opportunity for students to work on 'Live Briefs' delivered by agency professionals.

Tutorials – Formal and informal, group and one-to-one. Tutorials for students are informal except for those which follow interim and final presentations. The tutorial teaching model is common within the school and provides a supportive relationship between the tutor and the student. For these postgraduate students this will follow a model where the tutor's role is more that of a consultant.

Personal Tutorials – with verbal and written feedback, students have more formalised one-to-one tutorials at key stages in the course. Personal aspirations become individually oriented as the practise objectives targeted by students during their Personal Project. Teaching will become increasingly centred on one-to-one tutorials, in order to address project-specific issues and objectives targeted by students during their Final Major Project (FMP).

Presentations – By the Course Team, visiting professionals and students. At various stages of the programme, students will present - to staff, their peer group, agency staff and clients - their solutions to projects, work in progress, personal research, including their thesis, experiences and ideas.

Lectures – This will happen mostly online, especially for the Campaign, Branding and Planning modules. Lectures are always followed by seminars or group discussion.

Visiting speakers are used throughout the course to add diversity, gravitas and realism to core subjects and offering insights into practice and philosophies.

Workshops; One- and two-day workshops delivered in the university designed to develop student's personal and presentation skills.

Agency Workshops- A mix of lectures, presentations, live briefs and critiques scheduled by the course team. These are held in London by host agencies and take place throughout the year. They range in length and cover key topics. They offer students unique insights into the workings of different agencies and an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and possibly secure an agency experience.

Briefs - All work on the course is project based. These can be between one and four weeks in duration and engage students in a mix of taught and self-directed study. Briefs are set specific to subjects and outcomes and will always conclude with presentations followed by a critique and in-depth feedback.

Live Briefs - As above but set and critiqued by agencies. Students will present their outcomes in the agency to a variety of specific practitioners.

External Resources – The Course encourages a broad and inclusive experience encompassing wider cultural references. This includes visits to galleries, museums, lectures, the cinema and

theatre. London and all its resources are an integral part of studentship on the Course. At all times staff will direct students towards various media and activities that will benefit or extend their knowledge.

Personal Tutor – Academic and pastoral support will be provided to students in the same way as in all other courses in the faculty. This is through a nominated tutor, which will normally be one of the course tutors. Staff will hold both group and individual tutorials, as appropriate, to support students in their work.

Agency Experiences - A major feature of the MA is the opportunity to gain experience in agencies throughout the programme. Students will experience different agency scenarios and engage with staff from different departments within the agencies to experience the current of agencies and advertising.

In addition to experiences scheduled by the course team, students will be encouraged to negotiate their own agency experiences as part of their guided independent study and as part of their FMP module. Such self-negotiated agency experiences will not be assessed by the course team but will contribute to students' overall development. They will allow students to gain experience of agency practice whilst functioning as part of a team and will help to contextualise all that has been learned to date and to align the theoretical and practical strands of the Course.

Industry Involvement.

Hyreus Scheme – There will be selected alumni and agencies that will be part of the MA's Hyreus Scheme, who will provide students with an industrial practitioner as a guide, in addition to their University Personal Tutor. They may also provide internships and or placements should the student prove suitable. This presents students with an opportunity to build a one-to-one relationship with an influential figure from industry, who will act as adviser, reference point, critical sounding board, and ultimately a potential employer. This opportunity can be further bolstered by contacts made through research, whilst on an agency experience or by working on agency briefs such as the one for Portfolio Academy.

Additional Course Costs

There are costs associated with all studies, additional to the tuition fee, which require consideration, when planning and budgeting for expenditure. Costs are indicative and for the total length of the course shown unless otherwise stated and will increase with inflation; depending on the programme they may include equipment, printing, project materials, study trips, placement activities, DBS and/or other security checks.

There will be costs for trips to London and visits to advertising agencies. Although there is a small budget to help defray some of these costs, many will have to be borne by the student themselves but should be viewed as an investment in their future development and possible employment.

Contact Hours

1 unit of credit is the equivalent of 10 notional learning hours. Full time undergraduate students study 120 credits (1200 hours) and full-time postgraduate students study 180 credits (1800 hours) per year or 'stage' of the course.

Course Stage	Scheduled Activities (Hours)	Guided Independent Study (Hours)	Placement / Study Abroad / Work Based Learning (Hours)
Year One	582	1,218	1800

Assessment Methods

The [Assessment and Examination webpages](#) provide further information on how assignments are marked and moderated, including a description of assessment activities. These also include further information about how feedback on assessed work is provided to students, including our commitment to ensure this is provided to students within 15 working days (the ‘three-week turnaround’).

The following assessment activities are used on this programme.

Written assessments accompanied by face-to-face delivery of research presentations, creative presentations, portfolio work, final pitch presentations.

Some of these will involve additional assessment from visiting tutors and alumni or agency personal if the work being assessed is an agency-based project.

Formative feedback will be given at various key stages of every project.

Personal evaluation is developed throughout the programme, to arrive at a self-evaluative critical approach to all aspects of work evolved through application of creative advertising processes - judged against creative intentions. Self-assessment is an important part of the student’s development during the course and is implicit within tutorial teaching.

Students work on some non-assessed briefs to allow them to get as broad an experience as possible and experiment without detrimental results. If some of these are for working agency practitioners, via the Hyreus Scheme, this will further their potential intern opportunities and final employment chances. Feedback is an integral part of this approach and students will always get advice and support in taking their work forward. Feedback from as many sources as possible is the aim of the strategy and this comes both from tutors and industry practitioners

The programme employs a variety of assessment techniques, including project work, reports & essays and presentations. All assessment requirements accord with those in industry and students are aware of standards expected by the APG and IPA.

Classification

Calculation of final award:	Level 7 = 100%
------------------------------------	-----------------------

For full details of assessment regulations for all taught programmes please refer to our [Results webpages](#). These include the criteria for degree classification.

Admissions Requirements

Please see the [Application webpages](#) for more information on how to apply, including a statement on how we support students from a variety of backgrounds. Please also see our [general entry](#)

[requirements](#) for taught programmes. Applicants who do not meet our published entry requirements are encouraged to contact our admissions team for further advice and guidance.

Typical applicant profile and any programme-specific entry requirements

General criteria for admission is a passion for advertising, and an ability for creative thinking.

Potential Applicant Profile:

- Graduates with a good first degree, usually Upper Second and above; preferably in a communications subject.
- Advertising or marketing studied to BA level (as listed above).
Graduates from abroad (with grade 6.5 English or above) from a communications discipline or international advertising agency.
- Those with experience within the advertising industry, wishing to take a career break and re-enter the profession at a higher level. Applicants need a minimum 2 years' experience, and proven ability to undertake MA level qualifications (particularly theory/dissertation modules), with bridging assignment set to assess capability for Level 7 study.
- Employees from the communications industries who want to retrain or undertake staff development.
- Practitioners who want to refresh and/or realign their career aspirations
- Those wishing to progress to higher level research degree work
- Graduates with a passion to enter the advertising industry.

Entry will be by portfolio review and interview. All applicants will be interviewed, and their portfolios reviewed, where appropriate. This allows course staff to assess each candidate's suitability to the course in a comprehensive way. It also allows flexibility in pre-requisite qualification requirements. International applicants might undergo this process via the web.

Also, for those that impress at interview stage, but who lack the required experience or a degree in advertising, there is a special creative exercise, the BNU Creative Advertising Test, that can assess a candidates' suitable creative credentials.

At interview all candidates must evidence a creative ability. Applicants from a non-creative background must prove that they are capable of creative thought & application. Such candidates will be provided with a creative exercise, to complete and submit prior to interview, that will allow the Team some judgement about their creative approach and way of thinking. It will also inform the discussion at interview, designed to further investigate their creative thinking and 'creative' approach to problem solving.

Do applicants required a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check?

No

Opportunities for students on successful completion of the programme

After graduation, students will be able to identify their future role and exercise their advanced teamwork skills. The Course Team cannot guarantee a job as a planner or senior creative. However, if Masters' graduates enter advertising industries at the level of first-degree graduates, they will be in a far better position to exploit opportunities for career advancement in a greater variety of other roles like planners and account handlers, than just creatives.

Additionally, graduates will have made valuable contacts whilst on the course, especially via the Hyreus Scheme, and will be able to make use of these when seeking permanent employment. The skills and approaches to problem solving gained on the Course are easily transferable into other industries and roles.

This MA, uses the pillars of sustainability, inclusivity, and social responsibility, and teaches students an important mix of branding, planning, and advertising and enjoys unrivalled industry links, and contacts.

It also successfully bridges the gap between theory and practice by engaging and embracing opportunities presented by industry, translating all taught subjects into practical brief-led projects, contextualised in industry through regular workshops, students are learning and gaining feedback from a host of different sources which enables them to create contacts, links, and opportunities to gain entry into the real world of advertising at every stage of the course.

All this make graduates of this MA very employable in any branch of advertising, branding or communication industries, in either a creative, account management, strategic or planning capacity because of the up-to-date nature and wide scope of the curriculum offered.

There is also the chance of employment via a successful internship provided by the Hyreus Scheme.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules. Please refer to our [Credit Accumulation webpages](#) for further guidance.

Student Support

During the course of their studies, students will be supported in the following ways:

- At the start of their studies all students will receive a full **induction** to the programme which will include introduction to the staff responsible for delivering the course, and access to library and IT facilities
- The **Programme Handbook** will outline the exact nature of the course and how it is structured, including the availability of option modules
- Each student will be allocated a **Personal Tutor** who will support their academic development, be able to advise and guide them with their studies and, where necessary, give advice on study options
- Students will be able to access our full range of **support services**, including the Learning Development Unit for skills and study support, the Library, the Careers and Employability Team, Student Finance Team, Accommodation and Counselling Services

Appendices

Quality Assurance

Awarding Body:	Buckinghamshire New University
Language of Study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s):	Art and Design, December 2019
Assessment Regulations:	<i>Academic Assessment Regulations</i> , accessible via the Academic Advice webpages (https://bucks.ac.uk/students/academicadvice)
Does the Fitness to Practise procedure apply to this programme?	No
Ethics Sub-committee	Art and Design
Date Published / Updated:	September 2022

Other awards available on programme (Exit Qualifications)

Please refer to the *Academic Qualifications Framework* for Exit Qualifications recognised by the University and credit and module requirements.

Name of Exit Qualification:	Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)
Full name of Qualification and Award Title:	PgDip in Advertising
Credits requirements:	120 Credits
Module requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All modules except AD744: Portfolio Academy
Learning Outcome	
Evidence and understanding of the contexts for modern advertising –a critical analytical ability to link to strategy and culture to communicate successfully within the trends and mores of a changing society	
Evaluate the impact of the varied communication channels available today applying that knowledge in creating communication in different forms that fully utilises the diverse 21 st century media opportunities available	
Appreciate, understand and apply social responsibility through advertising, and branding that are now required to communicate in everyday life.	
Demonstrate throughout every project, the University's new sustainable and inclusive educational practises and higher employability goals.	

Name of Exit Qualification:	Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert)
Full name of Qualification and Award Title:	PGCert in Advertising.
Credits requirements:	60 Credits

Module requirements:

Any of the following modules: AD740 / AD741 / AD742

Learning Outcome

Evidence and understanding of the contexts for modern advertising –a critical analytical ability to link to strategy and culture to communicate successfully within the trends and mores of a changing society

Evaluate the impact of the varied communication channels available today applying that knowledge in creating communication in different forms that fully utilises the diverse 21st century media opportunities available

Appreciate, understand and apply social responsibility through advertising, and branding that are now required to communicate in everyday life.

Demonstrate throughout every project, the University's new sustainable and inclusive educational practises and higher employability goals.