

**Institution:**

London Metropolitan University, Sir John Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design

**Unit of Assessment:**

UoA 34 (Art and Design theory, history and practice)

**Overview**

The Sir John Cass Faculty of Art Media and Design (AMD) and the Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Design (ASD) merged in August 2012 following a two-year process of collaboration, to create the new Cass Faculty of Art, Architecture and Design.

The new Faculty includes three Schools, which currently deliver a total of 22 undergraduate, 15 MA and 2 Professional post degree courses, and hosts 37 PhD students, studying across a broad range of both specialist and interdisciplinary fields; it is a community of 2520 students (of whom 542 were PGT/R in 12-13) and 104 FTE staff with 279 HPLs (academic, administrative and technical) in place in 12-13.

The Faculty merger and concurrent university-level developments have resulted in significant changes, including restructuring of faculty management, technical resources and administration; University-wide changes to course structure and delivery and academic portfolio.

In the RAE 2008 for UoA 63 Art and Design, the University submitted research outputs from a high proportion of FTE staff (36.6) in art, media and design. Areas of the highest research excellence were noted in Music, Photography and Restoration. The submission for the REF 2014 UoA34 reflects continued excellence in subject areas with a new environment, a new strategy, and new strengths.

**b. Research strategy**

For research in UoA 34, the changes described above have opened up new opportunities and prompted a shift in direction. In the 2008 RAE UoA 63 had a number of different sections but 'research' was conventionally conceived as a distinct activity, even to the point of planning an autonomous research 'school' within the Faculty with its own appointments and funding streams. Environmental support for research was presented under a number of broad subject headings with convenors. As staff roles changed and staff left the institution, through restructuring or career change, the subject groupings were disbanded and the emphasis shifted to support individual excellence. Until 2012 this research activity included the *Journal for Visual Arts Practice* (Intellect), published in partnership with the National Association for Fine Art Education, and edited from the Cass by Chris Smith, whose role was to co-ordinate staff and student research.

The aim of the new research strategy is broadly unchanged; to directly interrogate the potential for Art, Architecture and Design to transform lives, regenerate communities, and to question and draw out meaning from our shared material cultures in both national and International arenas. Also unchanged is our commitment to explore and develop our role in consultancy and advocacy for our subjects and research territories.

In support of this aim the new Faculty is committed to embedding research and enterprise at the heart of teaching activities, a model successfully pursued by the former Faculty of ASD in terms of both sustainability and excellence. The new research structure is co-ordinated by a 0.4 Associate Dean of Research role (Head of School of Art), a full-time Director of CASS Projects, with 2 project office administrators/assistants, and a newly constituted cross-Faculty Research and Enterprise Committee.

For the UoA 34 we are currently rebuilding the community involved in research on new foundations using existing and new resources. Existing resources include a wide range of research activity and substantial expertise in supporting a PhD community. New resources include new growth in the reconfigured Schools of Art and Design and a new partner in the School of Architecture, that has different and complimentary strengths and areas of excellence in

design as research, design for scarce resources and design histories. Although the content in the two UoAs sponsored by the Faculty is (currently) UoA specific, the overarching research strategy is common to both. The Faculty is actively supporting and promoting cross-disciplinary discourse and collaborative research. This is best represented by the new faculty-wide undergraduate and postgraduate studio/atelier-based pedagogy that is research oriented in a number of ways. Most importantly it has the capacity to incubate original and excellent research that can be further developed using carefully constructed channels designed to foster rigour and maximise impact. This pedagogy is deliberately oriented at practice and research as mutually supportive activities. The studio/atelier model, originating from the School of Architecture, brings together students and staff including practitioners, industry leaders and researchers and research practices under thematic studio programmes, supported through projects, exhibitions, screenings and public lectures with a shared research focus. This pedagogic strategy has allowed us to reposition our research expertise at the heart of curriculum design and delivery. Each research cluster or group provides the intellectual and practice-based expertise and discourse to support the Cass's thematic studio model and the supervision of MA by Project and PhD students. The system encourages a natural synergy between research and teaching and fosters innovative practice.

Our core values and commitment to social engagement and local communities is clearly evidenced in a number of our research outputs and we have added to this commitment a more specific understanding of the city, London in particular, as a topic in its own right. This resonates with work across the three schools and has inspired joint projects that are the direct result of our new studio structure. The critical player in this strategy is the introduction of the shared 'live project' facilitated by CASS Projects. CASS Projects has been running since 2012 across the Faculty. It is headed by Anne Markey and provides support for externally funded research and consultancy projects. Previously based in the former Faculty of ASD, it was set up in 2004 as a RIBA chartered practice and now provides a professional environment in which researchers, staff and students from across the Faculty can undertake live projects and consultancy thereby generating research and third stream income. CASS Projects benefits from a broad network of stakeholders including the Corporation of London and the Mayor's Office, the Whitechapel Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Architecture Foundation and New London Architecture, Design Council and City Livery Companies. A recent initiative, the Aldgate Project, had twenty different projects running for the 12/13 academic year, involving disciplines that include architecture, fine art, jewellery, furniture and textile design and animation, and involving local groups, charities and stakeholders in the Aldgate area. CASS Projects facilitates publications and enables the immediate dissemination of the research undertaken within the Faculty.

Within this rich mix of projects and initiatives, people and practices, there are a number of structures specifically designed to support and strengthen research

#### **Relationship between practice and teaching and research**

The recent PG Review consultation (2012-13), led to the adoption of a more integrated approach between the MA by Project research training and that offered to the MPhil/PhD community. This is designed to support research students within a PG framework and foster collaboration. The profile of Research Student Symposia presentations, exhibitions and performances is being enhanced and embedded within the Faculty's events calendar. These help promote the constellation of research groupings within the UG and PG communities, and institute research and practice as core to learning and teaching.

#### **Commitment to social and city issues**

Faculty research groups draw together research themes that emphasise the Cass commitment to social and city issues with groupings related to social engagement, the city and its representation, critical curatorial practice, design for wellbeing, post-colonial design histories and the East End Archive. This commitment is exemplified in Patrick Brill's (aka Bob and Roberta Smith) research that challenges prevailing expectations of the artist's role and contributes to debates about art and its role in society and education both nationally and internationally. This research is deeply embedded in our studio teaching culture with Brill's leadership of the 'Public Acts' studio and role as MA Fine Art Course Leader.

### **Cross Disciplinary links**

Cross-faculty discourse and collaboration has proved highly effective in building on best practice to ensure a coherent, pro-active and outward-facing research and enterprise culture that has a profound impact on the immediate learning environment, the East London locale, and wider communities that the CASS works with. Research links with other HEIs and institutes are also productive, (see section E for examples) and are targeted as an area for further strategic development in the next period.

### **Dissemination**

The policy for research dissemination is generated through engagement in national and international exhibitions, conferences and performances, through publication, and through faculty led exhibitions and symposia. For example, Nico de Oliveira's 'Mulberry Tree Press' project, examined histories and methodologies of display through collaborative practices shared between participants involving over 30 national and international artists. The 'Art Party Conference' that combines art practice and political theory to bring together a diverse coalition of artists, organisations and supporters to engage in a "conference as artwork", conceived by Patrick Brill (aka Bob and Roberta Smith), is a major event that the Faculty has fully engaged with through CASS Projects, research funding and collaboration with colleagues and students on the event and its documentation and further dissemination.

## **People**

### **Staffing strategy and staff development**

The University has a well-established and inclusive staffing strategy. With the move towards greater autonomy for faculties in deciding on their own approach through 2012/13 the need for a robust staff development strategy that supports staff research aspirations has been built in to the Faculty's staff development and staffing plans.

The Faculty's ethos promotes a fluid approach to teaching and research where, alongside academic teams, key members of the faculty management team are engaged in teaching and research and enterprise activities including the Dean and Heads of School. In this way the needs and demands of research and its intimate relationship with the learning environment are fully understood by the team tasked with strategic management and leadership of the Faculty. Technical members of staff are also supported to engage as practitioners and researchers with technical team members supported to enrol as research students with funding support from the Faculty Research Budget as well as participating in live projects.

Staff development requirements are formally identified through annual appraisal. Through the Academic Work Allocation Model (AWAM), researchers are allocated time for research and for staff development as appropriate. The Faculty has more recently developed a mentoring system where professors, readers and established researchers mentor early career researchers through groupings. Staff have been supported to undertake PhDs, during the period 2008- 2014, 7 academic and technical staff have been engaged in PhD level study with 2 completions. The staff fees for LMU research degrees have been supported by the Faculty Research Budget.

Staff and Research Students can make bids for research funding at two points during the academic year to contribute towards travel, productions costs, conference fees and other research related outgoings. Sabbaticals have also been available during the REF period with staff undertaking periods of time to work exclusively on their research, for example Susan Andrews' work has been supported in this way along with funding towards dissemination.

Recruitment of permanent and hourly-paid (HPL) academic members of staff takes in to account their research experience, the relevance of their research to established and emerging research themes, and their ability to contribute to and be supported by the research and enterprise environment and achievements of the Faculty.

Currently the Faculty works with over 250 HPLs the majority are active as practitioners and researchers and their work is valued and positively feeds in to the research and learning culture through engagement in studio teaching, symposia organised by the Faculty and contribution to Faculty sponsored publications and exhibitions. More recently 4 long standing HPLs have been

recruited to permanent FTE teaching roles strengthening research expertise related to performance art, participatory and collaborative practice, material and immaterial labour and documentary film making.

### Research students and supervision

The new Faculty's adoption of the studio/atelier as a cluster of research and project activity is reflected in the developing approach towards recruitment of PGR students, where applications may be invited with proposals that relate to a specific research focus. An example of this is a development related to the new Critical Curation research group where the Cass gallery plans to recruit research students to undertake live projects within the gallery space.

The School of Design has seen an increase in PGR recruitment since the last RAE period, now hosting 10 students on MPhil/ PhD study. The School's emphasis on craft-based research, cross-disciplinary research, and international comparative studies is supported by Dipti Bhagat's role as Chair of the Design History Society. The School hosts a Reader in Metalwork, Silversmithing & Jewellery: Simone ten Hompel's research and exhibition practice informs much of the School's practice-based research and is evident in PhD projects and MA by Project outcomes.

The School of Art hosts 11 PGR students working on research projects ranging from Music Technology to interrogations into Fine Art practice. In the School of Art, the recent promotion of Susan Andrews as Reader (Photography) and Patrick Brill as Associate Professor (Fine Art), relates to the formation of the research group Public Acts and the more long-standing East End Archive project that Andrews directs. The relevance and reach of their practice and research is embedded in both teaching and research across the Faculty. The Head of School, also 0.4 Associate Dean of Research, Tamiko O'Brien, is Associate Professor (practice-based and pedagogic research) and is currently working on a Grundtvig funded partnership project investigating case studies of contemporary participatory practices in relation to 20<sup>th</sup> Century European memory alongside her practice that interrogates collaborative approaches to art practice.

Supervisors are trained through the University's Researcher Development Programme and the Centre for Enhancement of Teaching and Learning that hosts events and an annual Learning and Teaching Conference while also providing valuable online resources. The London met e-learning Matrix provides digital learning resources and CPD e-learning and e-teaching packages that also support supervision and research degree training.

Supervision in Art and Design is drawn from a pool of expertise currently clustered around a number of research themes as follows:

East End Archive and Cities: Reader Susan Andrews research in photographic documentary and the East End photographic Archive; Dr Jeremy Collins' research in to the sociology of news production and news management; Dr Nicholas Haeffner's research in digital photography, Hitchcock and contemporary art and new media; Charlotte Worthington's research in documentary film, societal portraiture and artists' film.

Design Histories: Dr Dipti Bhagat's research in to post-colonial design histories, diaspora and design and cultural and historical geographies of design; Dr John Cross' research in to furniture design histories and the timber trade; Mathew Hobson's research in image/text/sound history and theory in graphic design.

Dramaturgy, Spectatorship and Context: Dr Javier Garavaglia's research and practice in live electronics and music dramaturgy; Lewis Jones' research in to musical instrument technology, acoustics and hybrid performance practice; Dr Allan Seago's research in to music computing and psychoacoustics; Dr Elaine Thomazi Freitas' research and practice in interactive arts, video, real time video, music composition and collaborative practice; Dr John Keefe's research focusing on spectatorial dramaturgy.

Design for Wellbeing: Linden Reillys' research in taste, cognition, memory and imagination; Mah Rana's research in design and well being for acquired brain injuries; Head of School of Design, Charlotte Gorse's research in gender identity, fashion and body technologies.

Social engagement, participation and collaboration: Associate Professor Patrick Brill's research in

**Environment template (REF5)**

Art and Politics, Art and text, social engagement and participation; Associate Professor Tamiko O'Brien's research in collaborative art practice, participatory practice, sculpture and artists' residencies.

Critical Curation: Nicolas de Oliveira's research in curatorial practices, artists' writing and installation art.

With new members of the Faculty and established researchers joining the register of supervisors following training during 13/14 the areas of curation and collaboration have been further strengthened to include:

Mel Brimfield's research in histories of performance art, performance art, participation and dramaturgy, irony and re-enactment; Ben Cain's research in Material and Immaterial Labour, Installation, participation, writing and materiality; Dr Pil Kollektiv and Dr Galia Kollektiv's collaborative research in art and politics, performance art, dramaturgy, Immaterial Labour, Curation and art writing.

The University-wide induction program and Researcher Development Program also provides training and development opportunities for postgraduate research students. Courses, are available for all levels of experience and designed to develop a full range of transferable professional, personal, research, and career skills and knowledge. The Program offers courses in four domains:

1. Knowledge and Intellectual Abilities: the knowledge, intellectual abilities and techniques needed to carry out research; 2. Personal Effectiveness: the personal qualities, and career and management skills needed to take ownership of and engage in professional development; 3. Research Governance and Organisation: the knowledge of the standards, requirements and professional conduct needed for the effective management of research; 4. Engagement, Influence and Impact: the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to engage with, influence and impact on the academic, social, cultural, economic and broader context.

The Program is based on the Researcher Development Framework and Statement (a progression of the Joint Skills Statement) and supports the implementation of: the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers; the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Programs; and the Roberts' recommendations for researchers.

Research Degree Students may also attend any lectures or other aspects of modules that are relevant to their research (without incurring extra fees) and are invited to attend the regular public talks and events hosted by the Faculty. Alongside this Research Student Symposia and networking events are organised to support exchange, discourse and peer engagement.

**Information on progress monitoring**

Research student progression is monitored by the Faculty's Research Student Progress Group (RSPG), which reports to the University Research Degrees Subcommittee. The RSPG meets twice a year and considers the students' individual progression. There are two comprehensive forms called RD2 (Post-Registration Progress Review) and RD2T (Application for Upgrade/Transfer from MPhil to PhD). These forms, completed by the student, supervisors and reviewed by a nominated reader, provide detailed information regarding students' research progression to date. At the RSPG, the comments of the supervisors and the readers are read, discussed and decisions are made regarding the progression of individual students. The RSPG has the mandate to approve the progression or the transfer from MPhil to PhD or give the student some time to improve on the research or withdraw the student from the research programme.

**d. Income, infrastructure and facilities**

At the University level, support for research activities comes in a range of forms. First, the Researcher Development Programme (RDP) as described above. Second, the Funding Support Office helps researchers identify funding opportunities and offers practical advice and guidance for funding applications, costing and pricing and funder's terms and conditions. The Faculty Research and Enterprise Committee also provides support through research funding with organizational

support and advice also available through CASS Projects.

### Income

Research income comes from a number of sources, both institutional and external. From charities, from UK, EU and overseas governments and from industry in revenue generated from live projects and consultancy. For more details of HESA recorded income refer to REF 4B.

Non-HESA recorded research funding during the REF period totals in excess of £ 201,280 and includes funding from the Arts Council; Arts Fund; Daiwa Anglo Japanese Foundation; Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation; National Museums of Liverpool; Geffrye Museum; Tate and ICA among others.

### Facilities

As part of the Cass merger, studios, teaching rooms and offices of the new Faculty are located in the newly refurbished Central House building in Aldgate along with the Commercial Rd building. The location gives easy access to the creative and cultural hub that surrounds the Aldgate Campus and the specialist facilities include: wood and metal workshops; laboratories; TV and recording studios; editing suites; darkrooms and Cassworks, a digital manufacturing centre. The Faculty's own Architecture Research Unit (ARU) led the architectural design team for the extensive remodelling works to Central House. The ground floor (formerly the Habib Bank) has been converted into The Cass Gallery directly opposite the Whitechapel Art Gallery, providing a location and venue for exhibitions, public lectures, symposia and other research related events.

The new lecture hall and seminar/teaching spaces located across the 1st floor provide a sequence of large open spaces between these rooms like 'courtyards' that have the external quality of small public spaces or squares. This approach to the physical environment provides a fluid and dynamic transition between formal and informal teaching and research spaces, supporting researchers, students and academic staff teams to engage with the whole building as an opportunity for creative and critical discourse and making.

Cassworks offers specialist workshops, equipment and facilities including Metropolitan Works, a digital manufacturing centre. It provides a range of new technology for prototyping, manufacture, research and experimentation. This includes rapid prototyping machines, 3D scanning, laser and water-jet cutting and CNC routing. As well as the 84 Apple and Microsoft terminals available in open access computer rooms in Central House, Metropolitan Works offers CAD desks and a wide range of commercially licensed software (including major CAD programmes used in industry, Adobe Creative Suite 6 and ArcMap GIS). Cassworks is a leading Creative Industries Centre helping researchers develop ideas through access to digital manufacturing, workshops, knowledge transfer, advice, courses and exhibitions. The facilities at Commercial Rd are shortly to be moved to another building with investment and upgrades, meanwhile Commercial Rd offers a very wide range of specialist resources and a research student base room for those specialising in Musical Instruments.

The Cass has highly skilled specialist technical staff to assist with research projects in areas such as: textiles, ceramics, printmaking, woodworking, metalworking and rapid prototyping. The core philosophy is to realise the potential of the workshops and technical facilities as critically creative places for research through designing and making.

### e. Collaboration or contribution to the discipline or research base

The Cass contributes to and collaborates with a broad range of institutions and organisations including the Design History Society; the Frederick Parker Archive; The Victoria and Albert Museum; The Whitechapel Gallery and the Crafts Study Centre. The former Faculty of Art, Media and Design and the new Cass have been active in research dissemination, discourse and debate in the form of exhibitions, publications and by hosting conferences and symposia including:

A series of symposia in collaboration with Photomonth Festival of Photography: 2009: Exhibition and symposium: *Between the lines*; 2010: Symposium: *The Loving Gaze*; 2011: Symposium and Exhibition: *Shadows of Doubt* investigating the relationship between Alfred Hitchcock's childhood in the East End of London and his work bringing together experts from the worlds of film, photography, theatre, architecture and psychoanalysis.

Symposia hosted by the Faculty also related to the East End Archive research project include: 2009 Symposium: *Communities and Archives* and 2010 *Negotiating the Archive*, both brought together nationally and internationally significant speakers to discuss constructing archives and using archive material from the perspective of the artist, archivist, researcher, curator and wider public.

Nicolas de Oliveira and Susan Andrews instigated and hosted: *Fathom*, 2012 in collaboration with Four Corners Film, that explored production-led residencies and curatorial approaches. Bringing together writers, curators, artists and broadcasters, speakers including: de Oliveira; Gil Leung (writer and curator, distribution manager LUX); Stephen Gill; Gill Henderson; Gayle Chon Kwan (selectors/artists). During the REF period de Oliveira has been invited to give papers at 9 conferences and events including the Hayward Gallery; Museum of Modern Art Oxford; University of Gent with the Dutch Aesthetics Society; Zentrum fuer Literatur und Kunstwissenschaft Berlin (ZFL) in partnership with the Berlin School of Mind and Brain.

The EKSIG Conference 2009 hosted by the Faculty was convened by the DRS Special Interest Group on Experiential Knowledge: *Experiential Knowledge, Method and Methodology*

*The Animal Gaze* project curated by Rosemarie McGoldrick has involved two symposia hosted by the Faculty and touring exhibitions involving academics and artists from institutions across the UK and further afield. *The Animal Gaze*, 2008 was followed by *The Animal Gaze Returned*, 2011 a second symposium on contemporary art and animal-human studies with speakers Professor Steve Baker (UCLAN), Rikke Hansen (Art Monthly), Lucy Kimbell (Oxford), Suky Best (RCA), Professor David Wood (Vanderbilt), Kira O'Reilly, Dr Johanna Hallsten (Loughborough), Professor Mysoon Riszak (Toledo) and Professor Bryndis Snaebjornsdottir (Valand)

Cass research has also contributed significantly to the research base through our contribution to publications, conferences, symposia and collaborative research.

Dipti Bhagat's role as chair of the Design History Society and research in to postcolonial approaches to design history has led to 18 papers and keynotes delivered at National and International conferences during the REF period and included Chairing *Towards Global Histories of Design: Postcolonial Perspectives* (2013) conference at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, India and *Design and Social Activism*. (2011) Annual Design History Society Conference, Barcelona: Fundacio Historia del Disseny; and co-chairing *Design and Craft: a History of Convergences and Divergences*. (2010) Conference of the International Committee for Design History and Design Studies (ICDHS). Brussels: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven / Research Foundation-Flanders (FWO) / VU University Amsterdam / Ghent University. Bhagat has also been active on peer review panels and editorial boards.

Javier Garavaglia has contributed with papers and performances at over 20 International electro acoustic conferences and music festivals during the REF period and was Associate Director for the 17th annual Florida Electroacoustic Music Festival hosted by the University of Florida, Gainesville, USA.

Alongside his influential art practice Patrick Brill (aka Bob and Roberta Smith) is frequently invited to speak at conferences to discuss his research related to art practice and advocacy for art and design education, a recent example is his keynote at the National Association of Art Teachers Conference 2013. Brill is on the Tate Modern Council, the Tate Board and the Tate Acquisition Committee he contributes regularly to the Guardian on matters related to art and art and design education, his "Art Party Conference" includes contributions from key practitioners such as Jeremy Deller, Mark Wallinger, Richard Wentworth and Cornelia Parker alongside organisations as contributors and collaborators including: the National Society for Education in Art and Design; Arts Council; Art Fund; Design and Artists Copyright Society; Yorkshire Sculpture Park; Contemporary Art Society and the Cultural Learning Alliance.

These examples clearly illustrate the ways that the Faculty's research plays a significant role in contributing to the disciplines of Art and Design and their research base both through participation in International and National discourse and through instigating and initiating important discussion and debate about the future of the disciplines.