LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY

Course information for applicants

This information applies to the course as it will be delivered to students starting the course in 2027/28.
Information provided here was confirmed on 08/10/2026

General information

Programme code
MADOC

Target award
If you complete this course successfully you will be eligible for the award of:
MA Documentary Filmmaking

Delivery mode
✓ On campus
☐ Distance learning

Where you will study
The majority of teaching will be at City campus but on occasion may be at Headingley campus.

Awarding body
Leeds Beckett University

Regulator
Office for Students

Level of qualification
Level 7 of the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

Course duration
If you are made an offer of a place on the course, your offer letter will include the start date.

This course can be studied:

18 months full-time

Entry requirements
Admissions criteria are available on the online prospectus entry for this course.

If you have previous relevant qualifications or experience, you could be exempt from certain parts of your course. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) allows you to start your course at a point appropriate to the learning and skills that you may have developed in a professional, vocational or community setting.

Find out more here: https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/student-information/course-information/recognition-of-prior-learning
If you have questions about entry requirements and admissions, contact AdmissionsEnquiries@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Course fees

Course fees and a breakdown of any additional costs is included on the online prospectus entry for this course.

If you have questions about fees for this course, contact Fees@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Timetable

You will receive your full timetable for the year during induction week.

What you will study

Course aims

The aims of the course are to:

According to the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications: Much of the study undertaken for master's degrees will have been at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Students will have shown originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving problems. They will have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments'. (2014, p. 28) Accordingly the educational aims of the MA Documentary Filmmaking programme are designed to enable the students to:

a) develop and utilise Master's Level specialist documentary production skills and techniques;

b) become an individual, collaborative, creative and distinctive documentary filmmaker through experimentation and speculative enquiry;

c) develop intellectual independence and undertake independent study;

d) develop a critical understanding of the documentary industry and the wide spectrum of filmmaking activities involved;

e) build and develop an ethical framework and methodological plan for their own documentary practice by studying classic and contemporary documentaries, genres and key practitioners;

f) create a documentary film project of originality with a marketing strategy for an intended audience.

g) construct a personal and professional plan to continue as a documentary filmmaker, or to take up higher-level research, upon completion of their MA.

MA Documentary Filmmaking is part of the Leeds School of Arts and as such MA students are able to work with fellow students in Music and Performing Arts as well as working with other cohorts from the MA Filmmaking, and BA (Hons) Filmmaking within the Northern Film School. In addition the School now has a number of researchers at doctoral level providing potential new pathways for MA students as well as ensuring a further engagement in experience at different levels.

Teaching and learning activities

The MA Documentary Filmmaking encompasses a number of key activities including scheduled lectures, seminars, practical workshops, individual and group tutorials, supervision throughout project development, as well as guided independent study.

In the Documentary production module practical skills workshops and exercises provide the backbone of essential professional skills that equip the students to achieve the creation, development and production of documentary projects to a high standard.

Throughout the Documentary Development module seminars and presentations encourage and develop an understanding of contemporary documentary theories and debates that stimulate students to explore possibilities within their own evolving practice. The combination of these modules enable students to make an informed choice about the type of documentary practice they wish to pursue.

The learning and teaching approach of the Creative Concepts and Creative Practice modules is to encourage students to find their own filmmaking voice and vision through experimentation and reflection. Film exercises or sketches driven by the students' ideas are designed to experience and develop creative filmmaking and collaboration skills through the combination of; play, risk, experimentation, mistakes, and reflection on the processes to arrive at a greater understanding of their own creativity.

The development of the Master's Projects follows best industry practice. Once the ideas have been developed through workshops and tutorials, the students pitch to a panel, work with conditions and move into production with budgets receiving continual tutor support from development to completion.

Throughout the course students are required to be active learners, whether through the development of their documentary projects, through their presentations of critical theory, where students are expected to present to their fellow students and to engage in discussion about the ideas and concepts raised, or through the process of applying their individual understanding to the documentary projects.

There is an emphasis upon the reflexive process, both as individuals and as collaborators, with the expectation that the insights discovered and explored through this process will be demonstrated visibly and critically through practical application. One of the strengths of the course is that there is not a separation between tutors and lecturers who deliver theory on the one hand, with practitioners providing practical classes on the other. Instead the integration of theory and practice is reflected by the cross-collaboration of the School's academic staff in both areas.

The Film School has developed a strong PhD research programme. PhD students have undertaken research into a

number of filmmaking arenas and the introduction of PhD studies into the Film School has succeeded in stimulating increased interest in the significance of theoretical work allied to practice.

Course structure

This information is correct for students progressing through the course within standard timescales. If you have to repeat study or take time out during your course, you may be taught alternative modules which meet the overall course learning outcomes.

The option modules listed may vary. Those listed here are likely to be offered in a typical year.

Level 7

Compulsory modules

Module title	Credits	Semester/teaching period
Creative Concepts	20	1
Documentary Production	40	1
Creative Practice	20	2
Documentary Development	40	2
Masters Project	40	2 + 3
Next Project Development	20	3
Total number of credits of compulsory modules:	180	

Assessment and feedback

The balance of assessment may change depending on which option modules you choose.

Level 7

This course is assessed mostly by practical assessments with some coursework.

Workload

You can expect to spend a total of 100 hours learning per 10 credits.

Typically, a student on this course can expect to divide their time like this:

Overall workload	**Level 7**
Teaching, learning and assessment	136 hours
Independent study	664 hours
Placement study	X hours