

**ACADEMIC POLICY & QUALITY OFFICE**

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

for the award of

**Foundation Degree (Arts) Furniture: Design and Make**

**Managed by the Faculty of Technology, Design and Environment**

**delivered by City of Oxford College part of Activate Learning**

<b>Date approved:</b>	October 2015
<b>Applies to students commencing study in:</b>	09/2021

**RECORD OF UPDATES**

<b>Date amended*</b>	<b>Nature of amendment**</b>	<b>Reason for amendment**</b>

## SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

<b>Awarding body:</b>	Oxford Brookes University
<b>Teaching institution and location:</b>	Activate Learning - City of Oxford College, Oxpens Road, Oxford OX1 1SA
<b>Language of study:</b>	English
<b>Final award/s:</b>	Foundation Degree (Arts)
<b>Programme title:</b>	Furniture Design and Make
<b>Interim exit awards and award titles available:</b>	Certificate of Higher Education in Furniture Design and Make
<b>Brookes course code:</b>	FDA-FDM
<b>UCAS code:</b>	W261
<b>JACS code:</b>	
<b>HECoS code:</b>	
<b>Mode of delivery:</b> (Mode of study is given in brackets)	**Face to face/on-campus (full-time) **Face to face/on-campus (part-time)
<b>Duration of study:</b>	Typically Full-time 2 years and Part-time 3 years
<b>Subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:</b>	Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (February 2020)
<b>Professional accreditation attached to the programme:</b>	N/A
<b>Apprenticeship Standard:</b>	N/A
<b>University Regulations:</b>	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: <a href="http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/">http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/</a>

## SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

The Rycotewood Furniture Centre has been actively engaged in the training and education of students entering the Furniture Industry for more than 75 years. In this time it has actively engaged with employers with respect to the needs of the industry, bespoke training and in seeking external advice in the design of its programmes. It has thus established a reputation beyond its local roots and enjoys a position of national pre-eminence in the field, uniquely located in Oxford close to the UK's traditional furniture making industry of High Wycombe. The programme is one of very few available that is furniture specific and as such has several distinctive features.

### Distinctive features of the programme

The programme

- has significant links to the furniture industry. Live projects, competitions both internal and external, guest speakers, visits/study tours and furniture designer-maker's engagement with design projects all contribute to provide work related experiences and opportunities.
- provides a unique opportunity to study furniture design and make. Rycotewood are uniquely able to provide the resources, expertise and training required to prepare graduates with excellent craft skills that can gain successful employment in the bespoke craft sector of the industry.
- provides each student with their own personal workbench and space in the furniture workshops which they can use to continually practice craft skills.

- is located in central Oxford providing significant educational benefits. Partnerships have been developed with the Pitt Rivers museum (annual project and exhibition), Oxford old fire station gallery and shop (retail opportunities and exhibition) and links to Oxford colleges such as St Catherine's (annual study tour) and Queen's (live design project).

Students will also develop critical thinking and analytical skills, as well as professional and research skills. Alongside the academic study in the programme students will develop and practice communication skills that will equip them to respond to changing conditions, to develop essential skills to facilitate work in different environments and to seek out diverse opportunities within the furniture industries

Having successfully completed the FdA Furniture Design and Make students will be eligible to apply for the Top up year and achieve a BA (Hons) Furniture Design and Make.

## **SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The overall aim of the programme is to provide graduates with a unique combination of design creativity balanced with excellence in craftsmanship. We aim to instill the ability to conceive, technically develop and craft furniture using both traditional and contemporary processes. It specifically aims to:

- Provide a comprehensive introduction to the designing and making of furniture and the opportunity to develop proficient knowledge in the discipline and professional skills for a career as furniture designers and makers.
- Encourage self-motivation, individual fulfilment, inspire self-confidence and develop a student's intellect through problem solving.
- Enable students to develop, consolidate and apply; specialist knowledge, research methodologies and the use of appropriate technology in the design and craft of furniture.
- Develop students' aptitude for rational argument, debate and presentation, and gain an understanding of the historical, cultural and social context of furniture making.

It is expected that students will have the skills and knowledge to pursue one or more of the following options:

- Progress onto the BA (Hons) Furniture Design and Make
- Gain employment in the furniture industry as: designers, cabinet/furniture makers, wood machinists, retail assistants, CAD technicians

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes:

### **3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY**

- Demonstrate a sound understanding of the skills and professional knowledge required to underpin Furniture Design and Make activities.
- Demonstrate and analyse appropriate professional practice, work related skills and processes within Furniture Design and Make activities.
- Apply knowledge and professional practice of furniture design and making in response to internally and externally established work related project briefs.

### **3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY**

- Plan and undertake small scale research projects that review, synthesise, summarise and analyse subject-specific information to inform furniture design and make projects.
- Use a variety of established research methodologies to collect and evaluate information that informs problem solving and creativity in Furniture Design and make activities.

### 3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

- Demonstrate effective time management and organisation skills to meet deadlines and develop as an autonomous and independent learner.
- Evaluate personal performance to identify personal strengths and areas for improvement in work related situations
- Use reflective learning to inform, develop and apply a personal knowledge of professional practice, design process and quality of craftsmanship expected within the field of Furniture Design and Make.

### 3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

- Access, critically analyse and evaluate information from a wide range of appropriate source materials through relevant scholarly and professional databases, libraries, and other resources to inform furniture design and make activities.
- Use a range of technologies, including digital design tools, to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences.

### 3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of Furniture Design and Making in a cultural context and the importance of working with and for the local community, society and globally to engage with issues of sustainability.

## SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

### 4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
ARTD401 9	Technical & Visual Communication	30	4	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD401 7	Furniture Craft	30	4	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD401 6	Design and Make	30	4	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD401 8	Manufacturing & Material Culture	30	4	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD501 9	Advanced Technical & Visual Communication	30	5	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD501 6	Furniture Production	30	5	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD501 7	Advanced Design and Make	30	5	Compulsory	100% CW
ARTD501 8	Advanced Manufacturing & Material Culture	30	5	Compulsory	100% CW

### 4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

In order to complete satisfactorily a year of full-time study, a student must pass at least 90 credits during the year.

In order to complete satisfactorily a year of part-time study, a student must pass at least 45 credits during the year.

#### Award

The Foundation Degree in Furniture: Design and Make is awarded to a student who successfully completes the modules shown in the programme structure and earns 240 CAT credits. A Certificate of

Higher Education may be awarded, as an exit award only, to a student who passes 120 credits of level 4 modules within 3 years of entry to the programme.

There is the opportunity for students to progress on to a further year of study (full-time) or two years (part-time) in order to complete a full Honours Degree. The minimum entry requirement for progression to the BA (Hons) in Furniture: Design and Make is a Pass in this Foundation Degree programme. However, a typical offer will be conditional upon an average of at least 55% over the level 5 modules of the programme. A new application via UCAS will be necessary to progress onto the BA Top Up.

### **4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

There are no specific areas of the programme that are necessary for professional accreditation

## **SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT**

The FdA in Furniture Design and Make programme provides opportunities for students to achieve the learning outcomes using a range of different learning experiences. Students will be able to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence in their capabilities throughout the two years. Approximately 50% of all learning at level 5 will be work related and this includes live projects and competitions set by external organisations. Where and whenever possible all learning will be based on practical scenarios and real life situations

Students will be able to enjoy the advantages of working and learning in a creative Design Studio environment together with their peers. This provides the opportunity to pool experiences, research and ideas; to brainstorm on projects together; give and receive encouragement and advice; develop a group ethos and esprit-de-corps and generally enjoy the companionship of working alongside each other on common goals. The Design studio provides an opportunity for students to explore and develop their ability to use computers as an appropriate tool within the context of the design process and as a means of establishing effective communications with a diverse range of professionals.

Students will have the opportunity to use their own dedicated workbench and access to the Wood machine and veneering workshops to develop their learning through three dimensional exploration, testing, evaluation of their design proposals and subsequently making high quality practical outcomes. Students will be supported during the making stage of the projects through practical guidance by teachers and supervision in the workshops by dedicated workshop supervisors. Students of the FdA share the same workshops with final year BA students allowing opportunities for shared peer learning and collaboration.

Introductory lectures will typically introduce projects concentrating on learning outcomes and assessment requirements. Issues relating to Workload and Attendance will be explained and related to staff expectations and student aspirations.

Individual and group tutorials monitor the progress of student's project work and consider the direction of further work. Tutorials will ensure that work progresses evenly, that the quality and quantity of work is appropriate and that the key learning objectives of the module are met. Students will develop their learning, analytical skills and creative abilities by contributing to the discussion of their peers project work. Students will be constantly encouraged to explore their creative potential and natural curiosity as key methods of developing their learning. Students will be helped and encouraged to maximise their learning during their self-directed study time.

From the very outset of the course students will be given access to the two virtual learning environments at both City of Oxford College and Oxford Brookes. The Induction period and information provided to students will give a clear outline about the IT facilities, how to access them, and using them to their full potential.

The module assessments have been designed to assist in the building of skills offering formative before summative assignments. There will be a schedule for each student that provides the opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The module assignments prior to practice will require students to demonstrate a thorough grasp of the knowledge which is essential to practice safely and develop

competence. The assessments are designed to demonstrate attainment of the learning outcomes to level 5 of the FHEQ in line with the Foundation Degree Characteristics Statement (February 2020).

Formative assessments and feedback will take place on a number of occasions throughout a modules duration. This can take place formally as written feed-forward (guidance as to how they would be able to improve their work on subsequent sections of the project or module) as well as orally in tutorials.

Summative assessments will take place at the end of each project within a module. Written feedback on this project will be given in relation to the student's performance in overall terms and within the context of each assessment category. The context of the student's performance across all module components in relation to the learning outcomes will also be summarised.

The Assessment Weighting for each project will be communicated to students in the course handbook. The project briefs will include copies of the actual assessment sheets which detail the range of assessment criteria and the comparative weighting of each assessment category.

Module Feedback Sessions for both Formative and Summative Assessments will take place within three weeks of an assessment taking place. Students will be given general oral feedback in relation to the overall performance of the group and specific written feedback relating to their individual performance.

The table below gives an indication of how the teaching and learning experiences enable the students to meet the programme learning outcomes and develop the graduate attributes:

<b>Graduate Attribute</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning methods</b>
<b>Academic literacy</b>	<p>Academic literacy is developed throughout the programme in all modules. Professional knowledge and skills specific to furniture designing and making are introduced in year one through project work and technical exercises providing a sound academic base to develop. This is enhanced in year two though increasingly independent and/or work related briefs.</p> <p>Technical skills are developed through demonstrations and practical classes in the design studio and workshops. Workshop supervisors provide technical support and supervision. Lectures delivered by guest speakers and industry visits support the development of academic literacy in the workplace.</p>
<b>Research literacy</b>	<p>Research literacy underpins design and make project work where analysis of a range of research materials informs problem solving and creativity. Study skills for written projects are introduced in year one and in year two students progressively undertake more personal research. Students are guided in devising and undertaking a small scale research project using a wide range of appropriate sources.</p> <p>Design and make projects are guided and supported by ongoing individual and small group tutorials. This provides a supportive environment where research can be evaluated. Lectures complimented by individual and small group tutorials provide guidance on research for written projects.</p>
<b>Critical Self-awareness and Personal Literacy</b>	<p>Critical self-awareness and personal literacy is developed in year one through reflective evaluation of both design and practical work in technical notebooks and sketchbooks. Students are encouraged to contribute to small group tutorial activities discussing and developing an understanding of their individual strengths and weaknesses whilst learning from each other.</p> <p>Students take increasing responsibility for more independent work during year two. This is through the use of design and make project work where all aspects of the programme are brought together.</p>

<b>Digital and Information Literacy</b>	<p>Furniture focused digital literacy is specifically addressed through access and skills development in CAD. Whilst this is introduced in year one and developed into 3D in year two projects are designed to integrate digital design skills into design and make projects. Students are also introduced to digital image manipulation and presentation skills.</p> <p>The use of appropriate technology to research and inform project work is developed during both years of the programme through the critical evaluation of research in project work. Information literacy through access to online resources is supported through the VLE and learning resource centre.</p>
<b>Active Citizenship</b>	<p>Material culture studies in both years develops students understanding of the world they and their work will inhabit. Lectures engage them in local and global aspects of the furniture industry often considering key subjects of sustainability and the role of design. Guest lectures, visits and live projects promote an awareness of diverse perspectives, cultures and values.</p>

## SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

### 6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Each application will be considered on an individual basis following the University principle of widening access to those who might not have the traditional academic entry criteria to degree level awards.

It is anticipated that applicants will be drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Some practical experience of cabinet making is preferred. We also welcome applications from mature students with design or woodworking experience who may not have formal qualifications.

Normally the requirement would be:

Either:

- a minimum of the equivalent of two years' full-time relevant work experience and a current role in an appropriate workplace setting
- evidence of ability to study at academic level 4
- evidence of support from their employer and recommendation;

Or:

- a minimum of one A-level at grade C plus the equivalent of 5 GCSE passes at C grade or above normally including Mathematics and English Language - or a recognised equivalent vocationally related qualification, or;
- A National Diploma in General Art and Design or;
- An Art Foundation course, or;
- Level 3 City and Guilds Diploma in Furniture, or;
- Access to Art and Design,

In addition

- Where applicable; IELTS normally minimum level 6.0 overall with a minimum of 6.0 in the reading and writing components and a minimum of 5.5 in the speaking and listening components.

All applicants to the course will be interviewed and their portfolios reviewed. This will enable the course team to assess the candidate's suitability and compatibility to the course in a comprehensive way. It also allows flexibility in pre-requisite qualification requirements given the variety of entry points to the course. As a minimum, the portfolio interview should be able to demonstrate that the applicant can do the following:

- Show that they have an understanding of the course
- Demonstrate that they have the necessary (or required) academic, artistic and practical skills, as appropriate, to enable them to embark upon their chosen course of study

- Show that they are motivated to undertake the chosen course of study
- Show an awareness of, and interest in, creative ideas

Activate Learning welcome applications from mature students without formal qualifications, who now want to take the opportunity for some practical skills development. It also welcomes those who wish to place their experience and knowledge within a formal educational framework. We are happy to support them through the application process. We see our interview process as an opportunity to get to know students and we will give an applicant a course presentation, tour of facilities and an opportunity to meet staff and students as part of this process.

Students are normally expected to start at Level 4, but can be admitted to any level of the course which is considered suitable, after portfolio review and interview using the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS). Under this arrangement, a student may apply to have previous academic credits or other learning (APL) or experience (APEL) taken into consideration. Such applications are considered by the Faculty CATS committee and must be supported by the Programme Coordinator.

## 6.2 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

Activate Learning will confirm that DBS checks have been carried out where students are working with young people and/or vulnerable adults. It will be the responsibility of the student to arrange DBS checks.

## 6.3 ADDITIONAL COSTS

There are a number of additional costs which students need to be aware of in preparing for and studying on, the foundation degree

Prior to starting the programme	Cost
Tools	£250-£500
Drawing Equipment	£40
Stationery/sketchbooks	£50
PPE	£250-£500

FdA Year one	Cost
Materials fee: Consumables, toolbox, small table, jewellery box, small practical exercises, scale model	£120
Small table	£50-£200

FdA Year two	Cost
Materials fee Consumables, mirror, small box, bedside cabinet	£100
Chair	£100-£200
Cabinet	£200-£500

## SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

The Foundation Degree in Furniture Design and Make will equip students with the theoretical understanding and the practical expertise needed to undertake work in a variety of roles within the field of furniture design and make. The course aims to give students a well rounded set of skills that provides them with the opportunity to develop their individual strengths, while ensuring that students are aware of employment opportunities for furniture design and makers.

The course will emphasise the importance of understanding issues relating to furniture design and make and promote critical analysis while at the same time maximising employability opportunities. The



aim is to widen the students experience and give an insight into organisations that provide employment opportunities.

On successful completion of the foundation degree graduates have gained employment as furniture makers, furniture designers and furniture CAD technicians with local and national companies.

After the two year course, successful students may apply to continue for an additional year (full-time) or two years (part-time) to complete an honours degree.

The Rycotewood furniture centre has developed an extensive range of contacts within the furniture industry in order to maximise work related opportunities this will also provide a pool of specialist guest lecturers and ensure that the programme remains current.

Students studying on the FdA Furniture Design and Make programme will have a number of opportunities to link with employers, examples include:

### **Guest speakers**

A programme of 3-4 speakers is established each academic year, examples of speakers who have previously contributed includes:

Matthew Burt Furniture designer-maker  
Sebastian Cox Furniture designer-maker  
Jane Cleal Furniture designer-maker  
William Garvey (Robin Dietch) Commercial workshop  
Barry Jenkins Furniture designer  
Philip Koomen Furniture designer-maker  
Opus Magnum (Matthew Kelley) Commercial workshop  
Simon Pengelly Furniture designer  
Gareth Neal Furniture designer-maker  
Andrea Stemmer Furniture designer

### **Visits**

A range of regular integrated visits to employers include;  
Doig Design, Commercial workshop  
Ercol, Furniture manufacturer  
Sylva Workshops, Various designer craftsmen in wood.

### **Industry linked projects**

Ercol re-design live project ARTD5019  
Batch production for Oxford old fire station ARTD5016  
Guest lecturer guided storage design project ARTD5017  
Pitt Rivers Museum live project brief and exhibition ARTD5018

### **Offers of work experience/internship (between year one and two)**

Employers that regularly offer work experience include;  
Philip Koomen, Oxon  
Opus Magnum, London  
Halstock Cabinet Makers, Dorset  
Doig Design, Oxon  
Silver Lining, Cheshire

A Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers industrial study tour provides an annual opportunity with no additional costs for 2-4 students to visit furniture manufacturers/retailers in the North West of England, including Burgess beds, Nathan, Furniture village and Knightsbridge.