

MRes Information Environments



For more information
please contact:

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London College of
Communication
Elephant & Castle
London SE1 6SB

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All administration and
enrollment enquiries to
the Postgraduate
Admissions Office:

pgadmissions@lcc.arts.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7514 6400

Level: Postgraduate
Study Mode: Full-time
Duration: One year (45 weeks)
Start date: January
Application: Directly to LCC's Postgraduate Admissions Office

Course description

The course is the first of its kind within University of the Arts, London (UAL), with a focus on communication both 'in' and 'through' Information Environments.

Information Environments are physical or virtual spaces where information is generated, processed, received and experienced. Examples of practices which support this concept include the design, navigation, orientation and exchange of knowledge and ideas, communicated in or through urban spaces, architecture and the built environment, exhibitions, museums, the internet and learning environments.

The course seeks to develop postgraduate students whose understanding of information, design and visual language enables them to become influential and useful practitioners in a world which has become both rich in content and diverse in the range of physical and virtual environments. Research and enquiry in the pursuit of these aims will be informed by contextual and social, cultural and political awareness as well as subject expertise.

The course has emerged out of successful research collaborations with staff across UAL Colleges within the Research Unit for Information Environments (IE). The overarching UAL postgraduate

provision has always been recognised as being at the forefront of creative activity and education, and this new development extends beyond each individual College's expertise in design and visual communication. The IE Unit works in partnership with a range of professional practices and organisations linking in expertise in architecture, spatial design and information design.

You will have the opportunity to develop transferable research skills that should be applicable within a commercial or professional context, or which might be further studied within an academic environment toward PhD level study.

Course structure

You will propose your major project research question and outline methodology during Phase 1 of the course. With tutorial support, you will then identify potential areas of focus for your study.

Phases 1 and 2 of the course establish key research methodologies and provide you with a 'toolkit' through which to develop your independent major project, which will lead to completion of a major project together with a research proposal indicating potential routes for further enquiry at MPhil/PhD level or within a professional context.

Unit 1.1 introduces both theoretical and applied (or 'live') research routes including quantitative, qualitative as well as hybrid methods of analysis (design/geography, design/ethnography).

Unit 1.2 introduces a range of practical research methods through which to test visual strategies (materials, modelling techniques within physical and virtual environments, information hierarchies and generative systems design) and to prototype models and visualise outcomes.

Together, these units help you to structure a clear research question, which is underpinned by solid foundations in a theoretical, cultural, historical and material context.

This is further informed during Phase 2, with presentations from external practitioners in the field of Information Environments and members of the UAL IE Research Unit. During this phase, appropriate supervisory teams from across the participating Colleges will be selected who will then guide students during Phase 3 toward completion of the major project.

FAQs

How do I apply?

Home/EU students should apply directly through the College's Postgraduate Admissions Office. Download an application form from the LCC website at:

http://www.lcc.arts.ac.uk/docs/2007_2008_app_form.pdf

and send it to:

The Postgraduate Admissions Office, Room WG03, London College of Communication, Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6SB, UK.

International/non-UK/EU students should apply via the LCC

International Office. Download an application form from the LCC website at:

http://www.lcc.arts.ac.uk/docs/international_app.pdf

and send it to:

The International Office, Room WG03, London College of Communication, Elephant and Castle, London SE1 6SB, UK.

Is there a deadline for applications?

Applications can be made throughout the year. However, the course is very popular and reaches target numbers early each year. It is advisable to apply as early as possible — ideally before the summer prior to the course start date.

What are the standard admission requirements?

An Honours degree in a relevant subject, or a professional or academic qualification recognised as equivalent to an Honours degree. If you do not have the required qualifications, but do have professional experience you may be eligible to gain credit for previous learning and experience through the AP(E)L system. Your experience is assessed as a learning process and tutors will evaluate that experience for currency, validity, quality and sufficiency. Students whose first language is not English require IELTS 6.5.

Do I need to produce a portfolio? If so, what should it contain?

Your portfolio should cover your most recent commercial or academic activity, showing your aptitude and ability in design. This can be supported with documents showing your working processes and research (i.e. sketchbooks). Also include any other projects that indicate your personal areas of interest in the field of communication with particular relevance to the field of information environments.

Will I need to attend an interview?

You will be advised of interview procedures once your application has been processed. Students may apply with a portfolio, or may alternatively be called for interview where appropriate.

Are the requirements different for international and EU Students from outside the UK?

If your first language is not English you must demonstrate competence in English to IELTS (International English Language Testing System) 6.5 level or demonstrate an equivalent level of achievement.

Students from overseas should contact Vicky Gavulic in the International Office.

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7514 8138.

Email: v.gavulic@lcc.arts.ac.uk

How long is the course?

Full-time: 1 year, delivered over 45 weeks

When does the course start and finish?

It runs from January until December each year.

How long would I spend in College per week?**Is it possible to work part-time while studying?**

The course is timetabled for an average of two to three days per week contact time (though you may be scheduled for specific sessions or workshops on other days). You will be expected to work beyond this time on self-directed study, and may also access the range of College technical resources and studios. Many students do manage to fit in part-time work, but College work must take a priority.

Where is the course taught?

At LCC, Elephant and Castle during Phase 1, with access to tutorial support and technical facilities across the participating Colleges throughout the duration of the course.

What kind of people should I expect to meet on the course?

Generally the course is made up of around fifty percent international students and fifty percent Home/EU Students. Students come from right round the globe and across Europe.

What kind of projects would I be working on?

Students have the opportunity to learn transferable research skills which might be applicable within a commercial or professional context, or which might be further developed within an academic environment toward PhD level study. During Phase 1 of the course, core research methodologies are appropriate to both areas of future development. Tutorial teams work with students during Phase 2 to provide guidance and support in order that students may specify which research track they wish to undertake, and appropriate further research skills are developed during this stage and in the initial scoping of the major project at the start of Phase 3.

Research skills developed through the MRes course will provide graduates with expertise which might be applicable to professional design within the fields of information graphics, signage and wayfinding, planning, architecture and user-centred communication, but which might also be appropriate to public policy making, social networking and other areas of research which could be said to inform practice, rather than be based solely within practice.

What kind of project is suitable for the major project?

You will develop a major project proposal during Phases 1 and 2 of the course, supported by seminars and workshops in research methodologies and personal tutorials. The specific content of the project is determined by you, and as such the projects cover a wide range of subjects, from information design within the built environment, exhibition design, mapping and wayfinding through to identity design, user-centred design, responsive environments and interactivity. All projects are, however, underpinned with a clearly defined set of intentions and appropriate research methodologies through which to conduct experiments with potential visual outcomes.

How will my work be assessed?

There are two principal forms of assessment: formative and summative. Formative assessment is intended primarily to give you feedback during your course and to provide guidance on your development. Within each Unit there will be intermediate formative

assessment points, which will enable the tutor to monitor progress and identify any need for remedial action. Summative assessment is also undertaken and this forms the basis for measuring your overall achievement.

What are the facilities like?

During Phase 1, the course is based within the Graphic Design Postgraduate studio area, which is equipped with computing and laser printing facilities, a wireless network point for laptop connectivity to the College network, and seminar, teaching and tutorial spaces.

Beyond this, you also have access to the full range of technical workshops across the participating Colleges at Camberwell, Chelsea, Wimbledon and Central St Martins, as well as within LCC, including Computer Studios, Printmaking, Photography, Letterpress, Bookbinding, 3D Workshop and Moving Image studios and Library and Learning Resources facilities. There is an advice and information centre, exhibition galleries, lecture theatres, studios, laboratories, teaching areas, a shop, refectory, coffee bar and student bar within LCC. There is also an Enterprise Centre for Creative Arts, which provides information, events and advice on becoming self-employed in the creative industries.

What equipment will I be expected to have?

Access to a computer (ideally a laptop) and the internet.

Will I be expected to have any prior knowledge of particular software or technical skills?

You will be expected to have a strong understanding of design principles and technical skills, with a core emphasis on communication within 3D and/or virtual environments. These skills are not necessarily computer-related, but students will need to be able to produce visual material to a high standard.

What kind of people should I expect to meet on the course?

Generally the full-time course is made up of around fifty percent International Students and fifty percent Home/EU Students. Students come from right round the globe and across Europe.

What are the distinctive features of the course?

The course provides a framework for academic discussion and personal development, enhancing a student's ability to critically reflect, allowing them to initiate new and effective approaches to the subject and to engage with problems and insights at the forefront of the discipline. We aim to equip students to propose, research, develop and complete a self-directed project that reflects originality, critical analysis and evaluation underpinned with academic rigour.

What will students do after they finish the course?

Students complete the course with a proposal for further project development, either within a professional context or toward further study at PhD level. All students leaving the course find their possibilities in the workplace have widened and are more focused on the area of communication within information environments that they wish to pursue.

What are the course fees? Are there any additional fees?

For information about fees visit the website at <http://www.arts.ac.uk/pg-fees.htm> or call the Postgraduate Admissions Office on: +44 (0) 20 7514 6000, press option 3.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about the course email: graphics@lcc.arts.ac.uk

For administrative and enrollment matters, please contact the Postgraduate Admissions Office on +44 (0) 20 7514 6400, email: pgadmissions@lcc.arts.ac.uk or visit the website at: www.lcc.arts.ac.uk.