Programme Specification

Title:

Animation and Visual Effects

Final Award: Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons))

With Exit Awards at:
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons))

To be delivered from: 1 Sep 2017

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1. Introduction
This document describes one of the University of Lincoln's programmes using the protocols required by the UK National Qualifications Framework as defined in the publication *QAA guidelines for preparing programme specifications*.

This programme operates under the policy and regulatory frameworks of the University of Lincoln.
2. Basic Programme Data

Final Award: Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons))
Programme Title: Animation and Visual Effects
Exit Awards and Titles
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons))

Subject(s) Animation and Visual Effects

Mode(s) of delivery
Full Time
Part Time

Is there a Placement or Exchange? No

UCAS code W270

Awarding Body University of Lincoln
Campus(es) Lincoln Campus

School(s) Lincoln School of Film and Media

Programme Leader Sultan Efe (SEfe)

Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements

Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body Accreditation

Programme Start Date 2020-21
3. Programme Description

3.1 Overview
The BA (Hons) Animation and Visual Effects degree prepares students for careers in animation and associate creative industries and postgraduate study. The course explores the fundamentals of animation, storytelling, performance, design, drawing, 3D modelling, 2D and CG animation, compositing, animation theory and the production of short films. The course recognises the expectations of the creative industries, audience demand and the rapid change in technology for production and evolving platforms for the presentation of animated content.

Animation and Visual Effects at the University of Lincoln puts employability, research-led teaching, industry practices, creativity, student-led intellectual inquiry and technical expertise at the heart of its teaching and learning environment.

3.2 Aims and Objectives
The BA (Hons) Animation and Visual Effects programme aims to:

• Maintain a strong responsive curriculum as appropriate to the development and innovation of the animation medium in its application in interdisciplinary practice.

• Encourage students to develop original, authentic and experimental approaches to animation practice through research, including collaborative research between staff and student, critical thinking and critical engagement with animation and associate disciplines.

• Create a learning environment which enables students to gain a professional understanding of the role of an animator, through research, portfolio development, national and international studio visits, live projects, competitions and industry links.

• Provide students with a balance of intellectual, creative, experimental and production skills within the use of new and existing technologies.

• Provide students with a creative environment in which they can gain a critical aesthetic understanding in the art of animation in a professional context, whilst developing an individual creative vision, style and signature in their studio production. This is then securely underpinned by a clear artistic, cultural and theoretical understanding of film/digital animation art and the moving image.

• To encourage initiative and personal accountability, experience of collaborative working methods and be responsive and adaptable to change within the industry.

• Develop transferable skills and competencies which enable life-long learning.

• Enable students to develop a personal and professional portfolio that will assist their progression to the creative industries or post-graduate study.

• Create a learning and teaching environment which offers students the opportunity to integrate and share knowledge with students and staff from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

• Continue to offer an inclusive and supportive learning environment to enable students to build confidence; maximise their potential for creativity, production level skills, problem solving, research
and intellectual enquiry.

- To introduce entrepreneurial skills relevant to freelance and self-employment-based working practices through engagement with career events, personal tutorials and external collaboration.

3.3 Variations to Standard Regulations and Guidance
None
4. Programme Outcomes
Programme-level learning outcomes are identified below.

Refer to Appendix I – Curriculum Map for details of how outcomes are deployed across the programme.

4.1 Knowledge and Understanding
On successful completion of this programme a student will have knowledge and understanding of:

1. The established skills and techniques of animation.
2. A critical understanding of narrative forms in the animation genre.
3. The filmic and visual language used to articulate concepts and ideas in animation.
4. The creative potential of digital technologies in animation and its related industries.
5. The nature of technological change and the continuous development of knowledge.
6. High level of communication skills and analytical thinking.
7. The production process(es) and the roles involved in animation and their interrelationships.
8. The key professional practices and business processes necessary to underpin graduate employment in the creative industries.
9. The critical evaluation skills required for reflecting upon their own work, and that of other practitioners.
10. A critical understanding of communication and media practice and theory in the context of history, society, contemporary global culture, business and an appreciation of the significance of the work of other practitioners in animation.
11. The design process for animation.

4.2 Subject Specific Intellectual Skills
On successful completion of this programme a student will be able to:

12. Demonstrate an understanding of the skills used by the various branches of animation and how they are articulated.
13. Be intellectually curious, analytical and reflective within the processes of carrying out sustained independent enquiry; and develop the skills that underpin professional development and life-long learning.
14. Critically assess work with reference to existing and emerging professional and/or academic debates.
15. Place their own work critically in the context of business, culture, society, the environment, ethics, history, and be aware of the impact politics and economics can have on the relevance of animation.

4.3 Subject Specific Practical Skills
On successful completion of this programme a student will be able to:
16 Use visual languages to investigate, analyse, interpret, develop and articulate ideas and information.

17 Generate ideas, concepts, proposals, solutions or arguments independently and/or collaboratively in response to set briefs and/or as self-initiated activity.

18 Plan and manage projects to ensure deadlines are met and that solutions reach the standard required.

19 Experiment, select, test and make appropriate use of materials, processes, languages, techniques and practices.

20 Produce distinctive and creative work which demonstrates the effective use of sound and animated images.

21 Use digital technology creatively as part of the animation process and as a tool for presentation and communication.

22 Demonstrate drawing skills to communicate ideas, animation, character and story.

4.4 Transferable Skills and Attributes

On successful completion of this programme a student will be able to:

23 Work effectively and collaboratively with others in a team from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines.

24 Manage information in a range of media, selecting and using a variety of sources and technologies to evaluate and record/present information.

25 Work independently, setting own aims, objectives and deadlines to manage learning, workload and projects, including time, personnel and resources.

26 Articulate ideas and information in visual, oral and written forms, and communicate ideas and work clearly and appropriately to a variety of audiences, including technical and non-technical audiences.

27 Produce work that is literate, numerate and coherent, deploying established techniques of analysis and enquiry.

28 Identify, define and creatively solve problems, using appropriate knowledge, tools and methods, often in complex and unpredictable situations.

29 Demonstrate critical awareness and reflection through evaluating own strengths and weaknesses, and adapting proposals and plans accordingly.

For details of each module contributing to the programme, please consult the module specification document.
5. Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies

5.1. Learning and Teaching Strategy

5.1 Learning and Teaching Strategy

The Animation and Visual Effects course historically embeds research engaged co-creation and principles of the student as practitioner ethos in its learning and teaching strategy.

Overview:

Discovery
Students explore and analyse contextual elements of each module and principles of animation through research and reflection beyond basic course material; module content at level 1 enables students to explore, discover, exercise and research industry practices.

At level 2, students continue to explore, analyse, apply skills, define and study production methods suitable for their own pathways and develop a signature style.

Students engage in independent and self-directed study activities at level 3 and focus on their chosen pathways through completion of a short film and a dissertation.

Collaboration
Collaboration between students is achieved via team based projects, group presentations and project pitches.
Collaboration between staff and students is achieved via live project briefs, competition entries and research projects.

Engagement
Collaborative working practices between animation students and students of other departments.
Live project briefs locally and nationally.
End of year shows, field trips, Film and Animation Society and Subject committee meetings are some of the examples of the activities enabling students to engage with the wider community within and outside the University of Lincoln.

Production
At all stages of the animation and visual effects course, students engage in either self-initiated or supervised production briefs.

Context:
The teaching and learning strategy adopted within the BA (Hons) Animation and Visual Effects Programme is founded upon the experience of practice, and this is managed and mediated in the studio through a range of self-initiated, given or live projects. These range from individual work to team working and group projects.

Learning is facilitated by well qualified permanent teaching staff, by sessional staff and by visiting speakers who are practising professionals and who bring an important industry perspective to the course. Practical subjects that involve advanced and, in some cases, procedural software tools will be supported by online learning environments and video recordings, enabling students to study at their own pace. This will also enable the teaching team to engage with students with different learning styles.
Intellectual independence is one of the most important qualities required of an animation student and practitioner. By the time the student graduates, they will be expected to think of themselves as independent learners. Studio and theory modules will encourage and support them to achieve this by using flexible and varied means of teaching, learning and assessment. Students will learn to work in groups and to individually show work, write essays, reports, case studies and give oral presentations. They will learn to identify, use and evaluate a wide variety of source materials including personal testimony, show reels, photographs, shows, exhibitions, journals, digital media (including on-line sources), interactive games, films and literature. They will have the opportunity to work extensively within both traditional and contemporary (digital) mediums and technologies relevant to animation and associate disciplines.

Staff are involved in both practice and research, a dynamic made visible through the teaching process. This benefits the students, giving insight into the process of independent expression, and encouraging them to develop such approaches themselves. The independent study, final portfolio/showreel and exhibition at Level 3 offer the opportunity to demonstrate independent learning.

A wide range of teaching and learning methods are employed, appropriate to the learning outcomes of each stage or module, and these focus on the relationship between skills – cognitive and conceptual, practical and critical. Such skills are addressed in lecture, seminar, tutorial, workshop and studio sessions, and in technical demonstrations, virtual learning environments and open learning styles of delivery. The primacy of individual practice is pursued in both theory and modules with practical content.

Group Working:
Students studying the subject of Animation will engage in group activities as a part of the course, for pedagogic, practical and vocational reasons. Collaborative working cross-discipline, and with partners in other institutions, is actively encouraged. All grouped work is assessed either via individual contribution being identified on the student’s personal presentation or the grouped work is divided to allow individual response to the collaborative project to be identified and marked.

Flipped classroom:
Using a range of video recordings, online webinars and textual content, students are presented with key concepts prior to a lecture, seminar or workshop. Class time is then spent on discussions, Q&A, collaborative work and application of the knowledge.

Lectures:
Formal lectures and presentations will be used in most modules to convey information and review key concepts. They will also offer a review of key literature and guidance on further reading. A additional function of the lecture is that it can be a means of transmitting the tutor’s enthusiasm for his or her subject.

Seminars:
Seminars take a variety of forms; those with a direct relationship to workshop activities, those that are specific to Animation and those that provide knowledge and stimulus to discussion on a various issues related to contemporary graphic and time based communication. The role of seminars will vary from module to module, though the main emphasis will be upon either a fuller exploration of themes raised in a lecture programme, or the discussion of clearly defined issues which have been identified.
as being of importance in the teaching programme. As with lectures, seminars will not be regarded as having a fixed format – time will be used flexibly. In all modules, attention will be paid to the development of students’ communication skills.

Critiques and Pitch Presentations:
“Group critiques” of students’ practical work form part of the programme. “Crits” provide an important forum for discussion, with a high level of participation and input from students. They are an opportunity to critique both individual and group work, and are a way of generating and examining ideas quickly and in a stimulating group environment.

Tutorials:
Tutorials are conducted either on a one to one basis with a tutor, or with a group of students and a tutor for group project work. They offer personal and specific feedback, help and guidance intended to provide academic support and encouragement.

Workshops and Technical Tutorials:
Skills-based workshops support the learning of the practical skills required in order to undertake the projects. These are sometimes based on prescriptive exercises, sometimes on free exploration. A typical structure would be an hour’s demonstration, followed by two hours' supervised practical work, but other arrangements are also used. These workshops will form part of the teaching and learning methods in some modules. There will be sessions in which the emphasis is primarily on practical activities, such as using computers or working with craft technologies and these will usually have a task orientation. However, discussion and debate will also form an important part of these sessions. In addition, individual time for technical tutorials (that is, feedback and advice regarding the means and manner of production) has been allocated in some modules to support students’ independent work on projects.

Project-based working:
Throughout the course, there is an emphasis on project-based work. Projects may be:

- Self-initiated, undertaken to allow the student to show his/her individual interests, based on his/her motives and methods.
- “Live” and “Simulated Live”, giving experience of the “real world”, with the requirement to analyse communication needs and deal with the dynamics of the relationship with a client.
- Competition work, improving the student’s professional competence, and possibly enhancing career prospects.
- Team or Collaborative work is used to develop co-operative working attitudes and methods, to develop the ability to work in a team, and to enable the student to appreciate a number of roles within design communication.

Field trips/Festivals/Online Webinars/Exhibitions
The Animation and Visual Effects course is studio-based with an emphasis on simulated industry practices. Trips to animation, games and VFX studios as well as festivals offer an enhanced experience and environment. Field trips and student engagement with industry practitioners help students to

- maintain their focus to ensure they have an engaging educational experience
- have the opportunity to see new and emerging technologies and working practices in the industry
- Embrace the significance and importance of their learning
• Identify the progress and pace of their learning
• Identify the anticipated industry expectations
• Interact with students of different year groups and departments.

Information Technology:

Information Communications Technologies lie at the centre of this course, not only relating to the means of production and design but also to access information and learning facilities. The curriculum uses a wide variety of IT platforms and software applications and makes appropriate use of available on-line information in project work.

Key IT tools and environments used in the animation course are:
Industry standard production tools such as Maya, Mudbox, Zbrush, TV Paint and Adobe Software.

Project management software such as Shotgun Studio enabling staff and students to comment and offer audio visual feedback on student work in progress.

Render farm enabling students to do iterative work, work in teams and deliver project outcomes within agreed deadlines.

Ethics:
Ethics are introduced in the Research Methods module, and have to be considered in each piece of publishable work. The consideration of ethics is contained in each assignment brief, and as such will be considered during marking.

Personal Development Planning (PDP):
Throughout the programme students will be supported to critically reflect upon their learning and achievements so they may plan effectively for further study and career opportunities. This is known as Personal Development Planning (PDP) and along with a transcript of marks it forms a Progress File for the student. PDP is an active learning process that students manage for themselves with the support of the personal tutorial sessions. It will become a resource that they can then use to generate CVs and statements for a range of applications, as well as enabling reflection upon their own learning experience as a means of informing future personal and professional direction.

Personal tutorial sessions will be used to support students for the planning and execution of the PDP at all levels. Students will be able to finalise their PDP by completing the Showreel & Portfolio Development module at level 3.

Project briefs, deliverables and assessment criteria will include references to presenting and recording final output and progress with breakdowns. This will then be amalgamated as a coherent, professional portfolio ready for graduate level employment and/or postgraduate study.

5.2. Assessment Strategy
Overview

The assessment strategies adopted within the BA (Hons) Animation and Visual Effects Programme
are:

Formative assessment:
- Weekly progress meetings and feedback sessions in the studio and via online assessment and feedback tools
- Mid-term formative assessment and feedback sessions through crits, one to one tutorials and student presentations
- Academic and personal one to one tutorial sessions

Summative assessment:
- Peer assessment for team based projects, pitch presentations and final output
- Student self-assessment and project evaluation
- Double marking, internal and external moderation of assessed work
- Alternative assessment methods are arranged for students with special needs

Context:
The Assessment Map gives a top-level indication of the scheduling and distribution of assessment modes within the programme. Details of module assessment strategy are included with each module specification.
- The fundamental approach to assessment recognises that the acquisition of knowledge is cumulative, and requires students to demonstrate this at different levels. Achievement of learning outcomes is facilitated by systems of academic guidance and supervision designed to ensure that a common understanding of progress is gained and strategies for improvement defined.
- Assessment is not seen as separate from the learning process as throughout the professional life of the student and practitioner, continuous assessment through student/ staff contact and peer contact, are integral with the creative process. Throughout all studio practice there are elements of trial and error and continuous objective and subjective analysis through debate between individual students, student groups and staff.
- Students receive regular feedback, both verbal and written. Individual and group tutorials, considering work in progress, are scheduled on a regular basis and a multi-part tutorial feedback form is used to record progress since the previous tutorial, feedback on work at its current position, and advice on how to proceed. Both staff and students participate in the completion of this form, and the student receives a copy. The group critiques are a means of facilitating verbal peer group feedback as well as staff feedback.
- The knowledge, skill and understanding required in the Animation course are identified in the activities of responding, generating ideas, making and evaluating, which form the four interrelated and inter-dependent key elements of the assessment process.
- A generic set of assessment criteria are applied to the assessment process. This list of criteria is a guide – although many of them will normally apply to each module, others may not. Emphasis may be placed on particular criteria, in relation to a particular project. Additional criteria are also applied which are project specific.
- Assessment, at the end of a module of study, is through the completion and submission of a variety of assessment items (for example animation productions, related research portfolios, and written work) as appropriate to the learning outcomes of the module. A standard assessment/ feedback form, based on the generic set of assessment criteria, is completed, on which performance levels in particular aspects/ stages of the module are recorded together with written feedback and a mark.
- In larger modules there are formal review points. Documentation is completed as described above
for formal assessment, but the mark given is indicative ("performance in the band"). Grades are given in percentages, and the grade scheme utilised and process followed for all assessment is that as defined by the University quality module procedures for undergraduate assessment.

• Students experience a variety of assessment methods through which knowledge and skills development are tested. The teaching, learning and assessment strategy aims to facilitate a learning process in which students can develop a range of creative, cognitive, technical and personal skills, knowledge and capabilities appropriate to the subject and future career paths.

• The curriculum is designed to encourage independence in learning and the accompanying assessment strategy ensures that students receive appropriate feedback to improve skills, capabilities and awareness of how successfully they have applied an increasingly sophisticated knowledge base to their studies.

• The course integrates theory and practice to achieve vocational knowledge and understanding and include simulated and actual live projects, regular contact with the industry, and (where possible) elements of work experience. The balance between practice and theory is normally 70% and 30%.

Feed-forward activities:
Feedback will contain information on assessed work as well as information that informs subsequent work. The aim is to ensure that assessment has a developmental impact on active learning.

Indicative list of Assessment Methods

Written:
Essay writing
Dissertation

Report:
Project pitches, critical evaluations and reflective evaluations including peer evaluation
Production logs
Treatment documents detailing the initial idea generation with student’s design choices including visual style, story structures, genre and the audiences
Critical evaluations at the end of projects
Progress blogs
Research diaries

Project output (other than dissertation):
All level 1, 2 and level 3 modules will have a project output.

Oral assessment and presentation:
Presentations at level 1, 2 and level 3

Practical skills assessment
All modules apart from Pioneers of Animation, Research & Professional Practice and Dissertation modules.

Set exercises:
Drawing for Animation, Animation Principles, Storytelling & Film Language, CG Principles, CG Production Design and Digital Compositing modules will have elements of set exercises.
6. Programme Structure

The total number of credit points required for the achievement of Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE) is 120.
The total number of credit points required for the achievement of Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE) is 240.
The total number of credit points required for the achievement of Bachelor of Arts with Honours (BA (Hons)) is 360.

Level 1

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# Appendix I - Curriculum Map

This table indicates which modules assume responsibility for delivering and ordering particular programme learning outcomes.

**Key:**
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| Showreel & Portfolio Development 2022-23 | ✓    | ✓    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

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Page 18/28
## Appendix II - Assessment Map

This table indicates the spread of assessment activity across the programme. Percentages indicate assessment weighting.

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**Appendix III - Benchmark Analysis**
This table maps programme learning outcomes to relevant QAA subject benchmark statements or PSRB guidelines.

### Knowledge and Understanding

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## Subject Specific Practical Skills

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Appendix IV:
Benchmark Benchmark Statement(s)
Art01 - Present evidence that demonstrates some ability to generate ideas independently and/or collaboratively in response to set briefs and/or as self-initiated activity.

Art02 - Demonstrate proficiency in observation, investigation, enquiry, visualisation and/or making.

Art03 - Develop ideas through to outcomes that confirm the student's ability to select and use materials, processes and environments.

Art04 - Make connections between intention, process, outcome, context, and methods of dissemination.

Art05 - Knowledge and understanding of the broad critical and contextual dimensions of the student's discipline(s)

Art06 - Knowledge and understanding of the issues which arise from the artist's or designer's relationship with audiences, clients, markets, users, consumers, and/or participants.

Art07 - Knowledge and understanding of major developments in current and emerging media and technologies in their discipline(s)

Art08 - Knowledge and understanding of the significance of the work of other practitioners in their discipline(s)

Art09 - Exercise self-management skills in managing their workloads and meeting deadlines.

Art10 - Accommodate change and uncertainty.

Art11 - Analyse information and experiences, and formulate reasoned arguments.

Art12 - Benefit from the critical judgements of others and recognise their personal strengths and needs.

Art13 - Apply interpersonal and social skills to interact with others.

Art14 - Communicate ideas and information in visual, oral and written forms.

Art15 - Present ideas and work to their audiences.

Art16 - Apply information skills to navigate, retrieve, and manage information from a variety of sources.

Art17 - Select and employ communication and information technologies.