Programme Specification

Programme Title:	
BA (Hons) Photography Top-Up	
Programme (AOS) Code(s):	**BA6PTG1**
UCAS Code:	
Name of Final Award:	**Bachelor of Arts with Honours, BA (Hons)**
Level of Qualification:	**Level 6**
Regime of Delivery:	**Attendance**
Mode(s) of Delivery:	**Full Time**
Typical Length of Study (Years):	**1 year Top-up**
Professional Body Recognition / Accreditation (including specific requirements where applicable):	**Accreditation to Association of Photographers (AOP).**

Brief Description of the Programme

BA (Hons) Photography Top-up at BNU is a contemporary Level 6 programme of study for students who have already attained a Level 5 HND, FdA or other equivalent qualification in a relevant Art and Design or Media subject with a Photography focus and who wish to progress further to achieve an Honours degree.

The major project and contextual report are seen as a culmination of practice and theoretical development. Supported by supervision and tutorship, these modules provide the framework for students to undertake a sustained independent investigation in specialist areas of focus within their subject. Additionally, the course supports students in their professional development, preparing them for future employment in the photography industry, and arts and cultural industries.

You will be taught by staff who are active researchers and/or practitioners who will provide you with current insight into the subject, as well as develop your learning through research, collaborative projects, industry briefs and external opportunities. You will refine your skills, methods and knowledge to become thinking practitioners critically-engaged with your subject.

Programme Aims

1	To provide an insight into the processes and contexts which inform the making of commercial and culturally-located photographic images in society, providing opportunities for students to determine personal direction
2	To produce well-rounded graduates equipped with a range of technical, academic, creative and professional skills appropriate for the requirements of the image-based creative industries and/or to progress onto postgraduate study
3	To develop students' key transferable skills and behaviours, including self-reflection and management, in order to improve employability prospects and successful independent and collaborative enterprise

| 4 | To provide students with a critical understanding of photography in order to articulate and contextualise their practice within theoretical discourse and broader frameworks of contemporary practice. |
| 5 | To offer a contemporary curriculum engaged with social, technological, environmental, ethical and cultural perspectives, enabling graduates to become 'thinking practitioners' or socially-responsible entrepreneurs, applying their learning to a range of commercial and cultural contexts. |

Programme Learning Outcomes

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	Articulate their creative identity, motivations and aspirations within the context of contemporary photographic practice and the creative industries
K2	Demonstrate a synthesised understanding of the practice-theory relationship as they interpret, analyse and evaluate critical approaches to creative practice.
K3	Contextualise their practice in the light of key debates and theories in the field
K4	Apply a critically-informed knowledge of professional practice to the wider visual arts and media industries
K5	Demonstrate detailed subject knowledge and understanding of the critical dimensions of photography
Graduate Attribute: Creativity (C)	
C1	Apply a range of problem-solving methods to self-set, staff-set and/or industry briefs
C2	Deploy emerging photographic technologies, making use of associated equipment and processes and applying experimental approaches and technical skills relating to both analogue and digital methods
C3	Evidence the synthesis of ideas and concepts within presentation and exhibition
C4	Devise creative and innovative solutions to a brief, using a select choice of techniques, materials, processes and technologies to develop a coherent body of work
C5	Evidence conceptual and theoretical underpinning in response to briefs
Graduate Attribute: Social and ethical awareness and responsibility (S)	
S1	Evidence understanding of professional standards and codes of conduct within the creative industries
S2	Demonstrate understanding of legal rights and ethical responsibilities relevant to photographic practice
S3	Evidence understanding of the power of photography as a tool for representation and influence
S4	Implement a socially responsible approach to practice
S5	Demonstrate appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviours in professional practice

	Graduate Attribute: Leadership and self-development (L)
L1	Manage their own learning and development, demonstrating their ability to solve problems and make creative and professional decisions while being open to change and challenge
L2	Apply the skills of analysis, reflection and self-criticism to themselves and their practice
L3	Manage the progression of complex tasks, meeting deadlines and demonstrating appropriate self and time management
L4	Take responsibility for their participation in and contribution to effective group working, taking a leading role where appropriate
L5	Communicate information, argument and analysis effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

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 Six Top-up Year (1 year)

Code	Module Title	Credit	Core / Option	Compensable (Normally Yes)
PH601	Final Major Project	60	C	Yes
PH602	Contextual Report	30	C	No
AD603	Professional Practice	30	C	Yes

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:

A variety of teaching and learning strategies are employed, including
- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Seminar presentations
- Group critiques
- Practical workshops
- Technical demonstrations
- Guided independent study
- Individual Supervision
- Blended delivery through the use of Blackboard
- Study trips

Lectures – The contextual report element of the curriculum is led or supported by a programme of lectures. For the final major project they could refer to tutor-led presentations and demonstrations of the core content, which is further explored in a range of interactive and integrated activities, including practical workshops; this may include the discussion of historical, critical and contextual information to link theory and practice. Related exercises will be distributed so enabling students to both reinforce and evolve their appreciation of the material covered, incorporating a mixture of individual and group discussion and activity.

Seminars, Seminar presentations, Group Critiques – Seminars may involve group critiques where students are required to display work in progress to tutors and peers and is considered central to the student learning experience. They allow students to test ideas in the presence of staff and other students as well as more formal presentations which may be assessed. The process encourages students to become increasingly articulate and confident when discussing work and prepares students for client presentations when extending practice into employment. The critique is seen as an important forum not only for critical appraisal but also for debate and discussion, and as an opportunity for students to question the opinions of tutors and peers.

Briefing meetings/Progress critiques are used to launch projects and discuss current progress and anticipated requirements.

Supervisor meetings are arranged with individual students and are used to support individual project and professional targets, progression and attainment of independent goals/outcomes.

Tutorials – Tutorials may be individual or small group based. The tutorial system enables exploration through discussion of issues such as current work, progress, including new ideas and possibilities, research methodologies, providing analysis and exchange, through negotiated development to support progressively independent and student-centred learning. An open and direct approach to discussion of work is encouraged. Additionally, each student will be allocated a Personal Academic Tutor who oversees the pastoral support of their tutees within each year group.

Practical workshops and technical demonstrations – Students will be supported by a range of staff during the year, from tutors and visiting lecturers to technical demonstrators who will provide students with practical and technical instruction. Core technical skills will be delivered through a series of hands-on practical workshops, where student knowledge and skills-base are tested and applied through a range of practice-based tasks.

Projects – Central to the learning experience is the undertaking of predominantly self-set with some staff-set practical assignments, and industry briefs. This final level of study requires

students to manage and generate professional quality work which is suitable for exhibition and public dissemination. The modules in the final year require students to negotiate the complex relationship between theory and practice through application, and to grow from a coherent learning experience.

The project is essential in teaching and learning in that it encourages the definition of problems and their appropriate solution and evaluation. All projects have clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria, related to content, which provide the framework for exploration, experiment, research, development, presentation and communication. Since practice is the main element of the course, staff closely monitor the implementation, management and intellectual development of all projects, including student involvement in external assignments which contribute to their professional development.

Study Trips – These aim to foster group dynamics, peer group learning and broadening of student experience of other cultural and contextual perspectives. Visits to museums, galleries and other appropriate institutions and organisations are arranged to complement student awareness and understanding of contemporary commercial and cultural photographic practice.

Visiting speakers – a dynamic visiting lecturer programme is integral to the course, where visiting professionals from a range of backgrounds contribute through presentations and/or workshops on their practice and specialism. Students will regularly encounter different views and perspectives, which will help them to construct a wider knowledge base.

Guided Independent Study: The emphasis in Level 6 is on a growing independence and self-direction in students' work, and the tuition assumes a more individual dialogue with students. They are encouraged to explore a diverse range of applications for images from which they will decide a personal balance and direction. Personal research and independent project development are important, where time is given to plan and develop ideas as well as reflect on connections between areas of enquiry. Students are expected to undertake guided independent study throughout their top-up year, and to utilise their time outside of taught sessions to develop their knowledge, skills base and project development.

Blended delivery: The course offers a blended approach to learning and teaching, where students will be fully supported by the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). It is not just materials and resources that can be accessed, but tasks and interactive activities set up to structure and support their studies.

Learning strategies, under the direction of the course team, are designed to increase students' active involvement in the learning process, growing their level of independence during the year. Ongoing critical dialogue enables staff and students to shape the overall coherence of the student's experience and tutorial guidance fosters discussion on the progress of your personal intellectual and creative development.

Furthermore, students are encouraged to participate and engage with a range of arts-based, commercial and/or socially driven projects and workshops to build confidence and understanding of the broader industry or professional base. There will be opportunities to engage with externally set industry briefs to give students a better understanding of professional standards and expectations. Additionally, students are also strongly encouraged to be pro-active in seeking opportunities for work experience. Staff will provide support through the Professional Practice module, and there will be opportunities for external engagement, from community-based projects, and exhibitions, to specific commissions.

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 are additional costs associated with all studies, which require consideration, when planning and budgeting for expenditure. Additional course costs for Photography are outlined below:

Books and other Texts
Students will be required to purchase texts and journals to support their study programme. The minimum, average cost of books for students studying on a degree course is assumed as £100 per year.

Printing
We recommend a minimum budget of £50 for the year for basic printing/photocopying costs including dissertation printing and binding. Additionally, there are additional costs associated with photographic printing which can range from £50 to £400 per year for final year exhibition prints. Costs are estimated and are entirely dependent on individual choice of presentation, paper stock, size etc. For example, students whose work is most appropriately viewed as a projection or a video piece would incur little or no costs.
Photobook printing can cost between £25 - £150.

Equipment/Materials
Costs of £100 - £200 per year for photographic paper (darkroom use), film etc., with optional costs of £200-300 depending on student's choice of purchases in terms of supplies and materials. SD cards or compact flash cards, as well as a portable storage drive will cost approximately £120. Optional additional costs can include laptops £600 - £1500 depending upon model and specification, which some students find useful, as well as investing in a mid-range DSLR (upwards of £1200 depending on model and specification).

Study Trips
Compulsory study tours and trips will be up to £100 per year with optional trips estimated up to £400. Optional study trips to Europe will cost £250-£400, and international trips could cost £600-£800 depending on location and duration.

In year or end of year exhibitions and projects
This course requires exhibitions and major projects so additional costs will be incurred. These costs can be discussed in detail with your course teams and some will be linked to a professional skills element of the course where organised fundraising for such activities may be included. Additionally, there may be an optional summer exhibition organised externally at the end of your studies.

Graduation
Graduation costs per student are estimated at £100 - £200 total. This is an optional cost for all students as attending graduation is not a requirement in order to have a degree conferred.

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 Three (top-up)	317	883	-

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').

Assessment will be through a range of methods, including a written contextual report, papers, presentations, portfolios, critical sketchbooks, online blogs and exhibitions. Assessment criteria reflect the independent learning expected in the final year of study. This supports the practical nature of the course, supported by theoretical research and critical writing.
All assessment is coursework based.

Formative Assessment – These apply to learning through practice, taking place at the completion at key review points on major projects. They are designed to monitor and reflect on progress, identifying areas of achievement as well as focusing on objectives for future development.

At formative stage, marks and feedback are useful in indicating your progression. These will take a variety of forms including:
- verbal feedback during individual tutorials
- group critiques or seminars
- peer feedback and evaluation
- formal written feedback at key review points with indicative grades

They will be formally monitored and documented, indicating broad areas of achievement, and aligned with the criteria used at summative stage.

Classification

Calculation of final award:	Level 6 (1 year Top-up) – 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

Applicants will typically be those who have previously attained a Higher National Diploma, Foundation Degree or other Level 5 qualification in an Art & Design or Media-related course with a focus on photography.

Applicants are interviewed and are requested to provide a portfolio of their own work, which may take the form of a physical, electronic or online portfolio.

A bridging project will be set prior to the start of the course to support students' preparedness for Level 6 study.

Do applicants required a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check?	**No**

Opportunities for students on successful completion of the programme

With this award, students will be equipped to apply for jobs that demand well-developed image-based skills across the creative industries, or become self-employed or freelance and undertake work across a range of specialisms:
- Editorial photographer
- Advertising photographer
- Visual artist
- CGI artist
- Assistant photographer
- Medical photographer
- Digital marketer
- Fashion and portraiture
- Digital retoucher
- Image archivist or picture librarian
- Image researcher
- Sports photographer
- Event photographer, including music/band
- Art director
- Producer
- Picture editor
- Visual Consultant
- Studio or facilities managers

On successful completion of the programme, students can choose to undertake postgraduate study in photography or fine art.

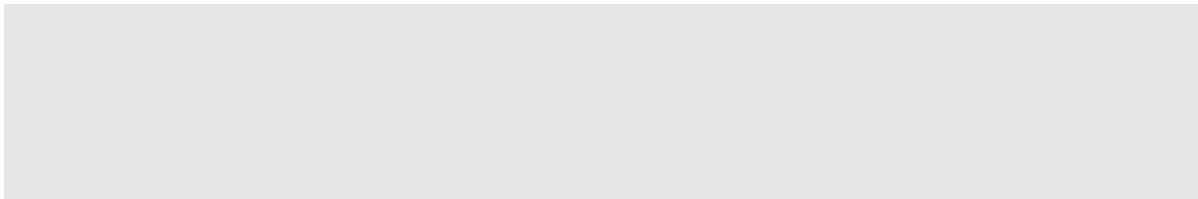### Recognition of Prior Learning

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

Programme specific support (if applicable)

Appendices

Quality Assurance

Awarding Body:	**Buckinghamshire New University**
Language of Study:	**English**
QAA Subject Benchmark Statement(s):	**Art and Design (2017)** **Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)**
Assessment Regulations:	*Academic Assessment Regulations*, **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 Ethics sub-committee**
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:	**Ordinary Degree**
Full name of Qualification and Award Title:	**BA in Photography**
Credits requirements:	**60 Credits**
Module requirements:	**PH601 Final Major Project**

Learning Outcome
Demonstrate advanced understanding and critical awareness of their conceptual aims through research and the quality of practical visual outcomes
Appropriately select key skills, techniques, materials and approaches informed by effective documentation and evaluation of methodologies, working practices and outcomes
Demonstrate independence in learning, organisational skills and the ability to plan, systematize and meet demands at a professional level
Evidence through practice a deep understanding of their creative, conceptual and theoretical position relative to contemporary precedents
Manage challenging expectations and develop problem solving strategies in response to a brief
Critically analyse ideas, concepts and principles from different disciplines, responding to the inter-relationships between practice and theory in order to produce a line of argument and meaningful conclusions in relation to a complex context.
Articulate a comprehensive awareness of the cultural and professional context in which they wish to practice creatively, demonstrating how their practice is located within the creative industries