

**MA Virtual Reality
Programme Specification 2021/22**

Awarding Body	University of the Arts London
College	London College of Communication
School	Screen
Programme	Moving Image and Digital Arts (L060)
FHEQ Level	Level 7 Masters
Course Credits	180
Mode	Full Time
Duration of Course	1 year
Valid From	September 1st 2021
Course Entry Requirements	<p>Applicants will be considered for admission if they have achieved an educational level equivalent to an honours degree in either animation, illustration, visual communication, graphic design or closely related subject, and present a portfolio of moving-image work. However, we do not exclude candidates who have graduated from other less strongly aligned disciplines.</p> <p>This educational level may be demonstrated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honours degree (named above); • Possession of equivalent qualifications; • Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required; • Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required. <p>APEL (Accreditation of Prior Learning)</p> <p>Applicants who do not meet these course entry requirements may still be considered in exceptional cases. The course team will consider each application that demonstrates additional strengths and alternative evidence. This might, for example, be demonstrated by:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related academic or work experience • The quality of the personal statement • A strong academic or other professional reference • OR a combination of these factors <p>Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.</p> <p>Language requirements</p> <p>All classes are conducted in English. If English is not your first language, we strongly recommend you let us know your English language test score in your application. If you have booked a test or are awaiting your results, please indicate this in your application. When asked to upload a CV as part of your application, please include any information about your English test score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) is required, with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four skills. • If your first language is not English, you can check you have achieved the correct IELTS level in English on the Language Requirements page. • For further details regarding international admissions and advice please visit the International Applications page.
Selection Criteria	<p>Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient prior knowledge and experience of and/or potential in games development, film, animation or VFX practice to be able to successfully complete the programme of study, and have an academic or professional background in a relevant subject • Knowledge of visual culture and an ability to engage in critical discussion
Scheduled Learning and Teaching	<p>During your course you will engage with learning and teaching that includes both online and face-to-face modes. The advertised scheduled activity for the course will be</p>

	<p>delivered through a combination of live, synchronous and asynchronous on-line learning. Scheduled learning and teaching activity may include lectures, seminars, studio and workshop briefings, tutorials, external visits and project briefings.</p>
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Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning Year 1

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	26
Awards	Credits
Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only)	60
Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only)	120
Master of Arts	180

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	To provide a creative and intellectually challenging educational experience that will enable you to develop a range of transferable, conceptual, critical and vocational skills necessary to progress onto a successful career in a relevant profession or research degree in higher education.
Aim	To support you in the development of a flexible, inclusive and responsive approach to your studies encouraging independent thinking and the ability to see things differently.
Aim	To prepare you for employment in Virtual Reality-linked industries by enabling you to acquire a range of professional, entrepreneurial and transferable employability skills.
Aim	To enable you to acquire a range of creative practice and advanced technical skills necessary for employment in your area of specialism.
Aim	To develop an innovative attitude to creative practice that can anticipate future technological, international, economic and business challenges in the screen industries
Aim	To equip you with a comprehensive and critical understanding of the core principles and technology of virtual reality that underpin your creative projects.
Aim	To respond to the growth in working across disciplines that has occurred in the creative industries in order to develop practitioners who can work in dynamic interdisciplinary teams and contexts.
Aim	To locate Virtual Reality within a historical, cultural and critical context in order to facilitate a stimulating learning experience. This will develop a creative, innovative and critical approach to your studies and chosen specialism.
Outcome	Use a variety of cognitive, creative and practical skills to identify and critically investigate appropriate primary and secondary sources relevant to virtual reality (Enquiry);
Outcome	Examine and critically interpret research material and demonstrate this understanding in order to inform visual and written outcomes (Enquiry);

Outcome	Demonstrate an understanding of, and practically apply, contextual knowledge of virtual reality, its connected industries, and its wider areas of influence (Knowledge);
Outcome	Problem solve, take risks, challenge preconceptions, experiment and test ideas, materials and media to develop complex ideas and deliver immersive virtual reality experiences. (Enquiry);
Outcome	Demonstrate use of appropriate design, theoretical, technical and media skills to produce immersive product using virtual reality technologies (Realisation);
Outcome	Show clarity of purpose, appropriate selection of media, awareness of precedent and sensitivity to the needs of the audience in the production and presentation of ideas (Communication);
Outcome	Manage your learning through reflection, planning, self-direction, subject engagement, and commitment and be able to place your work in a professional context (Realisation);
Outcome	Work independently and collaboratively with your peers or with those from different disciplines (Process).

Distinctive Features	
1	Small unit based technical skill acquisition: Virtual Reality and the broader spectrum of Mixed Reality, which covers augmented reality are often perceived as technically complex and challenging, especially for those from a non-technical background. In order to fully appreciate and harness the power of VR and MR, students are guided through the acquisition of necessary related technical skills in small units, which will enable them to develop advanced skills in a short period of time and gain confidence over this domain at a technical level.
2	Psychological science research guided knowledge acquisition: This course presents students state-of-the-art VR and MR research, all supported by evidence from rigorous experimental studies from psychological science. Following this method, students will be able to develop their knowledge base not only knowing “how” but also “why”, and thus can quickly adapt their understanding to the fast-changing future technical advances in this area.
3	Design with a multidisciplinary approach: Virtual Reality naturally stands between technology, science, and art, and this course encourages students to challenge themselves and grow in all these areas and associated disciplines to design VR and MR environments for a broad range of applications. This will require developing a command of VR and MR hardware and software technologies, a good understanding of psychology and human perception, as well as grasping essential design principles behind building believable and immersive VR and MR experiences tailored to a variety of subjects.
4	Positive social and cultural impact: As an immersive technology that truly appeals to one’s heart, it has been well established that VR has the ability to build bridges between people from different social and cultural backgrounds - ethnicity, gender, body shape, sensory abilities (autism, dementia) can all be explored directly and reflected upon. More and more often VR is being recognised as a tool to reduce discrimination and raise awareness, and practitioners in VR will soon have the responsibility to contribute to this area. A wide range of related topics will be discussed in this course.
5	Enhancing our lives with Virtual Reality: One of the main areas where VR applications will certainly thrive is concerning people’s well-being which can be greatly improved through this technology, and indeed most existing VR and MR applications before the rise of Oculus HMD are in the medical field: surgical training, psychotherapy for PTSD, and physical rehabilitations, just to name a few. Cheaper and more readily available VR and MR headsets, tracking devices, and advances in machine learning and AI will continue to lower barriers to entry in this area. Other fields benefitting from this are VR TV, VR cinema and VR social networks, which allow people to be part of a cross-media narrative as well as to expand and to enrich

	their experiences of media content. Again, this is something we will explore in this course.
6	Thought leader in Virtual Reality: Exposures to the state-of-the-art research, equipped with both technical skills and critical understanding of theoretical framework, and opportunities to work and learn with the best national and international VR and MR pioneer researchers and experts from industry in the UK, students graduated from this course will be in a perfect position to define the future trajectory of Virtual Reality.

Course Detail

MA Virtual Reality will equip you with the technical resources and specialist guidance needed to test and develop virtual experiences across a range of media platforms including 3D computer animation, 360-degree filmmaking, games and interactive AR applications.

What can you expect?

You'll experiment with new approaches to the use of these technologies, as well as explore the design and conceptualisation pipeline for these virtual experiences.

Across Terms One and Two, you'll have the opportunity to explore and utilise an array of VR software pipelines including VR painting, 3D modelling and environment design, 360-degree video capture and games development.

The course prepares you to progress into the fast-growing VR industry, as well as into sectors such as animation, film, television, games and marketing, which are all quickly adopting VR technologies.

Mode of Study

MA Virtual reality is in Full Time mode which runs for 45 weeks over 15 months. You will be expected to commit 40 hours per week to study.

Course Units

Each course is divided into units, which are credit-rated. The minimum unit size is 20 credits. The MA course structure involves five units, totalling 180 credits.

Autumn, Term 1

Creative VR Project Portfolio (40 Credits)

In this unit, you will have the opportunity to explore the full breadth of creative VR applications and begin to explore ways to utilise various software palettes and workflows to develop immersive products.

Designing Immersive Experiences (20 Credits)

In this unit, you'll explore the methods, techniques and critical theories that underpin the conceptualisation and design of VR experiences. You'll explore the principles of animation, alongside film and games concept development and use these to develop strategies that

help to establish the language and workflow of VR design.

Spring, Term 2

Critical Practice and Exploration (40 Credits)

During this unit, you'll draw on your knowledge of VR workflows and technical methodologies in order to produce a portfolio of advanced experimental, technical and critical practice. This could take the form of interactive application, games or immersive narrative experiences.

Collaborative Unit (20 Credits)

As part of the LCC Screen School strategy to enable collaboration and a project-focused approach to creative practices, you will use this unit as an opportunity to work as part of a cross-disciplinary creative team.

You'll be encouraged to work with postgraduate students across other courses within the Moving Image and Digital Arts Programme including [MA 3D Computer Animation](#) and [MA Games Design](#), as well as courses in other programmes within the Screen School such as [MA Sound Arts](#) and [MA Film](#).

Summer, Terms 3 and 4

Final Project and Thesis (60 Credits)

At this final stage of the course, you'll bring together the knowledge, skills and experience gained throughout your studies to produce a self-directed, longer-form VR project, alongside an associated thesis.

Students will specify, refine and produce an ambitious and substantial VR project that will show that they have an in-depth critical awareness of the area and the highly developed practical skills in production management, design and execution of immersive experiences to deliver a complex project on time.

This major project will demonstrate that the appropriate level of academic and technical proficiency has been reached for the award of a Masters degree.

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Tutorials
- Critiques

- Workshops
- Software training
- Individual research exercises
- Self-directed study
- Peer reviews

Assessment Methods

- Submission
- Written research and critical reports
- Review of design development portfolios
- Presentations and formal critiques
- Project work
- Exhibition of project portfolios
- Written thesis

Reference Points

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

UAL's Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Strategy - <http://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/teaching-and-learning/about-the-exchange/teaching--learning-strategy/>

The College and Screen School policies and initiatives - <http://www.arts.ac.uk/lcc/about-lcc/screen-school/>

FHEQ Level descriptors - <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf>

UAL Creative Attributes Framework <http://www.arts.ac.uk/about-ual/teaching-and-learning/careers-and-employability/creative-attributes-framework/>

Course Diagram

Level 7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36		37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47																																																	
Week																																																																																																		
Unit	Start of Undergraduate Year	Unit 1 Creative VR Project Portfolio (40 Credits)											S																																					PG Summer Break	Start of Undergraduate Year																																															
		Unit 2 Design Immersive Experience (20 credits)											S																																																																																					
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S = Summative Assessment

The University will use all reasonable endeavours to provide the Course and the services described in this Output. There may be occasions whereby the University needs to add, remove or alter content in relation to your Course as may be appropriate for example the latest requirements of a commissioning or accrediting body, or in response to student feedback, or to comply with applicable law or due to circumstances beyond its control. The University aim to inform you of any changes as soon as is reasonably practicable

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