

Programme Specification

Programme Title and Name of Award	BA (Hons) Commercial Photography		
Academic Level	6	Total Credits	360
Professional Body Accreditation / Qualification	Not Applicable		
Date of Professional Body Accreditation	Not Applicable	Accreditation Period	Not Applicable
UCAS Code	W287		
HECoS Code	100063		
Criteria for Admission to the Programme	The University's standard criteria for admissions apply. Please refer to the Applicant Information pages of the University website for more information. For APL , please refer to the University website: https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate/commercial-photography/		
Teaching Institution	University of Cumbria		
Owning Institute	Institute of Arts		
Programme delivered in conjunction with	Not Applicable		
Principal Mode of Delivery	Face to Face		
Pattern of Delivery	Full-time		
	Total weeks of study:	24 Weeks	
	Delivery pattern:	2x 12-week semesters	
	Standard semester dates:	Yes	

Delivery Site(s)	Brampton Road Campus
Programme Length	Standard full time registration period is 3 years with a maximum registration period of 6 years
Exit Awards	<p>You may be awarded one of the following Exit Awards if you fail to achieve the requirements of the full programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of Higher Education Commercial Photography (120 credits) • Diploma Higher Education Commercial Photography (240 credits) • Ordinary Degree Commercial Photography (300 credits)
Period of Approval	From August 2023 for continuous approval, subject to Periodic Review which takes place every six years.

This programme has been approved (validated) by the University of Cumbria as suitable for a range of delivery modes, delivery patterns, and delivery sites. This level of potential flexibility does not reflect a commitment on behalf of the University to offer the programme by all modes/patterns and at all locations in every academic cycle. The details of the programme offered for a particular intake year will be as detailed on the programme webpage:
<https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/study/courses/undergraduate/commercial-photography/>

Cumbria Graduate Attributes

Throughout your studies, you will be provided with the skills and knowledge relevant to the global workplace. All successful graduates of the University of Cumbria will be:

- Enquiring and open to change
- Self-reliant, adaptable and flexible
- Confident in your discipline as it develops and changes over time
- Capable of working across disciplines and working well with others
- Confident in your digital capabilities
- Able to manage your own professional and personal development
- A global citizen, socially responsible and aware of the potential contribution of your work to the cultural and economic wellbeing of the community and its impact on the environment
- A leader of people and of places
- Ambitious and proud

Programme Features

Commercial Photography is a fantastically versatile area of photography focused on delivering high quality photographic services to commissioning clients. The Commercial Photography degree offers

pathways into employment within the commercial photography, the creative industries and beyond. At the University of Cumbria, we have designed a Commercial Photography programme that will give you the essential techniques and practical skills, the power of critical thinking and enquiry, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills and a high level of professional conduct and industry insight, tailored to take you forward into the commercial career of your choice.

The Commercial Photography programme has been developed in response to the industry need for more dedicated routes and preparation for employment following graduation. The commercial degree puts emphasis on photographic and editing skills, the knowledge needed to work commercially, working to client briefs and commissions, concept development, acquiring and applying business skills. All targeted towards preparing a career path via a recognised industry route or a more entrepreneurial approach of a self-employed photographer. By studying on this programme, you will become equipped to design and manage a successful career in the commercial photography industry.

Being technically skilled with dynamic determination can open a multitude of commercial pathways for you. Examples include the expanding role of content creators working with e-commerce and online sales, Ad marketing and PR agencies, and can provide excellent areas of entry into a wide range of sectors. You will develop an understanding of how photographers calculate licensing fees and day rates, develop marketing strategies and be able to deliver quotes and breakdown costs to manage client expectations. You will become versed in the need for risk management in the studio and on location, the use of model and property releases, and most importantly your legal rights as a photographer and models for licensing your intellectual property. All essential building blocks for you to be an effective and informed commercial photographer.

We have developed this programme in response to the changing demands of both the photography industry and the wider advertising and marketing industry. This includes the rapidly shifting grounds of image-capture technology, moving image and VR content creation and delivery. From a starting point of gaining foundational skills and moving towards specialist photographic content supported by critical and contextual studies and academic skills development, you will be fully supported in your transition into study at this level. The following areas give you a taste of what we offer on our programme:

Who We Are:

The Commercial Photography degree offers a distinctive employability and industry led, student-centred approach to the study of photography. There is an emphasis on gaining industry skills, technique, and experience. The programme prepares you for a professional and entrepreneurial career in the commercial photography industry.

The degree is taught by a staff team who are nationally and internationally known professional photographers and scholars. We are members of various associations such as the Association of Photography in Higher Education and affiliated to the AOP (Association of Photographers). Our ambition is to provide you with the best photographic education. The degree builds in the fundamental principles of commercial photography, the business skills and experience needed to develop your own commercial practice.

Our photography studios, darkroom and post-production suites are industry standard enabling you to be ambitious and innovative in your practice. We are committed to offering one-to-one tutorial support, working with you to design your personal route to success.

Our curriculum is constantly updated and revised according to current industry trends and expectations. The dynamic and developmental nature of this course with our emphasis on guided independent learning, supports you as you build confidence, critical acuity and the entrepreneurial

skills, essential for industry success as a self-assured, competent and innovative Commercial practitioner.

Specialist Resources - the Commercial Photography programme is facilitated by our excellent technical resources and teaching spaces:

- Three photographic studios (including product and daylight)– you will be supported by our expert and dedicated technician
- State of the art darkroom - you will be supported by our expert and dedicated technician in all things analogue.
- Post-production Mac suites – equipped with industry standard software, printers and scanners with attendant technical support.
- Equipment Store – you can borrow any photography and lighting kit that you need, enabling you to experiment with different formats of digital, analogue and lighting set-ups, both in the studio and on location.
- Media studios including edit suites and video equipment and 3D workshops (including metal, wood, ceramic, textile and print workshops), are accessible to all students. Here you can broaden your experience and realise the full potential of your photographic practice.

There will be additional costs on this programme for printing, purchasing of film and any other consumable materials used in the resource areas. We endeavour to keep these costs at a minimum. Specific module production costs are outlined in advance of the commencement of each year and module, allowing students to plan and budget on the programme.

Community of Practice is vitally important to the developing commercial photographer. On this programme you will mix with peers across the two photography programmes as well as more widely with peers studying across the Institute of Arts. Through this community you will encounter different ideas and approaches, that are informed by different creative disciplines, all of which will feed into your work and enrich your own personal photographic practice. Your learning will take place in formal classes and resources areas, as well as through informal exchanges and collaboration where you can test out ideas, receive feedback on your work and prepare to present yourself and your portfolio in the commercial marketplace.

Employability and Entrepreneurship is central to the design of this degree. You will practice professional skills at every level, for example: from developing problem-solving skills through interdisciplinary group working at level 4, acquiring and applying industry specific commercial photographic and professional skills at level 5, and in level 6, the synthesis of practice, critical thinking, concept and targeted industry portfolio development, career planning, application, and commercial/business skills ready for you to move into your specialist career.

Digital capabilities are explored and developed in all levels through your modules and briefs. You will learn digital and analogue processing and editing techniques, working with still and moving imagery, increasing your digital capabilities across Adobe and other industry standard software packages.

Interdisciplinary and Collaborative Working is an essential skill to develop, as you prepare to work in a professional fast-paced environment. That is why we give you the opportunity of working in groups within photography and across the Art and Design suite of programmes (photography, fine art, graphic design and illustration). We share critiques, guest speakers, visits, a research module and an academic staff team. Communication, planning, adaptability, resilience, flexibility, organisation, team working, and leadership development are all skills necessary for the success of collaboration and in any future career.

A distinct feature of studying at the University of Cumbria is that in level 4, you will study two modules with all level 4 students of the Institute of Arts. These modules are Cultural Contexts and Collaborative Practice. Cultural Contexts introduces you a range of approaches to reading a diverse range of visual creative arts, and Collaborative Practice is a module where you will work with other students and embark on a problem-solving project, practicing professional skills essential for thriving in the commercial world such as leadership, team-working and project management.

Links with the Creative Industries are crucial to kickstart your career. Level 5 is designed to be dedicated to and directly linked with industry partners to prepare you for the commercial application of your practice. You will have a module focused on the negotiation and completion of a live client brief. And another module dedicated to the development and application of your business skills. These modules ensure that the programme stays relevant to the demands of the photography industry.

We work closely with our careers team to ensure that you will be taught professional conduct, career building skills, developing a professional profile, entrepreneurial and marketing skills amongst others. Masterclasses from the AOP (Association of Photographers) ensure that you are up to date in photographic law and copyright procedures and have access to external industry specific support and advice.

Opportunities for Enrichment, Growth and Wellbeing:

- Industry respected guest speakers offer added value to your learning experience, and you can share your own work with the professionals through folio reviews and crits.
- National and international visits are an important element of your learning experience. Where possible we try to provide subsidised trips annually. Destinations range from Liverpool and Edinburgh to the Lake District and the Farne Islands. International trips are an additional cost but a brilliant experience and opportunity. Destinations range from Amsterdam and Berlin to New York.
- Live briefs and competitions allow you to experience the real-world demands of commercial photographic practice. Success in live briefs and competitions means that your work is immediately located in the real world. You are supported during the live briefs so that you can develop confidence and experience when working with a client or commissioning body.
- Graduate showcases are important for you to engage with as you prepare your work for the public domain, this might be through online platforms such as Source: Graduate Photography Review, or through graduate exhibitions such as Free Range at the Old Truman Brewery in London.

The Commercial Photography programme reflects the physical and mental health benefits of creative practice to the individual and the collective. It is widely acknowledged that the benefits of creative practice are many. In this programme you will be able to develop your skills in line with your own ambitions in a supportive environment. You will achieve a sense of purpose and growth and understand that the work you are doing on your degree will contribute to your physical, mental and economic wellbeing and resilience as you pursue your chosen career path.

Risk taking and failure are integral parts of commercial practice, and you will learn to do both safely and build back from your mistakes, to become more knowledgeable and resilient in future tasks. While developing your practice you will experiment and innovate, you will consider your practice in relation to sustainability and the responsibility you take in your work, for yourself, others and those that will experience your work.

Our Location, the North of England is rich with resources and inspiration. Here you can develop your commercial photography practice in awesome locales, whilst being connected to the rest of the world. The World Heritage Site the Lake District, Forestry Commission reserves, Pennines and

Scottish Borders are accessible to you, as is the West Coast of Cumbria, the nuclear coast and Hadrian's Wall country. Cumbria is a fantastic region for innovative art hubs, bespoke and independent businesses and has a thriving tourism, outdoor and extreme sports industry that requires the skills of professional dedicated commercial photographers. On top of that we are within commutable distance of two of the UK's main creative cities, Manchester, and Glasgow. This proximity of Manchester and Glasgow creates the opportunity to take advantage of the thriving creative industries in both cities. A successful commercial photographer has to get used to being on the road, travelling nationally and globally as part of their work.

Brampton Road Campus is a fantastic base for your study. The site has been dedicated to arts education for almost 200 years, and remains dedicated to providing a rich, stimulating and brilliant experience to all our students. We have:

- A specialist arts library that the academic team add to regularly making sure that the most current titles are available to you.
- An on-site dining area to ensure that while you feed your knowledge you can feed your body too.
- The Vallum Gallery has a varied programme of professional exhibitions with associated gallery talks.

Programme Design:

Level 4: *The Cornerstones of Practice* deals with the craft of photographic image capture, both analogue and digital. In level 4, first year, you will study alongside peers on the Photography degree in semester one before peeling off to dedicated commercial photography modules in semester two. Your research and contextual skills will be established at this level through the module Cultural Contexts and you will be encouraged to work on inter-disciplinary project-based problem-solving projects at this level to support you in gaining experience working with other disciplines, as you will need to in your future career.

Level 5: *Commercial Application* attends to developing your specialist skills as a commercial photographic practitioner. This will include business development skills, live briefs, developing your visual style and identifying your audience as well as acquiring wider skills of still and moving image creation and the application of your commercial practice. Level 5 modules are dedicated to your commercial skills acquisition and application; we support you in seeking opportunities to test them out in real-world settings.

Level 6: *Independent Showcase* here you take full charge of your own practice and bring it into the public domain. Research, practice and professional skills come together in the final year of study to refine and showcase your personal vision and expression of photographic practice. At this point you will be an independent, intelligent, and competent practitioner with a commercial portfolio representing the breadth of your skill and depth of your engagement.

Upon graduation, you will be ready to embark upon a career in the commercial photography as a commercial assistant, ready to set up your own commercial practice, or work in the wider creative, media and advertising industries. Some students take on further study to extend their knowledge base and push themselves to produce ever more advanced photographic work. You can make the most of postgraduate study at MA, MPhil and PhD levels in the creative arts at the University of Cumbria.

Programme Learning Outcomes

By the end of this Programme learners will be able:

1. To apply the technical and practical knowledge, skills and attributes required to successfully study, train and operate as an effective commercial photographer, working to the demands of industry.
2. To execute effective methods of expression and communication techniques in visual, verbal and written contexts to both professional markets and academic audiences.
3. To make appropriate use of developing photographic and image capture technologies and develop your digital capabilities to communicate effectively as a socially responsible content creator.
4. To operate as a creative individual with the capacity for independent judgement, initiative, innovation, flexibility, ambition and with a responsible awareness of the social, cultural and ethical contributions of your work in professional and commercial contexts.
5. To be confident, imaginative and creative approaches to problem solving through enquiry, research, understanding, and the use of critical judgement.
6. To work collaboratively across disciplines, be open to new ideas, responsive to change and evolve in relation to the developments in professional photographic practice.
7. To employ appropriate self-reflective approaches to research, analysis, photographic production and presentation.
8. To apply the skills, business knowledge and personal/professional confidence that will enable you to identify, generate and access opportunities in the creative industries.
9. To practice resilience and be aware of the competitive nature of commercial environments.
10. To enhance, through increased opportunities for student centred learning, qualities of personal initiative, self-motivation, management and self-discipline.

Level Descriptors

Level Descriptors describe in general terms the expected outcomes you will achieve at each level of study as you progress through your programmes. They describe the relative demand, complexity, depth of learning and learner autonomy associated with a particular level of learning and achievement. The University's Level Descriptors are aligned to the national [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications](#) (FHEQ) and are a key mechanism for ensuring the academic standards of the University's provision.

At Level 4: (Usually Year 1 undergraduate), you will be able to demonstrate that you have the ability:

- To apply a systematic approach to the acquisition of knowledge, underpinning concepts and principles and deploy a range of subject specific, cognitive and transferable skills.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving well defined problems and communicate outcomes in a structured and clear manner.
- Identify and discuss the relationship between personal and workplace experience and findings from books and journals and other data drawn from the field of study.

At Level 5: (Usually Year 2 undergraduate), you will be able to demonstrate that you have the ability:

- To apply and evaluate key concepts and theories within and outside the context in which they were first studied.
- Select appropriately from and deploy a range of subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills and problem-solving strategies to problems in the field of study and in the generation of ideas effectively communicate information and arguments in a variety of forms.
- Accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal outcomes.
- Reflect on personal and workplace experience in the light of recent scholarship and current statutory regulations.

At Level 6: (Usually Year 3 undergraduate), you will be able to demonstrate that you have the ability:

- To critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge.
- Critically evaluate concepts and evidence from a range of resources.
- Transfer and apply subject-specific, cognitive and transferable skills and problem-solving strategies to a range of situations and to solve complex problems.
- Communicate solutions, arguments and ideas clearly and in a variety of forms.
- Exercise considerable judgement in a range of situations.
- Accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and group outcomes.
- Reflect critically and analytically on personal and workplace experience in the light of recent scholarship and current statutory regulations.

Programme Outcomes – Knowledge and Understanding

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate the following:

After 120 credits of study (CertHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

K4. Knowledge of cultural context, visual communication and contextual analysis.

K5. Understanding of the principles of production in lens-based image capture and studio environments.

K6. Imagination in idea generation, problem solving and practical application of photographic principles.

After 240 credits of study (DipHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

K7. Knowledge and understanding of the range of voices and communication techniques required by the photographer in different commercial scenarios.

K8. Fluency in photographic practices and professional and business skills including an awareness of audience, client and context.

K9. Developing initiative as an innovative and creative practitioner in the execution and presentation of your work responding to a client brief or commission.

After 360 credits of study (BA Hons) you will be able to demonstrate:

K10. Confidence as an autonomous, creative and professional in your approach to the specialisation of your choice.

K11. Critical synthesis and application of theoretical and contextual knowledge.

K12. Knowledge of advanced principles of professional practice including self-promotion, employability skills, career projection and working with others.

Programme Outcomes – Skills and other Attributes (including Employability Skills)

The programme provides opportunities for you to develop and demonstrate the following:

After 120 credits of study (CertHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

S3. A practical application of equipment and software, project management and personal conduct skills.

S4. Effective research, evaluation and reflective skills in relation to your own work and within a wider context of assessment literacy.

S5. Competence in selecting and applying technical and digital editing processes and material choices against industry led outcomes.

After 240 credits of study (DipHE) you will be able to demonstrate:

S6. Practical understanding that enables you to devise relevant photographic projects, solve problems and execute your ideas using appropriate techniques and materials.

S7. Developing skills in personal promotion, business analysis, collaboration and client engagement.

S8. Increasing independence and innovation in creation of content for commercial application.

After 360 credits of study (BA Hons) you will be able to demonstrate:

S9. An ability to create a versatile, personalised and targeted professional profile.

S10. Confidence in evaluating and reflecting your own practice, exhibiting initiative and originality in production, research and communication.

S11. Advanced understanding of photographic production in relation to context, audience and industry.

External and Internal Reference Points

The following Subject Benchmark Statements and other external and internal reference points have been used to inform the Programme Outcomes:

QAA Subject Benchmark Statement: Art and Design (2019)

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-art-and-design-17.pdf?sfvrsn=71eef781_22

The Association of Photographers <https://www.the-aop.org/>

The Redeye Photography Network <https://www.redeye.org.uk/>

Signal Film and Media signalfilmandmedia.com

The British Journal of Photography <http://www.bjp-online.com/#>

Arts Council England <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/>

[Careers, jobs and skills training in film, TV, VFX, animation and games - ScreenSkills](#)

QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies
<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>

Internal Reference Points:

- [UoC Strategic Plan](#)
- [UoC Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy](#)
- IoA Business Plans
- [UoC Academic Regulations and Academic Procedures and Processes](#)
- Towards 2030

Graduate Prospects

As a successful graduate of the BA (Hons) Commercial Photography programme you will be able to access a variety of career options. You will be well equipped to conduct yourself as a commercial photographer, project manager, business professional with the skills and knowledge of how to work with a client or a commercial brief, or to work as part of a corporation. You will be able to respond creatively, effectively and efficiently to the demands of the role.

According to Prospects* (2021), 15 months following graduation, 72.7% of photography graduates are in employment, 23% of these "are working as photographers or audio-visual and broadcasting equipment operators," and 7.2% have embarked on further study. These statistics have confirmed to us that employability skills, preparation and exploration of routes into employment are central to the success of our graduates and so we have embedded the practice of professional skills, experience of working in interdisciplinary teams and working to professional briefs into the programme across all levels.

Transferrable Skills:

- Working independently/Working with others
- Communication
- Time management
- Project Management
- Presentation skills
- Editing and production skills
- Self-evaluation
- Risk taking and using failure effectively
- Technical, research, critical and analytical skills
- Problem solving

Progression Routes:

- Freelance photography

- Setting up your own business
- Assisting and getting experience on the job
- Postgraduate education: we offer postgraduate level study in creative disciplines

Examples of Commercial Photography Graduate Destinations:

- Editorial
- Sports photography
- Commercial and fashion photography
- Advertising
- Corporate
- Studio Portraiture
- Photo/image editing
- Picture researchers

The scope described by these destinations is testament to the flexibility of the programme that supports all the individual interests of our students. It also speaks to the potential that photography holds as a great career choice.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/photography>

https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/photographer*

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies employed to enable the Programme Outcomes to be Achieved and Demonstrated

As a student at the University of Cumbria, you are part of an inclusive learning community that recognises diversity. You will have opportunities to learn by interacting with others in a collegiate, facilitative and dynamic learning environment. Teaching, assessment and student support will allow equal and equitable opportunities for you to optimise your potential and develop autonomy.

We seek to create a stimulating and innovative community of learning, whether encountered on campus or at a distance, on placement or in the workplace. Facilitated by our expert practitioner staff, you will experience a learning environment that is well equipped, flexible, and stimulating.

The University of Cumbria’s Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy sets out clear aspirations and commitments for and to our students. The students that graduate from this institution are enquiring and self-reliant, confident and capable, professionally ready, responsible individuals that are ambitious and proud. These attributes are practiced on every year of study as we support you to become one of our graduates. You will find your place in learning environments that will both support and challenge you, explore ideas in and around your discipline, enabling you to grow and develop to become adaptable and reliable agents in the field of commercial photographic image making.

The Commercial Photography degree is designed with three themes of learning: commercial photographic practice, critical and contextual studies and professional development. All three themes interweave throughout your modules and synthesise completely in level 6 where you bring together your interests, skills and techniques to critically engage with your chosen subject and develop your public-facing profile in readiness for your commercial career. Through these themes you will be

introduced to ideas, concepts, photographic practice from around the world so that you are supported to become confident in the global arena.

Learning and Teaching:

We use a variety of approaches to learning and teaching to make sure you develop appropriate concepts, knowledge and skills and to develop work related skills. These include study skills, research methods, critical and analytical abilities, and your ability to manage your time and plan your work. Our learning and teaching methods allow you to develop both social and independent learning techniques.

The majority of your learning will take place in a face-to-face scenario that allows for a responsive, discursive and reflective process of learning. You will work with your tutors and peers and develop skills to communicate ideas about your own and other's work. There is opportunity to work collaboratively on projects and work in groups made up of students from different creative disciplines. This enables you to bring your best skills to the task, learn from others and work as part of a team to achieve a task, thus emulating the creative situations you will encounter in your future career.

There will also be the opportunity to learn in a blended scenario where some of your lectures are delivered online and you will learn with the whole of the first-year cohort. The benefits of this are that you will meet with a rich diversity of voices (both tutor and peer) and analyse ideas and pieces of work from across many different disciplines. Here you will learn how creativity is informed and your voice will be enriched through open critical discussion.

Below are some of the learning and teaching methods you will encounter on your degree:

- **Lectures** are used by both practice and theory tutors using a variety of media as support. You will be expected to take notes, ask questions and contribute to any group discussions that ensue.
- **Seminars** will explore issues in greater depth with both tutor and student-led formats. These will require you to engage in research and background reading and will consider the relation of theory to practice and help develop wide ranging transferable skills.
- **Tutorials** provide individually tailored feedback to you. They can range from one-to-one to small group situations. They will be scheduled into timetabled sessions and as the course progresses you will be encouraged to request tutorials with specialist tutors for more involved feedback reflecting the advanced level at which you are working.
- **Visiting Speakers/Lecturers** are integral to your learning and offer you the chance to widen your horizons, meet with established creatives, share and discuss your work and find out more about the subject and the career routes open to you. Making the most of our industry contacts the visiting speaker programme allows you to draw on industry-based knowledge and expertise.
- **Practical Workshop Sessions** will provide the opportunity for you to develop specialist technical skills and knowledge. They normally take the form of tutor-led studio demonstrations, designed to allow you to focus on, experiment with, develop and personalise specialised skills, media, techniques and concepts.
- **Problem based learning** is a key element of your learning as problem solving is an important skill for the commercial photographer. In photography, there will never be only one answer or visual response. The photographer needs to both negotiate the demands of the situation within the technologies available to them, but also needs to work out the most effective way to respond to a brief and communicate efficiently with an audience. Each brief that you will be given will demand an individual response from you. This will involve thorough research, synthesising the information you have discovered and developing and presenting an appropriate visual response. As you move through the programme, you will begin to devise

your own briefs and set your own subjects to research and present, making your own decisions as you progress.

- **Group work** is very important in photography, as, in all creative arts, input from different voices, the demands of different bodies and situations require that you develop skills in communication, leadership, trust, responsibility, flexibility and reliability. We write projects and tasks that allow you to experience, consider and develop your team-working skills.
- **Industry-informed/Client Briefs** are used in level 5 to accustom you to working in line with industry standards. Employability and entrepreneurial skills are practiced through these briefs and are the focus of modules such as the Negotiated Live Brief module in level 5. The group project work you practice in level 4 sets you up for the modules undertaken during Level 5 and 6 and will form the content of the professional portfolio of work you will take with you when pursuing employment at the end of the course.
- **Independent Learning** forms a natural and expected extension of the formal aspects of the course. Your ultimate success will be dependent on your willingness to develop, experiment with and extend the concepts and approaches introduced by project briefs. It is only with continued application that lasting and valuable progress can be made.
- **E-learning and Digital Skills** are integral elements of the programme. Blackboard is the portal to access online lectures, learning materials, project briefs, timetable, to submit module assessments and receive summative feedback. Learning packages which can be completed at your own pace are also a feature in some modules.

Summative and Formative Assessment

Assessment for learning is fully embedded in our learning, teaching and assessment strategy. The five main principles of this are questioning, feedback, recognition and understanding of success, peer and self-assessment and finally summative assessment. As such we have designed a programme where enquiry and curiosity are starting points for learning; this is led by your own interests.

You'll be continuously involved in the assessment of your own work and that of your peers; developing the critical, interpersonal and team-working skills that are vital to gaining confidence and independence as a creative practitioner.

We have designed authentic learning and assessment methods where we will set work and learning outcomes in tune with the demands of industry. Portfolios, exhibitions, photo books, mock interviews etc all give authentic experience and outcomes to your practice (see below for more detail).

We will work with you to optimise your achievements through formative feedback as the module progresses, we will use assessment criteria so that you are clear on what you need to do to achieve in relation to the brief, and we will employ a variety of assessment methods at each level to engage you creatively and test the learning outcomes of a module effectively. For example, critique sessions, peer review and tutorials will give you the opportunity to share your work in progress, receive developmental feedback and develop presentation skills. At these formative assessment and feedback points, your work will be aligned with the actual final assessed requirements, so that you are prepared to achieve the aims and outcomes of the modules.

Assessment will be either formative or summative. Formative assessment responds to your developing work and summative assessment is a formal response to your finished work. Summative assessment is graded; formative assessment is not.

The final summative assessment of your degree will enable you to create a portfolio of works designed with reasoning, to target specific areas of your intended markets. Ready for release, this professional standard showcase will be your pitch and shop window for commissions and for employment. The creation of an individually profiled portfolio, of in-depth project work, effectively promoted to your audience will be the fitting commercial outcome of your studies.

- **Crits** (short for 'critique') take place at certain points throughout the semester on the photography practice modules. You will be expected to present your work to a group your fellow students and tutors. The work that you present will be either work in progress or a more finished resolution of a brief. Your work and presentation will then be discussed by all present and you will receive a large amount of formative verbal feedback.
- **Written work** is central to a degree course and many of the learning approaches and emphasis is put upon clarity of style and argument as well as presentation. Different forms of written language will be explored to ensure appropriate critical skills and creative authorship are examined. Written work can be either formatively or summatively assessed and this is always made clear in the assessment brief.
- **Peer Review** is a central part of your learning experience. Like an informal crit you will be expected to share work and ideas with a small group of your fellow students and a tutor. Here ideas will be tested and developed as you engage in a reciprocal discussion about your work. As you progress through the degree you will take more ownership of the peer review process and with your peers develop a study group system where you support each other in developing your work. Group communication and participation are essential skills to take into the workplace.
- **Portfolios** have traditionally been a method of presenting your photographic work, providing you with a portable way to showcase your talents to prospective clients. We work with you to develop a professional style for your physical portfolio. In the digital age the methods of showcasing your work are more varied, adaptable and flexible. Working on your digital capabilities you will explore how best, in different circumstances, to present your work using a variety of platforms.
- **Mock Interviews** give you a real-world experience where we bring in careers specialists who will conduct interviews with you. You will have a chance to practice interview skills and prepare before the interview. This process aims to take away a lot of the stress of being interviewed and allows you the chance to reflect on how you could improve before applying for a job.
- **Group Work** is an area of assessment that will be tested on several modules. Working as part of a group is an essential skill in the creative industries and we emulate that scenario from level 4 onwards. We will work with you so that you know how the group work will be assessed and can be confident that your work will receive the appropriate recognition.
- **Presentations** provide an alternative way of conveying research and offer an opportunity for all learning types to develop their verbal articulation skills. Confidence in being able to speak about your work is absolutely necessary in the workplace. Practicing these skills will contribute to your confidence and personal development.
- **Exhibition** is one method to share photography with a wider audience. In every year of your degree you will be required to respond to exhibition briefs. You will work as part of a group to organise an exhibition in a public space. This is an invaluable learning experience as you will work from concept design to location scouting, fundraising and marketing to production, curation and installation; these are transferrable skills and ones that will inform your decision making in your final year when you prepare your degree show.
- **Self-Assessment** is an important method of assessment. You will be given an opportunity to assess your work against the assessment criteria and/or rubric before the module tutor assesses your work. This process allows for a useful feedback tutorial about your sense of success and how well you are achieving your aspirations. Your involvement in the process means that you have the opportunity to devise, with your tutor, a bespoke achievement route to follow.
- **Assessment Criteria and Rubrics** are connected to each individual module and respond to the learning outcomes. As part of a group you will work with a module tutor to moderate an assessment rubric where you can see what is being assessed, what you need to achieve for each

grade band and the weighting attached to each criterion. This process gives you a clearer picture of how your work will be marked and you will gain a sense of involvement in the assessment process.

- **Anonymous Marking** is employed where possible, usually in contextual modules against written assignments. Your work is submitted anonymously so that first and second markers can assess your work without influence or bias.

The range of learning, teaching and assessment methods used enables different aspects of your learning to be developed and tested. As well as testing what you know and can do at the end of a module (*Summative Assessment*) you'll get regular advice and guidance while your work is in progress (*Formative Feedback*) through one-to-one, peer-to-peer and group tutorials where you will have the opportunity to discuss and develop strategies to develop your work. This enables you to develop and refine the work as it is being produced with the structured guidance required to achieve the best possible results.

Specific skills and tasks within the commercial module programme will be monitored through formative assessment tasks, making sure you are working effectively towards the project goals. This may be offered through professional feedback from photographers, or checkpoints from the staff team. It is essential to know you are on track and can identify areas to develop if necessary.

Student Support

We provide responsive learner support that promotes student success. Our approach to learner support is designed to support achievement and progression, champion inclusivity and accessibility, prepare you for opportunities beyond study, and promote independence and resilience, enabling you to achieve your potential.

As a student at the University of Cumbria, you will be taught by academics and expert practitioners who facilitate learning through structured inquiry. You will be provided with access to high quality academic resources through physical and digital libraries and will be supported to develop skills that enable you to become a critical, reflective, discerning and independent learner and researcher.

Induction

When you join the University of Cumbria you will be introduced to the Commercial Photography academic team and your fellow students and become part of a community of learning. Our induction activities include:

- Induction into the photography resources
- Exploration of the VLE
- Signposting central student services
- Introductory tutorials with your personal tutor
- Tour of campus facilities and information on how to access resources
- Dedicated group sessions with an academic learning advisor on academic skills

Returning students are offered refresher technical sessions supported by a dedicated photography technician, personal tutor meetings and advanced academic support sessions.

Personal Tutoring

You will also be allocated a Personal Tutor. Your Personal Tutor will be proactively involved in the delivery of your programme and will have contact with you throughout your time at the University.

They will support your learning and development, including through tutorials, Progress Reviews and other support as outlined in the Personal Tutoring Policy.

You will meet your personal tutor on a one-to-one basis as per the recommendations in the Personal Tutoring Policy, this will be either a face to face or online tutorial. The content of these meetings will be to discuss your progress and to support you in planning your ongoing learning and career goals. Your personal tutor will also be able to signpost you to any of the university support services. Additional personal tutor meetings can be requested by you or your tutor.

Personal Development Planning

The programme is designed whereby every level of study brings an increasing level of independence and opportunity to design your learning to a specific individual career trajectory. This will be scaffolded by your meetings with your personal tutor. Professional development is embedded in every year from practical skills acquisition to developing business plans. In foundation year you will work alongside students from a number of different creative disciplines learning cross-disciplinary practice, a fundamental skill for professional working. In year one you will be introduced to technical photography and academic skills. In year two you will develop competencies in your photography work, critical engagement and professional skills. These will be explored and practiced through your personalised responses to live or industry informed briefs. In year three, you will design your own projects in accordance with the career path you have chosen.

Library Services and Academic Skills

Module leaders will collaborate with Library Services to ensure that your online reading and resource lists are current and items are available via the library discovery tool OneSearch. In order to maximise access, availability and usefulness, ebooks and electronic journal titles will, in most cases, be prioritised. You can access a wide range of electronic and print content using [OneSearch](#) and you can find out more about key texts, databases and journals for your subject by accessing the library's [subject resources webpages](#). Where appropriate, module reading and resource lists will be made available to you electronically on Blackboard using the University's [online reading and resource list system](#).

Each campus library has a dedicated webpage. Check out local information about opening hours, reserving books, using self-service kiosks, printing and photocopying, booking study spaces and more. <https://my.cumbria.ac.uk/Student-Life/Learning/Libraries/>

An [Ask a Librarian](#) service runs from 17:00 - 09:00 weekdays and round the clock on weekends and holidays. This means you can get professional help using about library services, finding information, referencing and searching, even when the library is closed. <https://my.cumbria.ac.uk/Student-Life/Learning/Libraries/Ask/>

The [Skills@Cumbria](#) service can help support your academic, library and digital skills and success throughout your programme. It includes a suite of [online self-help resources](#) accessible 24/7 via the University's website and Blackboard site. Additional skills support for students is offered via:

- [Workshops](#)
- Email: skills@cumbria.ac.uk
- [Appointments](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Learn Well at Cumbria](#)
- [Study from Home Webpage](#)
- [Digital Capabilities](#) and [LinkedIn Learning Pathways](#)

Headstart: Head Start is a self-learning pre-entry module that is completed online and at your own pace. The module gives new undergraduate students an opportunity to prepare for their transition into university and to start to develop the academic skills that will help them become successful students.

All UG students are given the opportunity to register and complete Head Start prior to entry on their main programme of study. If you haven't been able to complete Head Start before starting your course, you can access the module via Blackboard by selecting the Skills@Cumbria tab and then the Head Start tile. Learning at university, academic writing and referencing are the key topics introduced in the module and previous students have told us how useful they have found the online resources and activities.

Head Start Plus: Head Start Plus is also an online skills development course, designed to support students who are about or who have just started study at level 5 or 6 (2nd and 3rd year undergraduate). This course is particularly recommended to students who may not have studied at HE level for some time or who are transitioning into the higher HE levels. The course provides a useful refresh on academic skills and practice and an insight into the expectations of tutors at those levels.

This course is free and available via the Open Education Platform powered by Blackboard. To access the course, follow the link to <https://openeducation.blackboard.com/cumbria> and set-up a free account with Open Education. Once logged on, select the course free of charge and work through it at your own pace.

IT and Technical Support

Technology is an invaluable asset when it comes to studying, so it's important you know how to make the most out of the excellent [IT facilities](#) we have available. Our aim is to ensure you can access university electronic resources from anywhere or any device, whether on or off campus. The [Student Hub](#) is your one-stop gateway to all University systems, Outlook email, and OneDrive.

Whether you consider yourself a computer expert or you're not confident about your IT skills, we're always around to ensure you get the level of support you need. We have a wealth of information and support available on the [IT Services website](#) and have a dedicated IT Service Desk where you can talk to someone by phone or log your question online from anywhere, at any time.

Student Support Services

Accommodation: Information for all our residential students and advice for those looking to rent private accommodation. You can follow the team via instagram: [UoC Accommodation](#)

Careers and Employability: The Careers and Employability team is here to help you with all things career-related. Through the career hub [My Career Enriched](#), you can:

- find graduate jobs, part-time work, work experience, industry placements and paid internships;
- book one-to-one careers advice appointments with one of the team;
- book onto careers fairs and employability events where you can meet employers;
- attend practical workshops on CVs, applications, interviews, success in your chosen sector; options with your degree, job search skills and more;
- send in your CV or application form for tailored feedback;
- complete mini online courses in Pathways to improve your employability skills.

Career Ahead+ is the University of Cumbria's Employability Award. Completing Career Ahead+ will help you recognise and develop your skills, providing a greater opportunity for you to get the job you want when you graduate. The award is based on what employers look for in an ideal candidate, in relation to skills, knowledge and experience. You will be supported with career direction, gaining

experience, and providing all the skills needed to complete the perfect application and be successful in that all important job interview. Contact careerahead@cumbria.ac.uk or visit www.cumbria.ac.uk/careerahead for more information.

Chaplaincy: Our chaplaincy provides a safe place, a listening ear and personal support to all students and staff, regardless of beliefs.

Disability and Specific Learning Needs: The University is committed to ensuring you are able to participate effectively in your chosen programme of study and all areas of University life. The University defines disability broadly, including:

- mobility impairments
- sensory impairments
- medical conditions
- autism (ASD)
- specific learning difficulties (SpLD's such as Dyslexia or Dyspraxia)
- mental health conditions.

Health and wellbeing: Our team forms part of Student Services. Your physical, emotional and psychological well-being are key aspects of living and learning well. The Health and Wellbeing page links to various sources of support, including how to self-refer to the mental health and well being service for appointments. We've highlighted a couple of specifics to get started:

- Register for [Together All](#) an anonymous and stigma free environment where you map your own path to well-being with peer support.
- Sign up to our health and well-being blog: [Live Well at Cumbria](#).

UoC Active: Staying physically fit and well makes a huge difference to psychological wellbeing and to our abilities to study. Check out Sport facilities at UoC Active.

International Student Support: Finding your way in a new country or culture can be challenging. International Student Support welcomes you and will be in touch throughout your stay. We encourage you to contact us if you have any questions or need support: intss@cumbria.ac.uk

Money Advice: The Money Advice Service are here to help you plan your finances and manage your money whilst studying. We also provide information to help you to manage your money more effectively. Our Advisers are based across the University and are here to help with money issues. We run workshops as well as offering one-to-one advice via telephone on taking control of your finances and gaining financial skills which can last for life.

Further support and guidance, including EDI and Safeguarding: We are an inclusive community, committed to supporting and learning from each other, find out more about [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\)](#). Depending on the nature of your course, you may well already know about or be learning about safeguarding in a professional context and to find out about the University of Cumbria's safeguarding policy and procedures visit: [Safeguarding](#).

Student Voice

As a student at the University of Cumbria you automatically become a member of the Students' Union. The Students' Union represents the views and interests of students within the University.

The Students' Union is led by a group of Student Representatives who are elected by students in annual elections. They also support approximately 400 Student Academic Reps within each cohort across the entire University. The Students' Union represent the views of their cohort and work with academic staff to continuously develop and improve the experience for all University of Cumbria students. You can find out more about who represents you at www.ucsu.me.

You can email at any time on studentvoice@cumbria.ac.uk.

University Cumbria Students' Union (UCSU) Student Support

UCSU offers a free, independent and confidential advice service to all students. They can help with things like academic appeals, extenuating circumstances or if you're considering a formal complaint. UCSU are also on hand to represent you in any formal meetings, for example in malpractice panels or fitness to practice meetings. Appointments are telephone based and can be booked at www.ucsu.me/support.

Programme Curriculum Map					
Academic Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Module Status*	Programme Outcomes achieved
4	PHOT4080	Photographic Image Capture	40	Compulsory	K5, K6, S5
4	UCIA4030	Cultural Contexts	20	Compulsory	K4, S4
4	UCIA4020	Collaborative Practice	20	Compulsory	K6, S3 S4 S5
4	CPHO4010	Digital Image Production with Lighting Design	20	Compulsory	S5, S3, K5, K6,
4	CPHO4020	Contemporary Image Theory	20	Compulsory	S8, K7, K8,
5	CPHO5010	Commercial Practice 1	20	Compulsory	S6, S7, K9, K8, K7,
5	CPHO5030	Media and Moving Image	20	Compulsory	S6, S7, S8, K8, K9, K7
5	CPHO5020	Word and Voice	20	Compulsory	S6, S7, S8, K7, K8, K9
5	CPHO5040	Commercial Practice 2	20	Compulsory	S6, S7, S8, K8, K9
5	CPHO5050	Negotiated Live Project	20	Compulsory	S6, S7, K8, K9
5	CPHO5060	Business Development	20	Compulsory	S7, S8, K8, K9
6	PHOT6070	Blueprint of Practice	40	Compulsory	K10, K12 S9, S10, S11
6	PHOT6080	Resolution of Practice	60	Compulsory	K11, S10
6	ARTD6000	Independent Research Paper	20	Compulsory	K10, K12 S9, S10, S11
Notes					

This programme operates in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and Academic Procedures and Processes

Where a student has not succeeded in their programme, they will not be permitted to re-register on the same programme.

The larger modules of 40 and 60 credits are recognised by the QAA, to be typical in Creative Design programmes, and reflect the pedagogic approach to encourage independent working on significant bodies of work. The size of the PHOT6080 module allows for a deeper and broader learning experience at the end of the degree programme.

* **Key to Module Statuses**

Compulsory Modules	Must be taken although it may possible to condone/compensate as a marginal fail (within the limits set out in the Academic Regulations and provided that all core or pass/fail elements of module assessment have been passed).
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Programme Delivery Structure: Full Time				
Module Code	Module Title	Delivery Pattern	Method(s) of Assessment	Indicative week number of Assessment Deadline
		Sept – Dec Jan – May June - Aug		
PHOT4080	Photographic Image Capture	Sept- Dec	Practical Skills Assessment	16
UCIA4030	Cultural Contexts	Sept- Dec	Written Assignment	16
UCIA4020	Collaborative Practice	Jan - May	Project Work	37
CPHO4010	Digital Image Production with Lighting Design	Jan - May	Portfolio and Presentation	37
CPHO4020	Contemporary Image Theory	Jan - May	Oral Presentation and Written Assignment	36 and 37
Students exiting at this point with 120 credits would receive a CertHE Commercial Photography				
CPHO5010	Commercial Practice 1	Sept- Dec	Portfolio	16
CPHO5030	Media and Moving Image	Sept- Dec	Portfolio	16
CPHO5020	Word and Voice	Sept- Dec	Oral Presentation and Written Assignment	15 and 16
CPHO5040	Commercial Practice 2	Jan - May	Portfolio	37
CPHO5050	Negotiated Live Project	Jan - May	Portfolio and Presentation	37

CPHO5060	Business Development	Jan - May	Set Exercise	37
Students exiting at this point with 240 credits would receive a DipHE Commercial Photography				
PHOT6070	Blueprint of Practice	Sept- Dec	Portfolio and Written Assignment	16
ARTD6000	Independent Research Paper	Sept- Dec	Dissertation	16
Students exiting at this point with 300 credits would receive an Ordinary BA Commercial Photography				
Students exiting at this point with 360 credits would receive a BA (Hons) Commercial Photography				

Exceptions to Academic Regulations

This programme operates in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and Academic Procedures and Processes.

Methods for Evaluating and Improving the Quality and Standards of Learning

Mechanisms used for the Review and Evaluation of the Curriculum and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Methods

- Module Evaluation
- Programme Validation and Periodic Review
- Annual Monitoring
- Peer Review
- External Examiner Reports
- Student Success and Quality Assurance Committee
- Student Voice Meetings

Mechanisms used for gaining and responding to feedback on the quality of teaching and the learning experience – gained from: Students, graduates, employers, placement and work-based learning providers, other stakeholders, etc.

- Staff Student Forum
- Module Evaluation Forms
- Programme Evaluation: National Student Survey, UK Engagement Survey
- Module/Programme/Personal tutorials
- Meetings with External Examiners
- Student Voice Meetings

Date of Programme Specification Production:

21st January 2022

Date Programme Specification was last updated:

19.04.2022

For further information about this programme, refer to the programme page on the University website tbc

The following information has implications for potential international applicants who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK

Is the placement requirement more than 50% of the programme?

NA

If yes, what % of the programme is the placement requirement?	NA
If yes, is the amount of placement a statutory requirement to meet Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) or Department of Education requirements?	NA