



Application Information Pack

Guidance on applying to work
for Leeds Arts University



Introduction	3
Part One – About Leeds Arts University	4
Our History	5
Leeds Arts University Now	6-7
Mission, Values and Strategic Plan	8
Other Information	9
Part Two – Staff Benefits	10-11



Dear applicant

Thank you for reviewing our application information pack. This guidance pack is split into two parts and provides information about Leeds Arts University.

Part One provides information about us. It contains information on our history, our mission, values and strategic direction.

Part Two deals with the benefits that our staff enjoy through working with us.

Graham Curling
Head of Human Resources



Part One

About Leeds Arts University



Our History

Over the last 170 years Leeds Arts University has contributed significantly to the development of art education in Britain, having pioneered new ways to teach and to structure qualifications.

Est. 1846

The Leeds Mechanics' Institute (which offered drawing classes) merged with the Literary Institute, creating Leeds School of Art. In 1903, it moved to our present Vernon Street building, where the radical design reflected the clean lines of the Art & Craft movement and in 1927 became Leeds College of Art. Following the world wars, ex-service personnel resuming their education filled the College almost to bursting. Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth (enrolling in 1919 and 1920, respectively) were students of this era.

1946

As our reputation grew, new design departments were formed, including furniture, graphic design and printmaking. A new pottery and workshops were built, and in 1959 a new library was created.

1950

From the 1950s to the 1970s, there was a reappraisal of art education in Britain, largely based on ideas developed in Leeds, where a large team of practising artists set up the Basic Design Course. Students were now encouraged to adopt a scientific approach, enabling them to develop a capacity for constructive criticism and understanding.

1960

In 1960 we began to run courses which encouraged an open-ended, creative and flexible approach, leading to a new system of art education at Leeds and, subsequently, nationwide.

1980

In the mid-1980s our Blenheim Walk building was erected. New construction and development continues to this day for the benefit of all of our students. More recent alumni include Marcus Harvey, Damien Hirst, film director Clio Barnard, and Leigh Francis, otherwise known as Keith Lemon. Between 1968 and 1993 the College was named Jacob Kramer College, after one of its leading alumni, before reclaiming the name of Leeds College of Art in 2009.

2017

In September 2017 we were granted full university title. Our title is now Leeds Arts University, making us the only specialist arts university in the North of England.



The University Now

Leeds Arts University is a leading specialist university with a national and international reputation for providing excellence in arts education. We pride ourselves in developing students with the skills, knowledge and attributes to thrive as professionals in the creative industries. The majority of our students are studying for Bachelors or Masters Degrees in a range of creative subjects. Currently there are approximately 2000 students studying undergraduate courses across 14 subject areas (15 from September 2019) and 60 postgraduate students across 2 Master's degrees (5 from September 2019). The majority of our students are from the UK or from within the EU though there are a significant number of international students from over 50 countries. We are also proud of our distinctive, diagnostic further education courses which prepare students for degree level study at Leeds Arts University and beyond. Some 600 students undertake these FE courses at our Vernon St building where the original art school was founded.

Despite the increasingly competitive HE environment, we have one of the highest application to place ratios in the sector and robust financial governance which enables investment in sustaining our high quality resources and we extended our estate to accommodate growth in our portfolio and in student numbers which opened in January 2019.

The undergraduate portfolio has expanded at the same time to include separating our existing Fashion degree into Fashion Branding with Communication and Fashion Design. In September 2018 we launched new undergraduate courses in Comic and Concept Art, Popular Music Performance and Filmmaking and in September 2019 a new undergraduate Creative Writing course will be launched. At the same time we will commence teaching on a new range of specialist Masters Degrees which include Fine Art, Graphic Design and Photography.

The University has set its standard for planning and providing specialist resources and is intent on continuing to delight its students, having won the 'WhatUni' award for best facilities twice in recent years.



Our students and graduates win an incredible number of high- profile industry competitions each year, and many of our alumni come back to visit as guest lecturers or exhibitors. We have a thriving programme of exhibitions and events, and have built very strong links with industry and the public sector. We are home to the region’s largest professional network for individuals working across the creative, cultural and digital industries, providing the perfect launch pad for graduates.

Employability is implicit in the project work that many of our students undertake, which includes competition briefs, work placements, mentorships by creative professionals and collaborative international projects. We also equip students through their course work with basic business skills and knowledge of the creative industry in which they wish to work. This gives them more confidence to consider starting their own business or work freelance. There is a significant emphasis on developing the key ‘softer’ transferrable skills of teamwork, time management, project management, reflection, problem-solving and self-motivation which are particularly important to employers and for self- employed work alike. This work is carried out by both our academic staff and the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Team.

Year on year, we are amongst the highest scoring for student satisfaction in the National Student Survey (in comparison with other specialist arts institutions) and in 2017 we were the highest rated specialist arts university. Further education students also give high satisfaction ratings. There is no complacency with regard to student satisfaction, however, and we arrange focus groups, termly student meetings and student representation on many of our Committees.

We have been reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency and have received confidence in all areas prior to being awarded our own Taught Degree Awarding Powers, and an overall ‘Good’ in our Ofsted inspection.

It is through our professional and highly motivated staff, fully engaged and creative students, and the support of our Board of Governors that our many successes have been achieved.



Our Mission

We are an influential, world-facing, creatively driven specialist arts university where professional educators, practitioners and researchers collaborate to develop and enable excellence.

We promote distinctive, critically informed and relevant practice in order to support the economic growth and cultural advancement of individuals and society.

Our Values

Our values define us and guide decision-making and behaviour. We are:

Student-centred

maximising potential, nurturing talent, respecting individuality, holistic

Focused on specialist creative communities

collaborative, interactive, multi-disciplinary, studio-focused, externally engaged

Critical in our thinking

aspirational, challenging, researching, questioning, analytical, innovative, independent-thinking

Professional

relevant, contemporary, ambitious, achieving, international, employable, entrepreneurial, networked with industry

Progressive

beautiful, unconventional, risk-taking, experimental, radical, responsive

Strategic Plan

Our strategic plan can be downloaded from our website:

www.leeds-art.ac.uk/strategic-plan

Other information

Other information about the University such as our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and our commitment to sustainability can also be found on our website by visiting:

www.leeds-art.ac.uk/about-us



Part Two

Staff Benefits



Listed below are some of the benefits which our staff enjoy:

Holiday entitlement

Academic staff have 35 days holiday per year (pro rata). Workshop staff have 25 days holiday per year (pro rata) rising to 30 days per year after 5 years' service. Business Support staff have 25 or 26 days holiday per year (pro rata). All staff receive a further 8 days for bank holidays and we also operate non contractual discretionary closure days between Christmas and New Year.

Pension schemes

Academic staff have access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. All other staff have access to The West Yorkshire Pension Fund which is our default pension scheme for auto enrolment purposes. Contributions to both schemes vary based on salary level.

Staff training & development

We offer in-house staff development plus support for external training.

Car Parking

Subsidised car-parking is currently available at Cambridge Road which is a 10 minute walk from our Blenheim Walk site.

West Yorkshire Metro Card scheme

You'll be entitled to a discount on bus and train travel in the Leeds/West Yorkshire region, on purchasing an annual Metro card.

Care First Employee Support Helpline

You'll be given access to a 24-hour, confidential and independent telephone service, offering advice on a wide range of consumer, family care, employment, financial, housing, legal, health and education matters.



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