# ual: london college of communication

# MA 3D Computer Animation

Programme Specification 2019/20

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| **Awarding Body** | University of the Arts London |
| **College** | London College of Communication |
| **School** | University of the Arts London |
| **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 2019 |
| **QAA Subject Benchmark** | Art and Design |
| **UAL Subject Classification** | Animation, interactive film and sound |
| **JACS Code** | W615 - Animation techniques |
| **UCAS Code** | N/A |
| **PSRB** | N/A |
| **Work placement offered** | N/A |
| **Course Entry Requirements** | An applicant will normally 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.<br><br>This educational level may be demonstrated by:<br><br>• Honours degree (named above);<br>• Possession of equivalent qualifications;<br>• Prior experiential learning, the outcome of which can be demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required;<br>• Or a combination of formal qualifications and experiential learning which, taken together, can be |

|  | demonstrated to be equivalent to formal qualifications otherwise required. |
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|  | APEL (Accreditation of Prior Learning) |
|  | 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: |
|  | • Related academic or work experience<br>• The quality of the personal statement<br>• A strong academic or other professional reference<br>• OR a combination of these factors |
|  | Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case. |
|  | Language requirements |
|  | 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. |
|  | • IELTS 6.5 (or equivalent) is required, with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four skills.<br>• 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** | Offers will be made based on the following selection criteria, which applicants are expected to demonstrate: |

|  | • Sufficient prior knowledge and experience of and/or potential in animation practice to be able to successfully complete the programme of study, and have an academic or professional background in a relevant subject<br>• Knowledge of visual culture and an ability to engage in critical discussion |
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# Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

## Year 1

| Percentage of Scheduled Learning | 21 |
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| **Awards** | **Credits** |
| Postgraduate Certificate (Exit Only) | 60 |
| Postgraduate Diploma (Exit Only) | 120 |

# Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

| Aim/Outcome | Description |
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| 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 the relevant 3D computer animation 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 computer animation industry. |
| Aim | To equip you with a comprehensive and critical understanding of the core principles and technology of 3D computer animation that underpin your creative projects within a theoretical framework. |
| 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 computer animation 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 3D computer animation (Enquiry); |

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| 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 3D computer animation 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 a 3D computer animation (Enquiry); |
| Outcome | Demonstrate use of appropriate design, theoretical, technical and media skills to produce advanced 3D computer animation practice (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 (Process); |
| Outcome | Work independently and collaboratively with your peers and filmmakers or with those from different disciplines (Process) |

| | Distinctive Features |
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| 1 | Design, creation and animation of traditional CGI and real-time 3D experience: Discerning empathy for the experience of the audience, whilst collaborating with a different range of disciplines is a central significant skill that we seek to develop and nurture. Adapting a creative idea or vision from the static to the animated requires a keen understanding of film language as well as strong animations and design skills. Planning for a linear time-based project versus an interactive/360° storytelling experience requires distinct pipelines that our students will be well prepared for. |
| 2 | Specialism and Visual Voice: Students are encouraged to see themselves as specialists in their field, pushing the boundaries of what is possible within the world of 3D computer animation. Students are stimulated to create strongly performed animations seeking to express themselves through their own unique style while developing desirable high-end technical specialist skills. |
| 3 | Learning from the Professionals: Through masterclasses and lectures from visiting practitioners such as animators, directors and producers, the students will be directly inspired and immersed within a field that's constantly evolving. Understanding and responding to the current trends in 3D Animation practice will be a key part of developing a relevant skillset, towards working in the industry as a team member or independent animation artist. Observing a practitioner's presentation methods can also ameliorate the students' ability to present ideas, pitching to clients and debating their own work as well as that of their peers. LCC's close proximity to many established London animation studios makes it very convenient for industry speakers and ALs and will facilitate mentoring opportunities and work placements for students. Regular peer and industry reviews of 'dailies' build up resilience and ability to present work in a professional context, as the ability to receive feedback is as important as being able to present. |
| 4 | Technical skills development within a strong studio culture: the expectation is that applicants come with an existing skill set in 3D computer animation and have sought to do an MA in order to build in areas of specialism and experimentation with collaborations across the screen school. Using high quality rigs for their animation will ensure they gain excellent animation skills, able to convey emotion and impact through movement, and are ready to work in the industry as highly skilled 3D animators. Through engagement with a range of industry professionals and permanent teaching staff, students will have access to workshops that build in complexity from intermediate to advanced levels across 3D computer animation skills. As an example, within the collaborative unit, 3D Computer Animation students could form partnerships with Lighting Artists from the MA VFX or Game Designers from MA Games, towards creating short sequences that follow the working practices of the teams of specialists within the Animation, Games and VFX |

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| | Industries. Studio practice within a base-room will encourage peer-learning and good attendance, modelling the studio practices of established Animation and VFX companies. |
| 5 | Creative and critical skills development: students will be given the freedom and encouragement to nurture ideas and forms of play in their work through projects and workshops in research, experimental image and film making, and through a critical understanding and application of film language, games and immersive experience to their practice. |
| 6 | Multidisciplinary practitioners: students will be given the skills to interpret work through multiple formats and methods reflecting the demands on and opportunities for graduates in the current 3D computer digital landscape with industry standard software and contemporary approaches towards the creation of flat screen and immersive 3D experiences. |
| 7 | Experimental practice: The course is firmly rooted in experimental practice of new 3D computer animation, MR and VR software and the course ensures that students are equipped with both a technical and critical skillset that allows them to produce a portfolio of innovative 3D computer practice from within the film, game and design field. |
| 8 | Programme Community: The course will be established within the Screen School programme which will allow well as access to the production resources in these areas you will have access to a broad range of industry speakers from these disciplines and develop peer group relationships that will enable collaboration across disciplines. Collaborations between the different Courses from the Screen School, such as MA Games Design and MA VFX would produce exciting and fruitful meetings of minds and ideas. |
| 9 | Portfolio and showreel building: The practice-based nature of the course is derived from the understanding that the primary tool for successful graduate progression in this field is the portfolio of work. The course aims to give students the opportunity to build a strong portfolio of critically agile work over the course that will enable them to progress to their chosen destinations. These projects may manifest themselves in the portfolio and online websites/blogs as outcomes such of high 3D computer technical knowledge for films, animations, games, web projects, VR/ AR projects, special effect for fiction, documentary, TV or live events including hybrid experimentation. |

**Course Detail**

In an era of unparalleled opportunities for skilled visual players and sequential image-makers, our students will create, explore and play with 3D digital technologies towards developing a specialist personal practice. Through experimentation and learning of advanced technical skills, they will instigate innovative approaches that are driven by critical understanding and self-reflection.

During the course, students will create 3D computer animation sequences and assets, both individually and as part of creative teams comprising students from different media disciplines. Collaborative work will form an important part of the course philosophy – working with external industry partners as well as courses within LCC such as MA Games Design, MA Illustration, MA Visual Effects and MA Animation.

The course curriculum will give particular emphasis to three areas:

● *Animation for Film and Television:* This course component will prepare the student to be a specialist 3D Animator, with an ability to animate stylised/exaggerated/cartoon characters. Building on the principles of animation, cinematography and film language, the students will explore storytelling and characterisation within short animated sequences, web and television and/or short films.

● *VFX Animation:* With an emphasis on natural movement towards photorealistic visualisations, creature animation and special effects.

*Animation for Games and Immersive Storytelling:* This course component will prepare the animator to be a specialist in 3D animation for real-time animation, environment design, interactive design, VR/AR and 360°storytelling.

**Course Units**

**Term One (10 weeks)**

● 1.1 3D Computer Animation Fundamentals (40 credits)

● 1.2 Design for Animation, Narrative Structures & Film Language (20 Credits) (This unit is shared with other MIDA MA courses)

**Term Two and Three (20 weeks)**

● 2.1 Advanced and Experimental 3D Computer Animation techniques (40 credits)

-        2.2 Collaborative Unit (20 Credits) – term two only.

**Term Four (5+10 weeks)**

-        3.1 Final Major Project + Thesis (60 Credits)

(Part of the Thesis delivery of seminar is shared with other MIDA MA courses)

In term one students will explore a range of both technical and conceptual approaches to 3D computer animation and real-time motion graphics. Work will explore technologies and processes by producing short form animation across the 3D computer animation spectrum to set briefs. They will also engage in a programme of theoretical seminars that explore the cinematic, conceptual and interactive underpinning of this practice. This phase is the technical and academic basis for the subsequent phases of the course. The students will be provided with high quality rigs of characters/objects that will ensure that their practice immediately focuses within animation, rather than modelling or rigging, that – when anything less than perfect – hinder the production of fluid and well-crafted 3D computer animation. Anatomy as well as drawing and acting classes will help the students towards creating animations that brim with style, gesture and impactful posing.

In terms two and three students will specifically engage in experimental 3D computer animation process and practice, developing their distinct visual voice, and this is underpinned by critical study that significantly expands their understanding of what themes animation can address in a critical context and across interdisciplinary fields. A technical programme that ensures students are able to experiment widely with various 3D computer animation techniques underpins this practice. Pushing the boundary of what 3D computer animation can deliver, exploring formats from flat screen, to AR & VR, new potential interactive approaches and games. Term two specifically contains the cross-college collaborative unit. Students will also receive a firm grounding in scheduling and time management skills, ensuring that the work is not only delivered by the required deadline, but also thoroughly explored and highly developed within the given time frame.

In term four students will take the knowledge, skills and experience from the first two phases of the course and synthesise these through the production of a self-directed longer form project or interdisciplinary project and associated thesis.

**Learning and Teaching Methods**

Students will be supported in the completion of projects through engagement in lectures, seminars and formative critiques. The development of their practice will be fostered through the completion of technical workshops and software training, peer reviews, group and individual critiques.

## Assessment Methods

The course is assessed entirely through the completion and submission of coursework which, dependent on the nature of individual units, can range from design portfolios and moving image products through to written research project and thesis papers. Assessment methodologies present on the course include, but are not limited to-

· Review of research and design development portfolios

· Submission of interactive and immersive artefacts and showreels

· Written essays and research project

· Presentations and formal critiques

· Exhibition of project portfolios

## 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 | MA 3D Computer Animation

| Autumn Term (Term 1 | 11 Weeks) | Spring Term (Term 2 | 10 weeks) | Summer Term (Term 3 | 15 weeks) | Undergraduate Summer Period (14 weeks) | Autumn Term (Term 4 | 10 weeks) |
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**Autumn Term (Term 1 | 11 Weeks)** — Week 0, week 1, week 2, week 3, week 4, week 5, week 6, week 7, week 8, week 9, Week 10, week 11

**Spring Term (Term 2 | 10 weeks)** — week 12, week 13, week 14, week 15, week 16, week 17, week 18, week 19, week 20, week 21

**Summer Term (Term 3 | 15 weeks)** — week 22, week 23, week 24, week 25, week 26, week 27, week 28, week 29, week 30, week 31, week 32, week 33, week 34, week 35, week 36

**Undergraduate Summer Period (14 weeks)**

**Autumn Term (Term 4 | 10 weeks)** — Week 37, Week 38, Week 39, Week 40, Week 41, Week 42, Week 43, Week 44, Week 45, Week 46, Week 47

Freshers Week

Start of Undergrauate Year

**Autumn Term units:**
- 1.1 3D Computer Animation Fundamentals (40 credits)
- 1.2 Design for Animation, Narrative Structures & Film Language (20 credits)

Christmas Break

**Spring Term units:**
- 2.1 Advanced and Experimental 3D Computer Animation Techniques (40 credits) **S S** **F**
- 2.2 Collaborative Unit (20 credits) **S**

Easter Break

**Summer Term units:**
- 2.1 Advanced and Experimental 3D Computer Animation Techniques (40 credits) cont. **S**
- 3.1 Final Major Project + Thesis (60 credits) **F**

**Undergraduate Summer Period:**
- PG Summer Break Independent Study / Writing Up Period

Freshers week

Start of Undergraduate year

**Autumn Term (Term 4):**
- PG Overlap Period with new year intake
- 3.1 Final Major Project + Thesis (60 credits) cont. **F** **S**
- PG Shows

S = Summative Assessment Point (Your Assignment Brief will give you details on the deadline date, time and how to hand in your assignment)

Formative assessment points will be indicated by your tutor in your unit handbooks or assignment brief

*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.*