

Course Aim and Title	Prof Doc Fine Art
Exit Award Available	PgCert Fine Art
Teaching Institution(s)	UEL
Alternative Teaching Institutions (for local arrangements see final section of this specification)	None
UEL Academic School	Architecture, Computing and Engineering
Professional Body Accreditation	None
Relevant QAA Benchmark Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UK Quality Code for Higher Education</li> <li>• The Advice and Guidance Theme: Research Degrees (2018)</li> <li>• The Doctoral Degree Characteristics Statement (2020)</li> </ul>
Additional Versions of this Course	None
Date Specification Last Updated	May 2025

## Course Aims and Learning Outcomes

The Professional Doctorate in Fine Art is a doctoral-level, credit-bearing, practice-based programme that provides structured advanced learning beyond traditional undergraduate and postgraduate study. It serves both as Continuing Education, supporting artists seeking to advance into higher-level academic and professional practice, and as Continuing Professional Development, enabling established practitioners to critically interrogate and evolve their creative work through rigorous research. The course is designed to develop advanced knowledge and research capabilities at doctoral level, enabling you to contribute meaningfully to professional practice and scholarship. Participants engage deeply with their own creative processes and contemporary theoretical debates, producing original practice-based research that is documented and disseminated through exhibitions, performances, publications, and public discourse. Delivered alongside ongoing professional artistic practice and often in collaboration with cultural institutions, the programme fosters innovation, reflective inquiry, and dynamic knowledge exchange across the creative industries.

This course is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- Develop an advanced independent fine art practice and area of research, realised within a professional context.
- Analyse current models of artistic practice relevant to the research area
- Elaborate a theoretical framework for the research that informs and supports creative practice
- Establish an advanced professional practice that makes connections between intention, process, outcome, context and methods of dissemination and display.

What you will learn:

### Knowledge

- To establish and analyse a personal working process of artistic research
- To understand the professional context within which you are working
- To work flexibly and imaginatively with the key literature of your research area

### Thinking skills

- To demonstrate an analytical approach to art practice
- To link creative practice with professional practice and theory
- To reflect on learning through advanced and sustained research
- To make use of critical response from audiences

### Subject-Based Practical skills

- To develop the technical skills appropriate to your medium and art practice
- To critically reflect on art practice and its process
- To keep a reflective journal of research
- To undertake a literature review and use theory creatively in practice
- To navigate, retrieve and manage information from a variety of sources - textual, visual, sound.

### Skills for life and work (general skills)

- To demonstrate problem solving, collaborating and negotiating skills
- To write clearly and analytically
- To make use of digital technologies for recording, promoting and displaying artwork

## Assessment - Taught Stage

### Knowledge is assessed by:

- Creation of a doctoral proposal accepted for registration
- Work in progress presentations
- Supervisory tutorials
- Annual review process
- Viva examination

### Thinking skills are assessed by:

- Creation of a successfully registered doctoral proposal
- Work in progress presentations
- Supervisory tutorials
- Annual review process
- Viva examination

### Practical skills are assessed by:

- Work in progress presentations
- Supervisory tutorials
- Annual review process
- Viva examination

### Skills for life and work (general skills) are assessed by:

- Work in progress presentations
- Supervisory tutorials

- Annual review process
- Viva examination

Students with disabilities and/or particular learning needs should discuss assessments with the Course Leader to ensure they are able to fully engage with all assessment within the course.

## Assessment - Research Stage

Prof Doc students will be assessed throughout their course in the following ways during the research stage of their course:

Taught stage (FA8000 Research Methodologies and Professional Development) is assessed through staff appraisal of June Showcase exhibited work and through completion and registration of a DFA proposal. The application to register is approved by supervisors and assessed and approved by the School and University Research Degrees Sub-Committees

Research stage of the DFA (years 2-5) is assessed through the AMR process, which allows students to progress to the next year of the course.

### **Annual Monitoring and Review (AMR) process:**

The AMR process takes place annually for student in years 2,3, and 4 of the part time course, and year 2 of full time. The Prof Doc student is required to submit a progress report of up to 5,000 words, and forward plan each year. An AMR panel, consisting of a minimum of two School research active academics, will then take place where the student will attend and defend their research to the panel members.

### **Final viva:**

A DFA student is required to submit a report of up to 25,000 words in support of their thesis, which is the final exhibition of work.

Assessment of the DFA takes the form of a *viva voce* examination, conducted by two Independent Examiners and a Chair of Examiners. Further details of the procedure can be found in the Manual of General Regulations - Part 8 Research Degrees and the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees.

## Work or Study Placements

N/A

## Research/project work

Professional Doctorate students will be supported, throughout their course, by a team of School/Institute appointed supervisors. The supervisory team will consist of a minimum of two academics who together demonstrate an appropriate range of academic and/or professional experience, engagement in research activity and relevant publications or exhibitions

One member of the supervisory team shall be appointed as the Director of Studies and will ensure that the Professional Doctorate student is supervised on a regular, frequent basis. Supervision on the DFA is augmented by the DFA staff team who take an active part on work in progress seminars and discussions and support the designated supervisory team.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the supervisory team can be found in the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees.

Registration of proposal happens within 6 months of enrolment (full time) or 12 months of enrolment (part time) and is back dated to enrolment date.

Supervisors are negotiated according to student's research area.

Ethics is considered by the student and supervisors and ethical approval is applied for if relevant, at the time of registration or subsequently.

Viva examination takes place after 3 years (full time) or 5 years (part-time). The viva exhibition is the thesis to be examined, supported by a 15,000-25,000-word report.

## Course Structure

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Weighting	Core/Option	Available by Distance Learning? Y/N
8	FA8000	Research Methodologies and Professional Development	60	Core	N
8	N.A.	Research	480	Core	N

### Additional detail about the course structure:

The programme comprises:

- Independent research that makes an original contribution to knowledge, the outcome of which is a final viva exhibition of artwork, supported by a written report of up to 25,000 words. Professional development for doctoral students in the form of exhibitions within and outside of UEL, and other relevant professional activities such as teaching, publishing, presenting at conferences and curating.

Professional development and key milestones training for DFA students is mainly through the first-year module FA8000, through the work in progress seminars and through supervisory and course team advice and support relevant to fine art research. The UEL Researcher Development Programme also provides opportunities for PGR students to develop their skills and competence in a range of areas including research skills and techniques, research environment, research management, personal effectiveness, communication skills, networking and team development.

DFA students can explore which sessions from the Researcher Development Programme meet their professional development needs at each stage of their journey with their supervisory team.

DFA students present their work twice yearly to staff, supervisors and students in work in progress seminars. In addition, all Prof Doc students are encouraged to make oral presentations of their work during their course at the PGR conferences, the UEL research and knowledge exchange conference and via a range of other internal and external opportunities.

## Full-time

Year of Study	Activity	Timescale
Year One	FA8000 module	Oct to March
	Complete proposal and submit registration	April
	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice)	Oct to Oct
	Present to work in progress seminars.	Oct to March
	Meet supervisors a minimum of twice a term in addition to seminars	Oct to June
	Exhibit in Showcase	June
Year Two	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice)	Oct to Oct
	Present to work in progress seminars	Oct to March
	External exhibition	Oct to Oct
	Meet supervisors minimum twice a term in addition to seminars	Oct to June
	AMR	May/June
	Exhibit in Showcase	June
Year Three	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice)	Oct to June
	Present to work in progress seminars.	Oct to March
	Meet supervisors minimum twice a term in addition to seminars	Oct to June
	Write doctoral report	Oct to March
	Curate viva exhibition	April to June

	Defend show in viva voce Make any amendments to report, submit final report	June June to September
Year Four		

\*Third year Annual Review Meeting will take place if Doctoral thesis has not been submitted.

### Part-time

Year of Study	Activity	Timescale
Year One	FA8000 module	October to March
	Complete proposal and submit registration	By September
	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice)	October to October
	Present to Work in Progress seminars	October to March
	Meet supervisors minimum of once a term in addition to seminars	October to June
	Exhibit in Showcase	June
Year Two	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice)	Oct to Oct
	Present to work in progress seminars	Oct to March
	Meet supervisors minimum of once a term in addition to seminars	Oct to June
	Exhibit externally	Oct to Oct
	AMR	May / June
	Exhibit in showcase	June
Year Three	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice) Present to work in progress seminars	Oct to Oct Oct to March
	Meet supervisors minimum of once a term in addition to seminars	Oct to June

	Exhibit externally AMR Exhibit in showcase	Oct to Oct May / June June
Year Four	Research (creative practice, theory, professional practice)  Present to work in progress seminars  Meet supervisors minimum of once a term in addition to seminars  Exhibit externally AMR Exhibit in showcase	Oct to Oct  Oct to March  Oct to June  Oct to Oct May /June  June
Year Five	Write and submit doctoral report  Meet supervisors minimum of once a term in addition to seminars  Curate viva exhibition  Defend show in viva voce  Make any amendments to report, submit final report	Oct to March Oct to June  April to June June June to September

### Course Specific Regulations

Further information on the PhD via MPhil course regulations can be found in the Manual of General Regulations - Part 8 Research Degrees and the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees.

### Typical Duration

It is possible to move from full-time to part-time study and vice-versa to accommodate any external factors such as financial constraints or domestic commitments. Many of our students make use of this flexibility and this may impact on the overall duration of their study period.

In full time mode of study, the minimum duration of this course is 3 years (36 months), and the maximum duration is 4 years (48 months).

In part time mode of study, the minimum duration of this course is 5 years (60 months), and the maximum duration is 6 years (72 months).

The time limit for completion of the course is eight years after first enrolment on the course.

## Further Information

More information about the Prof Doc course is available from:

- The UEL web site ([www.uel.ac.uk](http://www.uel.ac.uk))
- Part 8 Research Degrees from the UEL Manual of General Regulations (available on the UEL website)

Part 3 to be added for the taught stage

- The Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees
- Research Ethics Handbook

All UEL courses are subject to thorough course approval procedures before we allow them to commence. We also constantly monitor, review and enhance our courses by listening to student and employer views and the views of external examiners and advisors.

Additional costs:

Required:

Art materials for independent art practice (these will vary based on the work you carry out but you should budget between £200 to £1000 per year)

Optional:

Rental of private studio space (price varies depending on your space requirements but you should budget between £1500 to £3000 per year)

Recommended:

Entrance fees and travel costs for attending exhibitions (this can vary but you should budget around £50 per year).

Personal computing equipment (price dependant on specs and software required but from approximately £250 upwards for a basic laptop) and home internet connection

## Alternative Locations of Delivery

N/A