BA Animation

Programme Specification 2020/21

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 6 Degree
Course Credits	360
Mode	Full Time
Duration of Course	3 years
Valid From	September 1st 2020
Course Entry Requirements	**Home/EU/International** The course team welcomes applicants from a broad range of backgrounds from all over the world. The course attracts students who apply direct from A-level (or equivalent) or from Foundation Diploma in Art and Design, or other art or design courses, as well as mature students who may have previously worked in industry. **The standard entry requirements for this course are as follows:** 96 UCAS tariff points which can be made up of one or a combination of the following accepted full level 3 qualifications: • A Levels at grade C or above (preferred subjects include: English; History; Media; Business; Art and Design, or other subjects within Social Sciences). • Pass at Foundation Diploma in Art & Design (Level 3 or 4). • Merit, Merit, Merit at BTEC Extended Diploma (preferred subjects: Art and Design, IT & Computing). • Merit at UAL Extended Diploma. • Access to Higher Education Diploma (preferred subject: Digital and Creative Media, Film and Production, Computing).

	• OR equivalent EU/International qualifications, such as International Baccalaureate Diploma at 24 points minimum
	
	And 3 GCSE passes at grade 4 or above (grade A*-C)
	
	APEL - Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) 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
	    • The quality of the personal statement
	    • A strong academic or other professional reference
	    • A combination of these factors.
	
	Each application will be considered on its own merit but we cannot guarantee an offer in each case.
	
	English Language requirements (InternationalEU)
	
	IELTS level 6.0 or above, with at least 5.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking. Please check our main [English language requirements](#) page for more information.
	
	All classes are conducted in English. If English is not your first language you will be asked to provide evidence of your English language ability when you enrol.

Selection Criteria	The portfolio, along with the details on your UCAS application (including the academic reference and your personal statement) will be assessed against the following criteria:
	
	    ▪ Evidence of ideas generation: quality of ideas and expression of conceptual thinking
	    ▪ Technical skills and experimentation with visual creativity, demonstrated in your own creative work
	    ▪ Materials and media exploration and experimentation: experimentation and testing of

	materials in realisation of concept ▪ An understanding of the need for a critical and analytical approach (through research and practice) to this area of study
Scheduled Learning and Teaching	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 delivered through a combination of live, synchronous and asynchronous on-line learning. This is often described as blended learning. Definitions of our learning and teaching modes can be found here.

Awards and Percentage of Scheduled Learning

Year 1

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	33
Awards	**Credits**
Certificate of Higher Education	120

Year 2

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	28
Awards	**Credits**
Diploma of Higher Education	240

Year 3

Percentage of Scheduled Learning	22
Awards	**Credits**
Bachelor of Arts	360

Course Aims and Outcomes

The Aims and Outcomes of this Course are as follows:

Aim/Outcome	Description
Aim	Provide a challenging and stimulating specialist educational experience that enables you to work in animation as a specific discipline but also to understand its application in interdisciplinary practice.
Aim	Ensure you have the digital and cross-media production skills needed to engage with the creative industries in experimental and innovative ways.
Aim	Develop a professional understanding of the role of an animator through professional research, studio visits, live projects, competitions and industry links.
Aim	Encourage you to develop creative, innovative and experimental approaches to animation practice by being critically engaged, analytical practitioners who can communicate and exchange ideas in a range of contexts
Aim	Enable you to develop a strong portfolio that will allow you to progress to the creative industries or further Postgraduate study.
Aim	Provide you with the opportunity for progression to Postgraduate courses.
Outcome	Demonstrate critically informed knowledge of the principles, methodologies and technologies used in Animation production. (Knowledge)
Outcome	Produce a range of creative work that will demonstrate your personal development and ability to work to a standard necessary for progression to the creative industries and/ or Postgraduate study. (Process / Realisation / Knowledge)
Outcome	Use a variety of key communication, interpersonal and enterprise skills required for effective practice in industry. (Communication)
Outcome	Demonstrate a critically informed knowledge of the history and practice of animation as a specialist discipline. (Enquiry / Knowledge)
Outcome	Show personal visual development through creative animation practice by demonstrating an understanding of animation in an interdisciplinary

	context. (Enquiry / Process)
Outcome	Work in creative teams and make a significant contribution to joint creative outcomes, accommodating change and uncertainty as part of the creative process. (Communication / Process)
Outcome	Adopt an evaluative and experimental approach in applying and using a variety of techniques and equipment in creating animation and other time-based media for a diverse range of audiences. (Realisation)
Outcome	Benefit from the critical judgement of others and recognise your personal strengths and needs and in response set realistic goals, priorities and action plans. (Personal and Professional Development)

	Distinctive Features
1	You will learn core traditional skills and principles in animation to underpin any future specialism such as 3D Digital Animation and Modelling or Stop-motion animation, as well as 2D analogue and digital.
2	You will be taught drawing as a key skill that informs all aspects of your subject knowledge and technical expertise. Solid drawing underpins strong animation and design skills and enables you to express your creative ideas with skill and dexterity.
3	A strong emphasis on communication and presentation skills giving you the confidence and ability to articulate your ideas and communicate with colleagues and clients in a professional context.
4	Digital animation is taught intensively from year one onwards to students who choose 3D Computer Animation or Games Arts as their specialism, recognising the particular demands in becoming skilled in this technique and the levels of expertise expected of graduates by the industry.
5	Students work in teams throughout the course and are encouraged to develop an appreciation and understanding of the importance of roles and specialisms within a project collaboration, which helps prepare them for a career in the industry
6	Collaboration and communities of practice flourish most notably as animation is a key part of the Interaction and Visual Communication programme. You will benefit from close collaboration with the other UG courses, sharing knowledge, practice and common approaches.
7	You will have the possibility to learn your craft in a range of animation techniques supported by a skilled core teaching team who are also practitioners with a range of specialist skills, working in the creative industries.
8	The course actively encourages students to identify and explore outcomes beyond traditional formats, equipping graduates with the ability to be able to offer multi-disciplinary solutions.
9	Industry led and mentored 'Live' projects and competitions are delivered in collaboration with external industry partners giving you the opportunity to practice your skills in a professional context and to build a professional portfolio of work - previous industry partners include: Channel 4, MTV, National Trust, All Saints Records, Marmite, The Royal Society
10	London is now the recognised European centre of media employment. BA (Hons) Animation, as one of few courses of its kind in Greater London uses its location as a key asset, giving students access to the specialist creative industries and other colleges within the University, and a network of professionals and key industry

	partners.
11	The course encourages you to consider your future vocation and prepares you for employment within your specialist field by enabling you to acquire a broad range of employment skills through work placement and professional practice units, building a strong portfolio of professional work, and by ensuring that you are able to respond positively to developments within the creative industries.

Course Detail

In Year 1 you'll learn skills in pre-production and design for animation, and different animation production techniques – 2D hand-drawn, 2D digital, 3D digital and stop-motion – before working towards a specialist area.

Key characteristics of the four pathways are:

- Animation Arts pathway builds on the existing practice of BA (Hons) Animation in which you'll experiment with design, technique, content and format. Animation is no longer restricted to conventional formats and the course reflects this by encouraging you to explore a range of areas including performance, installation, interactive, projection mapping, short film or documentary.
- 3D Computer Animation pathway is designed with industry professional practice at the forefront.

  It will equip you with the specialist skill set required to create 3D digital art within established industries such as animation, film, television, and games, or empower you to push the envelope with emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Mixed Reality (MR).

  You'll gain an understanding of the software, workflow and pipeline principles that underpin this specialist area as you use them to bring to life digital worlds and characters.
- Visual Effects (VFX) pathway gives you the experience and skills to work in the film, television and animation industries, having the particular skills to be able to create through digital techniques, characters, objects, environments and effects that are not seen in front of the camera, but are integral to the imagined world.

  You'll study rendering and composition tools, procedural effects such as fire and tornadoes, and learn how to build digital creatures and characters. You'll work in close collaboration with BA Animation students across the other pathways and will be supported in collaborations outside of your discipline.

- Game Arts pathway engages you with a wide range of current and emerging gaming platforms. The increased demand for games along with the increase in processing power of our digital devices means that games are becoming more complex in terms of visual content and animation.

  Consumers playing on devices from games consoles to smartphones are now expecting much more in terms of visual feedback from their games. This pathway would prepare animators to use not only traditional framed based techniques

but also procedural, real-time animation approaches.

What can you expect?

BA (Hons) Animation will actively encourage you to investigate formats and explore outcomes beyond the traditional modes associated with animation - such as installation, virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), live performance, projection mapping, short film documentary to equip graduates with the ability to offer multi-disciplinary solutions.

The course looks at animation production in a broad context, providing an intensive and team-based experience, in which you develop expertise in the whole production process. You'll learn how to deal with the challenges of a professional animator – the importance of flexibility and the value of entrepreneurial skills.

You'll be taught drawing as a key skill that informs all aspects of your subject knowledge and technical expertise.

The course places a strong emphasis on developing your communication and presentation skills, giving you the confidence to articulate your ideas to colleagues and clients in a professional context.

Work experience and opportunities

Industry-led and mentored live projects and competitions are delivered in collaboration with external industry partners. You'll have the opportunity to practice your skills in a professional context and to build a strong portfolio of work.

Previous industry partners include Channel 4, MTV, National Trust, All Saints Records, Marmite, The Royal Society, Horniman Museum, Tate, Paperchase, Hostelworld, Protein Dance, Nutkhut, V&A Museum of Childhood, Westfield and The Rivers Trust.

The course is designed to ensure you'll benefit from access to the specialist creative industries in London, as well as other Colleges within the University, a network of professionals and key industry partners.

Course Structure

The academic year for this course is divided into 2 blocks.

The 1st block is of 15 weeks' duration from late September to mid-February. In accordance with the University timetable, there will be a four week holiday in December.

The 2nd block is also of 15 weeks' duration from mid-February to the end of June with a

four week holiday for Easter.

Mode of Study

BA (Hons) Animation runs for 93 weeks in full time mode. It is divided into 3 stages over 3 academic years. Each stage lasts 31 weeks

Course Units

Year 1

All students take the same units in Year 1, although the projects will vary in the Visual Narrative unit focusing their proposed pathway specialism.

Introduction to Animation

This unit introduces you to the course and its subject specialism as well as to effective learning and studentship at an undergraduate level. There's a focus on theory and practical skills development that will encourage you to explore the wider college facilities such as print workshops and photography studios.

Production principles

This unit introduces you to the fundamental terminology, technology and craft skills that underpin all areas of animation across all pathways. You will work in stop-motion, 2D drawn animation (both analogue and digital), rostrum camera and 3D computer animation.

The unit covers a range of key production areas including the principles of animation, design for animation, character design, storytelling and performance. This unit focuses on short projects developed through skills-based workshops.

Visual Narrative

This unit extends the Principles of Animation unit, giving you a deeper understanding of how a narrative is constructed visually. All students will follow this unit, but you will also have the option of exploring your preferred area of specialism.

You'll attend workshops and taster sessions relating to pathway options. The workshops will give a basic introduction to the fundamentals of visual effects, 3D computer animation, game arts, stop-motion and 2D animation.

The shared delivery includes working with sound, creative writing, story development and its translation into visual formats, visual literacy, film language, and editing techniques.

You will be required to select your area of specialism towards the end of this unit.

Contextual and Theoretical Studies 1

This unit introduces you to histories, theories and debates in relation to animation and visual and material culture. It focuses on the development of ideas in design and explores the common themes and relationships that occur between theory and culture. You will examine animation in a range of media and through a variety of representations.

Year 2

All pathways will follow the same unit structure to enable the opportunity for collaboration across the pathways, however the content and delivery will be differentiated to reflect the specialisms.

Pathway Units

This unit builds on the learning developed in Year 1, advancing your skills in the technical and practical skills of your chosen area of specialism.

You'll learn skills through studio projects, some of which will work across other pathways to encourage and facilitate collaborations.

- **Principles of Animation Arts:** students following the Animation Arts will build on the existing practice of BA (Hons) Animation, experimenting with design, technique, content and format.

   Animation is no longer restricted to conventional formats and the course reflects this by encouraging you to explore a range of areas including performance, installation, interactive, projection mapping, short film or documentary.

- **Principles of Visual Effects:** students following the Visual Effects pathway will be encouraged to develop concepts and articulate them through a variety of visual effect techniques such as: tracking, rotoscoping, greenscreen, grading, matte painting, compositing, projections, CG integration, reconstruction, simulations and shooting for Visual Effects.

- **Principles of Game Arts:** students following the Game Arts pathway will focus on developing an understanding of the fundamentals of animation for games: Game Narratives, Digital fundamentals, Game Assets, Design and Concept, CGI Foundation.

- **Principles of 3D Computer Animation:** students following the 3D Computer Animation pathway will focus on developing an understanding of the

fundamentals of 3D digital animation: modelling, key-framing, animating and rigging.

- **Introduction to Professional Practice**

This is also a shared unit across all pathways to open up the possibility of collaboration. The unit focuses on work-based learning, competitions and/ or live projects that will be initiated, mentored and judged in collaboration with external industry and cultural partners. Work placement and/ or live project opportunities will enable students to experience the professional world they will eventually be working in.

This experiential learning environment will support the development of skills and tools that are necessary for professional practice.

Exploratory Practice: Animation Arts/ Visual Effects/ 3D Computer Animation/ Game Arts

Whichever pathway you take, you will explore the application of your skills through a selection of longer form projects. At this level, you'll be encouraged to enquire about your own personal and unique approach to your subject area.

Technical skills workshops will continue on all pathways. These include:

- **Visual Effects:** Rotoscoping, Tracking and match moving, Lighting and rendering, Performance Animation (motion capture), Digital paint, simulations, lens distortion, and shooting for Visual Effects.

- **Game Arts:** Game flow, Digital sculpture, Character animation, Experimental games, Design for interaction, Performance animation.

- **3D Computer Animation:** Cameras, Lighting, rendering, Materials texturing, UV mapping, Maya dynamics, Animation task and skinning, Digital sculpture – Mudbox.

Contextual and Theoretical Studies 2

Following on from Contextual and Theoretical Studies 1, this unit is shared unit across all pathways and will introduce you to the histories, theories and debates in relation to animation, games, VFX and visual and material culture.

Year 3

All pathways will follow the same unit structure to provide the opportunity for collaboration across the pathways, however, the content and delivery will be

differentiated to reflect the specialisms.

Final Major Project: Animation Arts/ Visual Effects/ 3D Computer Animation/ Game Arts

The Final Major Project is a collaborative project that allows you to make a significant contribution to a major project in a specialist role within a small production team.

This is an opportunity to exploit and exhibit the skills developed over the course. You'll work together with a carefully formed team, based on interests and specialisms.

Professional Practice

This unit builds on the experiences gained through Year 2 Introduction to Professional Practice. There's a focus on tailoring skills towards a specific role within the industry and on developing professional methods and tools of presentation such as CV and personal website.

The unit will contribute towards your portfolio of work. This experience will give you the opportunity to make introductions to contacts in the animation and creative industries.

Contextual and Theoretical Studies 3

This unit is a culmination of the Contextual and Theoretical Studies component of the course. the subject of the work will be based on a written proposal and research produced at the end of the second year -it can be directly linked to other Year 3 units.

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Seminars
- Study Visits
- Personal Tutorials
- Group Tutorials
- Lectures
- Workshops

Assessment Methods

- Supervision
- Tutorials
- Peer review
- Report
- Presentation
- Lectures
- Seminar

- Tutorials
- Workshops supporting individual and group needs
- Guest lectures
- Self-assessment document
- Reflective diary

Reference Points

The following reference points were used in designing the course:

- The College Learning and Teaching Strategy
- The College Assessment Strategy
- The College approach to Personal and Professional Development
- The Learning and Teaching policies of the University of the Arts London
- University of the Arts London Level Descriptors
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
- QAA Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies Benchmark statement
- Course forums whereby students on similar courses had direct input into course design and structure
- Industry panel feedback

Course Diagram

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15		Week 16	Week 17	Week 18	Week 19	Week 20	Week 21	Week 22	Week 23	Week 24	Week 25	Week 26	Week 27	Week 28	Week 29	Week 30

Level 4 – Year 1

Block 1 | **Block 2**

- Introduction to Animation (20 credits) — S (Week 11)
- Production Principles (40 credits) — S (Week 14)
- CTS1 (20 credits) — S (Week 25)
- Visual Narrative (40 credits) — S (Week 28)

Level 5 – Year 2

Block 1 | **Block 2**

- Principles of Animation Arts (40 credits) — S
- Principles of Visual Effects (40 credits) — S
- Principles of Games Arts (40 credits) — S
- Principles of 3D Computer Animation (40 credits) — S
- Introduction to Professional Practice (20 credits) — S
- Exploratory Practice: Animation Arts (40 credits) — S
- Exploratory Practice: Visual Effects (40 credits) — S
- Exploratory Practice: Game Arts (40 credits) — S
- Exploratory Practice: Computer Animation (40 credits) — S
- CTS2 (20 credits) — S

End of Block

Level 6 – Year 3

Block 1 | **Block 2**

- Final Major Project (60 credits) — S — Final Major Project
- Contextual and Theoretical Studies 3 (40 credits) — S
- S — Final Major Project — S
- Professional Practice (20 credits) — S

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