

BA (HONS) PHOTOGRAPHY

Professor Paul Seawright, *Course Director*
p.seawright@ulster.ac.uk

Welcome to the BA (Hons) Photography Course which is based on the Belfast Campus. The course aims to equip you with the broad range of academic and practical skills required to create innovative and critically informed still image work.

Photography aims to:

- Provide students with a range of professional and technical skills.
- Facilitate students' exploration of creative and innovative traditional and digital photography practice.
- Develop in each individual student the essential skills and understanding, flexibility and confidence to respond positively to the professional challenges of a career in the continuously changing field of contemporary photography or more broadly communications media or the visual arts.
- Encourage and develop each individual's ability and desire to talk effectively through the unique photographic medium and encourage the clarity of thought, understanding of audience and context, creativity and innovation, technical skills and above all the motivation and self-belief that is essential for the successful communication of ideas.

These aims will be achieved through the delivery of a coherent, progressive and integrated programme structure that strongly promotes the notion of learning by engagement in both theory and practice.

1. The Modular Programme

The programme offers an educational experience which integrates the development of a defined critical and cultural position, the interrogation of social values, the increasing role of technology and the acquisition of skills and experience. It aims to produce *creative thinkers* and is therefore a programme driven by research and the development of ideas.

You will encounter a learning environment in which emphasis is placed on responsible cultural production, extending and refining knowledge and understanding of your subject in its cultural context. Growth in knowledge and conceptual development are linked through challenging interdisciplinary research projects and visual research in the course.

The Context of Studio Practice

You will be encouraged to enter into dialogue with colleagues and staff in the studio, exploring and critically evaluating the work which you and others produce.

Through the projects with which you engage you will have the opportunity to challenge accepted stylistic conventions and to develop a personal response to the visual world.

You are encouraged to develop a sense of subject identity through your course. Your course work will involve a range of experimentation in media, techniques and approaches, from which you will acquire facility, flexibility and the ability to judge and position your work.

History and Theory

Theoretical understanding is an integral part of any practical resolution and this programme of study will inform your visual practice. The modules are designed to provide you with a diverse range of perspectives, research skills and methodologies, and critical and analytical debate. In third year you will write a dissertation but first and second year employ a range of assessment techniques for these modules including research folders, presentations and essays.

You will study two History and Theory modules in first year. The aim these is to introduce you to ways of analysing visual media and to develop your skills in critical debate, reasoned argument, research and communication and literacy. You will attend a series of lectures, followed by seminars in which key themes will be discussed and pursued. Semester one will introduce key ideas in Photo history and theory and Semester 2 will broaden the debate to include ideas shared with other creative disciplines.

At Level 2 you will study two Photography modules that examine the history of photography in some detail and introduce research methods that will help you plan your dissertation. The aim of these modules are to help with your development of critical awareness in visual media with a focus on more in-depth academic study, appropriate to Level 2 undergraduates. You will attend a series of lectures, followed by seminars in which key themes will be discussed and pursued.

At Level 3 you will work on a dissertation in a subject of your own choosing.

2. Course Outline for Photography

Modules

Level 1, Semester 1

Documentary
Co-ordinator: Peter Neill/Jim Maginn

20 credits
6 weeks

case when due to illness or other circumstances you have fallen behind with course work.

Booking a Tutorial

Sometimes you will be given a tutorial time or will be scheduled for a group tutorial or seminar. Other times there will be tutorial sign up sheets in the studio. Make good use of these. Every time you have a tutorial the tutor will sign your tutorial record sheet which should be taped inside your Research Development Book (a roughly A4 sketchbook/notebook where you document your progress in a project and gather visual and research material). Tutorials are IMPORTANT – please see a range of staff and see them as often as possible.

Staff Offices

A staff office is a private workspace, where we see students, hold meetings, conduct research activities, and so forth. Please respect this if the door is closed, and remember that you can always leave a message with any member of staff on the message boards outside their doors or in staff pigeonholes at the back of the building on C Floor.

If an office door is open, feel free to come in!

4. Information and Communication

Online Timetable

We use Google Calendar for the timetable. Open a free Google account after you receive an invitation email to join the calendar for the course. Check this regularly – we aim not to make changes after Saturday midnight for the following week. Check it Sunday.

Notice Boards

These are on E Floor and F Floor. Tutorial sign up sheets, press cuttings and notices can be found here.

SMS Texts

Make sure we have your mobile phone number – communication is often by text – mostly if the timetable changes at short notice or to remind you of a visiting speaker. To REGISTER text **Photo** + your name to **07786206055**

E-mail

E-mail is the main method of communication within the School. Please use it wherever possible and **make sure we have your email address.**

5. Timetables

You start on Monday 21st at 10.00 (please do not arrive late) in the main Photo Studio 82F04. Most of your sessions will take place in this room or straight below it on E Floor 82E01B or in the space outside the darkrooms. The weekly timetable is available online but is also on the notice board. Your delivery days will be **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday** for the year although the odd one off visit

or guest speaker may be on another day of the week. Guest lecturers are on Thursday – often international photographers and even if they are here for the MFA we ask all Photography students to attend – these are usually opportunities to hear people talk about their work and won't be repeated.

We have a trip organised to Bush mills on the 28th and 29th Sept – an opportunity to get to know the staff and each other. It costs £15 for the night (Bushmills Youth Hostel). You can pay on the day by cheque or cash.

Please note a trip is planned to Paris for the Paris Photo Art Fair. This is the biggest photography fair in Europe and there are numerous photography exhibitions on throughout Paris as well. Dates Nov 19th – 21st price approx £225. We need a £100 deposit on the 21st to secure your flight and hotel. Pay this by cheque or credit/debit card at the Faculty Office on C Floor. The balance is due on the 1st of November.

6. Hours and Attendance

If you are unable to attend a taught session or tutorial either through illness or other circumstances, please contact the module coordinator by e-mail. We take registers at all taught sessions and will note those students who are late. We expect the kind of professional attitude to time-keeping and commitments that will be required in the photography industries. You will find further information on attendance and withdrawal in the module handbook. If you miss three taught sessions you will be asked to meet with the Course Director to review your position – if poor attendance continues the Course Committee can ask you to withdraw from the course.

7. Assessment

In the course we use a range of assessment methods. Course work, exhibited work, presentations, essays and the RDB (Research Development Book). The module assessment sheet lists the module criteria, weighting and outcome descriptions and notes from the assessing team.

- Pass mark for course and modules and individual assessments is 40%.

In order to be considered for a particular class of honours degree a candidate must have obtained marks in the appropriate range or above in at least 50% of Level 3 modules, in addition to achieving an overall mark in the class.

All work in final year is at least double-marked by staff and sampled by the External Examiner – Professor Arabella Plouviez, Head of Photography at the University of Sunderland.

Level bandings for degree classifications

- 40-49% - 3rd
- 50-59% - 2:2
- 60-69% - 2:1
- 70-100%- 1

The pass mark for all modules is 40%. If you fail 50% of the modules in any year you will be asked to withdraw from the course. Depending on your circumstances you may be allowed to re-sit the year at the discretion of the exam board.

8. Submission of Work

We take prompt submission of work very seriously in Photography as good time management is an integral part of being a competent photographic practitioner. The deadlines for work are on the timetables and module handbooks and on the Google Calendar. Practical submissions are normally viewed in a crit and are retained for marking. Unless you are notified otherwise, your RDB should be submitted with your practical work.

If you need to notify us of illness or other difficulty, please see the module Co-ordinator. You should use the extenuating circumstances process to tell us about your situation, and details can be found in the School Handbook.

Each practical module has an INTERIM CRITIQUE or REVIEW. This is part of the assessment process and is therefore not optional. All students must have work on the wall and be prepared to present it to the year group.

There are no extensions given to students other than formal deferrals for valid extenuating circumstances.

Students will be provided with feedback on their achievement if handed in within the required time.

9. Teaching And Learning Methods

Your timetable will indicate different types of teaching. The range of teaching and learning strategies described below are a set of general definitions, and you can expect to be introduced into a teaching and learning pattern which will employ these strategies in ways that are distinctive to your course modules

Project Briefings

Understanding the requirements of a project brief is an essential element of the subject. Project briefings provide context, rationale and assessment information along with submission requirements

Project Work

BA (Hons) Photography consists mainly of project-based coursework. Projects consist of set objectives linked to a given theme or brief, and are designed for particular module aims or outcomes.

Lectures

Lectures are normally occasions where a member of staff or guest lecturer will speak on a defined subject to groups of between 20+ students. Lectures are usually illustrated by images and/or other design material. Normally there will be an opportunity for some group discussion during the lecture period

Seminars

Seminars normally consist of a structured discussion between a group of students and a member of staff. The seminar is usually based upon a topic or presentation that has been previously prepared and circulated. The discussion may be led by either a member of staff or by a student. On occasion, the seminar may be illustrated, though this is not always the case. Active participation and quality of presentation and discussion in seminars may be an assessable component of study.

Critiques ('Crits')

Critiques normally consist of a structured review of ongoing project work between a group of students and a member of staff. The 'crit' may be led by students or a tutor. Active participation is critical in developing mature photographic discourse and may be an assessable component of study.

Individual/Group Tutorials

Students can receive individual/group tutorials on a regular basis, usually by appointment. In a tutorial, the tutor or tutors may discuss with the student a range of issues relating to the development of the student over a specific period of time. In this way the student can obtain personal guidance and the opportunity for sustained in-depth discussion

Workshops/Demonstrations

These often involve the introduction to a process, technique or operational instruction of equipment to a group of students by either a member of academic staff or by a technician. They are a method employed to make students aware of the characteristics of particular skills and equipment. Whilst it does not necessarily mean that each student will go on to learn the skills, it makes them aware of their function and potential.

Academic Supervision

Academic supervision goes one step further than demonstration in that members of staff will assist students in the acquisition or strengthening of a particular skill or aspect of learning. The degree of assistance is usually determined by the capabilities of the individual student. Supervision of this kind will mean that a member of staff is close at hand to assist with problems.

Study Visits/Field Trips

A study visit involves travelling to particular places of interest related to the aims of the course. They form an essential part of the educational practice in that students are able to engage with cultural and industrial contexts and personnel at first hand.

Web Based Learning

This is currently under development and the course team wish to develop the amount of web supplemented learning over time. The Library has developed an online web-portal for photographic research.

Self-Directed Learning

It is recognised that students engage in forms of self-directed learning in relation to the broad issues of the subject. A capacity for self-directed learning is in fact an entry prerequisite of the course. Formal tuition will be based upon an expectation of self-motivated personal development. Self-directed learning may ultimately lead to more structured forms of research activity in the later stages of the course. This includes the taking of photographs on location and in the studio.

Film Screenings

They will relate to the module. Sometimes staff will chair a post screening discussion or the themes may be picked up in seminars the following week. It is important that you are exposed to a breadth of creative material, including film.

10. Progression

The course is designed for those wishing to pursue a career within the photographic sector. Careers may include:

- Editorial Photography
- Funded Arts Practice
- Working within the Community and Education sector
- Photojournalism
- Research and Consultancy
- Self-employment in Photography
- Gallery and Curatorial work

The University has a Careers Service, available to all students through the office in the Library and Learning Resource Centre on B Floor. They also run some classes for Photography students.

11. Materials / Resources

Stores/Equipment

You may not borrow equipment or use facilities until you have completed the relevant technical workshop. These are timetabled in the module and you need to attend or you will be disadvantaged. Stores open for one hour twice a day and you need to plan your time in order to access equipment and book darkroom space.

INSURANCE: As the course progresses you will want to borrow lighting kits, medium and large format cameras. All equipment valued above £500 must be insured by you. If you take out an annual policy for your own equipment you can amend it online for when you borrow stuff from stores. E.g. PhotoGuard insurance will insure £1000 worth of equipment for £31 a year or £2.92 a month. Photoguard.co.uk and follow Photoguard Select link for a quote. They allow you to amend the policy online for when you borrow equipment from us. Errol will need a copy of the cover to staple to your loan form. ALL equipment in your possession is your responsibility and **you are liable** for its replacement.

You will need your own camera but don't rush out and buy one right away. The first module uses 35mm film so you will need access to a manual film based camera. We have 15 in stores but if you have one please use it.

The letter sent this summer asked you to come with the following – you will need them next week – from Monday:

- You need 12-15 rolls of one of the following:

Kodak T-MAX 400 - 135-36 approx £2.20/roll

Kodak TRI-X 400 - 135-36 approx £2.30/roll

Ilford HP5 400 - 135-36 approx £2.25/roll

- A Jessops Magnifier Lupe 8x or similar approx £7.00 or Kaiser MAGNIFIER LUPE X8 from Calumet
- 25 negative storage sheets – Jessops make their own £7.18 for 25.
- A Negative file for the above.
- A coloured Chinagraph pencil – you can get these in an art shop.
- [Ilford Multigrade Black & White Paper - MGIV 10x8 Glossy - 100 sheets](#) – 7 day shop have this for £22.50 (2x50) which is CHEAP!

A manual film camera if you have one – don't buy one unless you get it cheap on E-Bay – lots available e.g. Right now Canon AE1 item 160362334472 Buy it Now price £39.99! Buy a Canon, Olympus or Nikon – don't pay more than £50.

12. Events/Visits

The course organises visits to galleries and events – including Paris Year one and New York in Year 3. Many students in the final year go to the International Photography Festival in Arles – South of France where they can show their work to curators and editors.

13. Reading List

You will receive specific reading lists appropriate to each unit on the course. The following books and periodicals are of general use throughout the entire programme:

- Cotton, C. (2004) The Photograph as Contemporary Art London: Thames and Hudson ISBN 0500203806
- Marien, M W (2002) Photography: A Cultural History London: Laurence King ISBN 1856692892
- Wells, L. ed. (2004) Photography: A Critical Introduction (third Edition) London: Routledge ISBN 041530704X **Recommended key text**

The following periodicals will keep you up to date with new work and the latest developments in the study of photography and are all available in the library:

Photoworks www.photoworksuk.org

Portfolio www.portfoliocatalogue.com

Source: The Photographic Review (www.source.ie)

For basic technical information, including sections on digital cameras and manipulation, the following book is recommended:

Langford, M. (2000) Basic Photography (seventh Edition) London: Focal Press ISBN 0240515927

14. IT

We have a few dedicated machines in the Photo Studio linked to A3 printers and a Nikon Neg scanner. These are for printing course work only and we supply the inks – you the paper.

All students on the Belfast campus have equal access to PCs equipped for online functionality and word-processing at the Library and in the computer rooms. 71 PCs and 15 Mac stations are available for student use at all locations on the Belfast Campus of the University of Ulster, so seating 86 students in total, plus a couple of disability machines. The computer rooms housing the majority of PCs are open for 15 hours a day (09.00-22.00 and the Mac labs are open for 12 hours a day (08.00-20.00. The computers based in the library are available during library opening hours, which are extended during pre-examination periods.

All UU students receive e-mail addresses by right on registration (using Single Sign-on Password technology), and teaching staff are hence enabled to construct automatic mailing lists associated with their modules. Students are encouraged to use e-mail for communication with their tutors.

15. The Library

You will have an induction session in the first two weeks. You **MUST** use the library – we have bought hundreds of books to support the course and a key element in your visual development will be looking at the photography of others. Work your way through the book collection and keep notes in your RDB. Don't simply surf the web looking for photographers. If you find something you think the library should have, let a tutor know and we will order it. Don't **HOLD** books for long periods, think of others. Bring books you like to seminar and tutorial sessions to share and discuss.

The Library at the University of Ulster holds over 800,000 books in stock, approximately 3,000 journal titles in print and over 14,000 unique journal titles in electronic format. In addition to this, the library also has a significant range of non-book media such as videos, DVDs, CDs, Slides and electronic books. Each campus has its own Library or Learning Resource Centre and all registered students and staff can use the facilities on any campus. All stock is listed on the Library Catalogue and library users can request material located on other campus libraries through the Inter-Campus Loans service.

Library Homepage

<http://library.ulster.ac.uk>

The library homepage is the gateway to an increasing range of online services including the library catalogue, electronic databases, subject guides and a growing number of electronic journals. Many of these resources are available to registered users either on or off-campus using any computer with a connection to the Internet.

Catalogue <http://library.ulster.ac.uk/catalogue>

The Web catalogue can be consulted from networked terminals within UU and from outside. It can be used to search for material anywhere in UU library via the main catalogue, or users can choose to search the holdings of one particular campus by choosing a discrete campus from the drop-down menu. They can also use the online catalogue to reserve books on loan to other borrowers.

16. Course Structure

	Module Title	Credits	Module	Awards
	LEVEL 1			
	Semester 1			
PHT101B1	Documentary 6 WEEKS	20	Compulsory	
PHT102B1	Narrative/Photo Book 6 WEEKS	20	Compulsory	
PHT103B1	Photo History 12 WEEKS	20	Compulsory	
	Semester 2			
PHT104B2	The Constructed Image 6 WKS	20	Compulsory	
PHT105B2	Landscape 6 WKS	20	Compulsory	
PHT106B2	Photography History 2 12 WKS	20	Compulsory	
	LEVEL 2			
	Semester 1			
PHT201B1	Strategies	40	Compulsory	
	Semester 2:			
PHT202B2	Contextualising practice	40	Compulsory	
	Semester 1 & 2			
PHT203B4	Photography History & Theory 3	40	Compulsory	
AAD309B4	Diploma in Industrial Studies	60	Optional	Dip
AAD310B4	Diploma in Area Studies	120	Optional	Industrial /Area Studies
	LEVEL 3			
	Semester 1			
PHT301B1	Advanced Independent Practice	40	Compulsory	
PHT304B1	Dissertation	20	Compulsory	
	Semester 2			
PHT302B2	Advanced Indp' Practice 2	40	Compulsory	
	Semester 2			
PHT303B4	CriticalPresentation/Professional Practice	20	Compulsory	

