

# Your Guide to

# Master of Fine Arts (MFA)

# Master of Design (MDes)

# 2019

Wellington  
New Zealand



Robbie Hancock, 2016

# Master of Fine Arts (MFA)

**2 years full time (Semester 1 and 2 each year)**  
**240 credits**

- Focussed or transdisciplinary creative-practice-led research inquiry
- Self-motivated, independent learning amongst a diverse community of artists, designers and other creative professionals

The programme supports the development of creative practices that engage experimentation, iteration, risk, curiosity and innovation in relation to culture, politics, materials, histories, technologies, place, experience and media. Students have two supervisors with expertise relevant to your practice and research topic.

## Four papers constitute the MFA and each must be successfully completed to be awarded the degree

When you complete your MFA, you can choose to have it awarded with or without designation: MFA (Fine Arts), or MFA (Design), or MFA.

### YEAR 1

197.821 Postgraduate Studio and Seminar	60 Credits	Semester 1
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197.822 Thesis Project Preparation	60 Credits	Semester 2
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### YEAR 2

197.811 Thesis Project	60 Credits	Semester 1
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197.812 Thesis Project	60 Credits	Semester 2
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## FAQs for study in 2019

### Can artists and designers enrol in the MFA at Massey?

Yes, this is the unique aspect of our new two-year MFA – it has a cohort of students with a variety of backgrounds with disciplinary-specific and pan – or transdisciplinary practices. In 2018, the programme included students engaged in spatial installation, music, performance writing, sound art, graphic design, virtual reality and interactive design, photography, film, painting, sculpture, participatory art, live art, video and digital art, print making, jewellery, industrial design, puppetry, digital fabrication, fashion design, sustainable dye to name just a few.

The programme is geared to support exploratory and experimental projects. We use the term “studio” as a placeholder for a diversity of creative research practices that will invariably employ different approaches in their focus and production. For us, the studio is a conceptual space as much as it might be an actual place.

### Can I study part-time?

Yes. Full-time study is 2 years whereas part-time study can be undertaken as a 3 or 4 year option. Tuition fees are paid per paper, per year.

### Do I have to be in Wellington or can I study from afar?

The MFA is structured to enable students to work on site at the Wellington campus or at a distance. Either mode necessitates that students sign up for small group or 1:1 sessions with academics, participate in the korero sessions and participate in the two hui each semester, which include critiques. Some of these activities can be done via skype. Be aware that there is an orientation event for all MFA students the week before semester 1 begins.

### How many hours a week is recommended for students who work and study?

A full-time MFA student should not work more than 15 hours per week. (Part-time students no more than 30 hours per week.) These numbers are based on the fact that the MFA is 120 credits per year and students are expected to work at an advanced level.

### How do I develop a proposal?

The first step is to contact the MFA Co-coordinator, Julieanna Preston at [j.preston@massey.ac.nz](mailto:j.preston@massey.ac.nz) and have a 1:1 discussion about your interest in the programme. Check out the Postgraduate Study guidelines on the CoCA website. [creative.massey.ac.nz/study/how-to-apply/postgraduate-applications/](http://creative.massey.ac.nz/study/how-to-apply/postgraduate-applications/)

An application should include a digital or online portfolio of your creative work and a letter of expression (approximately 1-2 pages), which introduces your practice, why you want to study, and what topics, issues and media you wish to engage. If you are not a Massey University graduate, you will need to supply transcripts of your previous degrees and a reference letter. International applicants need to apply through the Massey University International Student Office – see [www.massey.ac.nz/massey/international/international\\_home.cfm](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/international/international_home.cfm)

## How do my supervisors get allocated?

In the first phase of study, a team of College of Creative Arts research academics collectively mentor the cohort of MFA students. The postgraduate leadership team is responsible for securing supervisors for the thesis phase of study. Each student is typically connected to two supervisors. Students are asked for preferences. Allocation depends on an academic's availability, the research topic and the constitution of the cohort overall.

## What facilities can I access as an MFA student?

MFA students have access to all the facilities associated with the School of Design and the School of Art including Toy Store, School of Art Photography Lab and workshop, Printmaking Studio, School of Design 3D Workshop, and digital fabrication laboratory FabLabWgtn.

## How much writing is involved?

The MFA is a practice-centric mode of study, which means that creative work is the primary activity. However, we also expect our students to strongly develop their ability to articulate and contextualise their practices through writing and oral presentations. In the thesis phase you develop and present an exegesis of approximately 8,000 – 10,000 words that effectively contextualises and reflects upon your creative practice and project. Writing workshops are run to assist your progress and the campus Centre of Teaching and Learning offers 1:1 assistance.

## How much is tuition?

Tuition fees are reviewed and posted by the university on a yearly basis. For example, for a full time domestic student, Year 1 MFA in 2018, the MFA tuition fees were just over \$9,000 NZD. For more information, see [www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/fees/fees\\_home.cfm](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/fees/fees_home.cfm)

## How is the MFA assessed?

Year 1 of the MFA is internally assessed on the presentation of course-work at the completion of the papers and engagement with reading groups, masterclasses, site visits and other events. The MFA thesis is assessed at the end of the degree by one internal examiner and one external examiner.

The thesis consists of three parts: an exhibition of creative work, an exegesis and a verbal presentation. These three parts are assessed holistically.

## Where can I go to see previous MFA thesis work?

The best place to visit is the Massey University Library website ([www.massey.ac.nz/massey/research/library/library\\_home.cfm](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/research/library/library_home.cfm)): type in Master of Fine Arts Thesis or organise with the Programme Co-ordinator to attend one of the crits.

## What kind of employment opportunities have previous MFA students had?

The MFA is housed in the College of Creative Arts and is currently delivered by the School of Design and the School of Art. Graduating students from the MFA have gone on to present and exhibit their work at international and national venues; taken up roles as secondary and tertiary teachers, museum and gallery preparators, educators and curators; start their own businesses or work for creative industries in NZ as well as travelled and worked overseas.

## What awards and scholarships are available to MFA students?

Check the fees calculator [massey.ac.nz](http://massey.ac.nz) to see if you qualify for the fees free government scheme. The Master of Design and Master of Fine Arts have in recent years provided financial support in the form of internal awards. These awards range from modest project awards to support materials, travel, consulting and venue fees to more substantial hardship awards for students who experience challenges during study. Students approaching or in the Thesis Year who have strong academic records are encouraged to apply for the Massey University Masterate Scholarship. Students who have excelled as Massey BDES and BFA students may also have been awarded what is known as a Massey Scholar Award, an award granted by the university and useable in the first two years after undergraduate graduation. See this website for some further information: [www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/scholarships-bursaries-awards/scholarship-bursary-award\\_home.cfm](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/scholarships-bursaries-awards/scholarship-bursary-award_home.cfm)



# Master of Design (MDes)

**1 year (52 weeks) full time**  
**120 credits**

- Design-led research project
- Self-motivated, independent learning
- Includes industry-partnered projects

The programme supports experimental, iterative, innovative, and industry-based projects including those focussed on contemporary technologies. Students have one primary supervisor from the School of Design on the Wellington campus, and one supporting supervisor.

## **Start dates**

July, September or November

## FAQs for study in 2019

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### Can I study part-time?

Yes. Full-time study is one year (52 weeks plus a few weeks extra to get the final documents submitted), whereas part-time study is 2 years (104 weeks). The difference between full-time and part-time study is in the pace of the project with critiques and supervision sessions spread out across two years. Since the MDes is a single course, all tuition fees are paid in the first year of part-time study.

### When does the study programme begin each year?

In 2019, the MDes will accept applications for start dates in July, September and November. This new scheme is specifically tailored to projects where industry partner's needs and schedules demand milestones to be met by certain dates. At present, the start-up dates are provisionally set at late February beginning of March, mid-July and mid-September. It follows that the application dates and process will change to reflect these dates.

It is recommended that international applicants apply at least 3 months prior to the start date to allow for the International Office processing and visa application. For more information, see [www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/programme-course/programme.cfm?prog\\_id=93141](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/programme-course/programme.cfm?prog_id=93141)

### Do I have to be in Wellington or can I study from afar?

Request to study by distance (for those who do not live in the Wellington region) can be put to the Master of Design Co-ordinator for consideration at the time of initial contact and application. Although distance study can be undertaken, there are significant challenges to overcome. One is mandatory travel to Wellington to attend and present work in progress for critique (arohaehae). Most distant MDes students admit that being in Wellington offers significant benefits especially when it comes to face-to-face interaction with other postgraduate students and supervisors, as well as access to the campus facilities.

That said, industry-partnered MDes often require the student to spend time away from the university. In many cases this means short visits or extended stay to other parts of the country, or internationally, to meet with experts, gather primary data or learn essential skills.

### How many hours a week is recommended for students who work and study?

A full-time MDes student should not work more than 15 hours per week. (Part-time students no more than 30 hours per week.) These numbers are based on the fact that the MDes is 120 credits and students are expected to work at an advanced level and make concerted progress over the study period.

### What do you mean by "industry connection"?

The MDes is an applied design-led research degree. All projects must have an industry connection or focus. In this case, "industry" refers to all associations, professional practices, businesses and communities outside of the tertiary education sector. The definition of industry is broad and inclusive. Examples include entities such as Fisher & Paykel, Athfield Architects, the Royal New Zealand Ballet (RNZB), the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO), Weta Digital, Kapinua, Moore Wilsons, Te Papa, Saatchi & Saatchi, or a local community park trust. Industry connections can take the form of formal partnerships, collaborations, consultations, in-kind material sponsorship, sharing of expert knowledge, use of specialist facilities and/or scholarship funding.

### How do I develop a proposal?

How you develop a proposal depends on what kind of industry connection you are seeking. If you are interested in being considered for what is called a MBiE/Callaghan Innovation Master of Design (see page 8), then it is important that you contact the MDes Co-ordinator Dr Caroline Campbell as soon as possible and provide a cv, portfolio or recent creative work and a letter of intent identifying what kinds of design research experience you are looking for.

Alternatively, prepare a research project proposal of approximately 1000 words including a bibliography, and supporting visual portfolio of finished works and processes. You can gain feedback on your proposal as it develops from the MDes Co-ordinator. For further information regarding proposals, see [creative.massey.ac.nz/study/how-to-apply/postgraduate-applications/](http://creative.massey.ac.nz/study/how-to-apply/postgraduate-applications/)

# MDes 120

## Prerequisites

Honours degree or equivalent  
B average

### Credits to complete & duration

120

credits

=

1 year

full time  
or can be done  
part time\*

### Structure

Design Thesis

**Part 1**

60 credits

+

Design Thesis

**Part 2**

60 credits

### Research proposal and portfolio submission

Yes

### Application due date

**Nov**

February  
start

**Jun**

July  
start

**Aug**

September  
start

\* Full-time study is one year (52 weeks plus a few weeks extra to get the final documents submitted), whereas part-time study is 2 years (104 weeks).

# MDes 180

## Prerequisites

Honours degree or equivalent  
B average

### Credits to complete & duration

180

credits

=

18

months

### Structure

**Part 1**

Undergraduate  
honours year  
level.\*\*  
60 credits

+

**Part 2**

Postgraduate  
level.  
120 credits

### Portfolio submission and interview

Yes

### Application due date

**Jul**

September  
start

\*\* You must attain a B level in order to progress.

## What happens if I don't get accepted? How much is tuition?

Non-honours applicants who's proposals and portfolios don't merit entry into the 120 credit MDes will be offered a place in the 180 credit programme. This taught programme (60 credits) starts in September and comprises one core course and two electives. A B grade must be attained in order to progress to the 120 credit MDes. A below B grade allows you to exit with a Postgraduate Certificate in Creative Arts.

Tuition fees are reviewed and posted by the university on a yearly basis. Actual fees payable will be finalised on confirmation of enrolment. In 2018, the tuition fees for the 120 credit MDes were \$7,044.20 (domestic) and \$33,680.00 (international). For more information, see [www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/fees/fees\\_home.cfm](http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/admission/fees/fees_home.cfm)

## What is a MBIE/Callaghan Innovation/ Master of Design?

Callaghan Innovation Postgraduate Scholarships are part of MBIE (Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment [mbie.govt.nz](http://mbie.govt.nz)). The NZ government runs a scheme to fund postgraduate students with a stipend while embedded in an industry-focussed research and development project identified by the company and facilitated by Massey University. This kind of project necessitates a long development period whereby a Massey academic researcher collaborates with an industry partner and a regional development agent to write the application that establishes the scholarship.

## How do my supervisors get allocated?

The College of Creative Arts postgraduate leadership team is responsible for allocating primary and secondary supervisors. Allocation depends on an academic's availability, the research topic and the constitution of the cohort overall.

## How much writing is involved?

The MDes carries a design-centric mode of study, which means that design is the primary activity. It is supplemented by an exegesis of approximately 8,000-10,000 words (not including bibliography and appendices) that effectively contextualises and reflects upon the project. Writing workshops occur throughout the year and the campus Centre for Teaching and Learning offers 1:1 assistance. Examples of MDes exegeses can be found in the Massey online library by searching for titles with the words "Master of Design Thesis". Hard copies are also available in the postgraduate lounge.

## How is the MDes assessed?

The best way to see current MDes work is to visit the College of Creative Arts postgraduate studio on the Wellington campus and to participate in the MDes critiques (arohaehae). Send your details to the MDes Co-ordinator to receive notices of upcoming critiques (arohaehae) where you can see the MDes students present their work in-progress or visit the Exposure graduate exhibition in early November on the Wellington campus.

## Where can I go to see MDes work?

The best way to see current MDes work is to visit the CoCA postgraduate studio on the Wellington campus in (location) and to participate in the MDes critiques (arohaehae). Send your details to the MDes Co-ordinator to receive notices of upcoming critiques (arohaehae) where you can see the MDes students present their work in-progress or visit the Exposure graduate exhibition in early November on the Wellington campus.

## What kind of employment opportunities have previous MDes students had?

In the sixteen years that the MDes has been active, graduating students have gone on to start their own businesses or work for design-based companies in NZ and abroad, win national design competitions, had their designs commercialised and taken to manufacture, become research academics, travel and work overseas, present and exhibit their design work at international venues and collaborate with high profile designers.



Glenn Catchpole, 2017

**For further  
information  
contact:**

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For more information about Julieanna's  
creative research practice, see:  
[creative.massey.ac.nz/about/our-people/school-  
of-design-faculty-and-staff/dr-julieanna-preston/](https://creative.massey.ac.nz/about/our-people/school-of-design-faculty-and-staff/dr-julieanna-preston/)

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[creative.massey.ac.nz/about/our-people/school-  
of-design-faculty-and-staff/dr-caroline-campbell/](https://creative.massey.ac.nz/about/our-people/school-of-design-faculty-and-staff/dr-caroline-campbell/)