

BA (Hons) Animation

Production



ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

Course Specification

This Course Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, graduates, academic staff and potential employers. It provides a summary of the main features of the course and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

Whilst every endeavour has been made to provide the course described in the Course Specification, the University reserves the right to make such changes as may be appropriate for reasons of operational efficiency or due to circumstances beyond its control. Any changes are made in accordance with the University's academic standards and quality procedures.

This document is available in alternative formats on request.

**COURSE SPECIFICATION**

The Course Specification provides a summary of the main features of the **BA (Hons) Animation Production** course and the learning outcomes that a 'typical' student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they pass the course.

Further detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching and learning methods of each unit may be found in the Unit Descriptors, which forms part of the Course Handbook.

<b><u>Key Course Information</u></b>	
Final Award	BA (Hons)
Course Title	Animation Production
Award Title	BA (Hons) Animation Production
Teaching institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Awarding Institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Offered in the School of:	Bournemouth Film School
Professional accreditation	Screenskills
Length of course / mode of study	3 years full-time
Level of final award (in FHEQ)	Level 6
Subject benchmark statement	Art and Design Communication, Media, Film and Cultural studies
UCAS code	W615
Language of study	English
External Examiner for course:	Lesley Adams
<i>Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact external examiners directly</i>	
Date of Validation	June 2004
Date of most recent review	June 2024
Date course specification written/revised	August 2024

**Course Description**

BA (Hons) Animation Production provides the technical and creative skills required by professional animation practice. Through a combination of practical and theoretical assignments, the course develops an understanding of animation as an expansive visual language that has multiple creative applications. Its expressive outcomes can challenge the expectations of realist image-making and broaden our understanding of cinema. Animation exists at the heart of emerging moving-image technologies and production contexts, and the course curriculum provides a core set of animation skills to allow participation in multiple areas of traditional and new production processes.

The course team believes strongly in teamwork ethics and creating a collaborative community of practitioners working in a studio-based environment. In this environment, the discipline of drawing is a core learning and teaching tool, and an intensive drawing programme informs image-making in multiple animation techniques, including 2D hand-drawn, stop-motion, and 3D computer animation.

Working alongside specialist tutors and industry professionals, the course offers opportunities to develop animation practice in a range of contexts – including work-related learning, exchanges with other academic institutions, or collaborating with other courses in the creative environment at AUB.

The course connects the practice of animation to its critical and theoretical contexts, exploring both historical and conceptual underpinnings of contemporary production paradigms. By engaging both animation scholarship and practice, the course helps build a critical awareness of practical skills. This helps practitioners realise their full potential both as independent artists, but also as integral parts of a production team.

Through its collaborative, production-based approach, the course builds stamina and resilience required by professional activity and helps develop a standard of expertise in preparation for entry into professional practice or postgraduate study. It seeks to create a deeper understanding of the dynamics of teamwork through practical studio experiences. In doing so, it aims to produce socially and culturally aware practitioners who are valued in a professional environment, and who will positively contribute to the future development of animation as a creative practice.

### **Distinctive features of the course**

The course makes extensive use of traditional drawing and painting skills to underpin the development of technical abilities relevant to contemporary professional practice.

There are elective workshops to promote an exploratory approach to learning and teaching, and this allows students to navigate practice on both a group and individual basis.

The final year follows a group-based filmmaking process that simulates a real-world production scenario, helping to better prepare students for entry into professional practice.

### **Course Industry Patron Scheme**

All courses at AUB are connected formally with an industry Patron, practitioner or business that acts as a critical friend to the course and course team. Many courses work with several industry partners, but the more formal Industry Patron connection offers the opportunity to collaborate and maintain close relations with industry / business. This is a unique concept that ensures AUB courses are industry relevant and maintain current practices while providing further opportunities for students to engage with industry practitioners.

### **AUB Strategic Vision**

The BA (Hons) Animation Production course aligns to the university's strategic vision in several ways:

#### ***Innovation:***

The course develops a critical relationship between traditional approaches to production and contemporary techniques, thereby grounding innovations within proven production methods relevant to a rapidly changing field of moving-image production.

#### ***Collaboration:***

The course allows for collaboration across different student cohorts at BA and MA level. The collaborative nature of a filmmaking process is a key learning experience for students and allows them to learn experientially about ethical professional practices.

#### ***Internationalisation:***

The course is attractive to international students, who are motivated to study in this field, thereby contributing to the university's internationalisation and diversification goals.

The BA Animation course attracts the highest number of overseas applications, and the highest proportion of overseas applicants to home applicants, within the UG provision at AUB.

### **Course Aims**

The course aims to:

- Develop students' creative thinking and cultural awareness through the investigation of contemporary animation practices and historical contexts.
- Develop students' ability to analyse information and critically evaluate discourses and practices relevant to animation and its representations.
- Provide students with opportunities for creativity and innovation by applying knowledge of animation techniques to problems posed by production.
- Develop students' awareness of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits of knowledge in relation to the changing landscape of the discipline.
- Develop students' discipline-specific technical skills and transferable skills necessary for employment in the creative industries.
- Provide students with opportunities for the planning and delivery of a body of work through the effective use of time and resources.
- Develop students' ability to take ownership of learning in relation to career aspirations and professional roles.
- Encourage students to instigate effective collaboration with others as an ethically and socially responsible practitioner.

### **Course Outcomes**

On completion of the BA (Hons) Animation Production course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate creative thinking and cultural awareness through the investigation of contemporary animation practices and historical contexts.
- Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate and analyse information, discourses, and practices relevant to animation through the compiling of research and development support work in the form of learning journals, industry research analysis and dissertations.
- Demonstrate knowledge and research through the practice of animation techniques, creating innovative solutions for animation productions.
- Recognise the uncertainty, ambiguity, and limits of knowledge in relation to the changing landscape of the discipline.
- Demonstrate discipline-specific technical skills and transferable skills necessary for employment in the creative industries by developing a body of production-related animated film work.
- Plan and deliver a body of work through the effective use of time and resources.

- Demonstrate the ability to take ownership of learning in relation to career aspirations and professional roles by undertaking industry research into roles and responsibilities.
- Collaborate effectively with others as an ethically and socially responsible practitioner.

### **Reference Points**

UK Quality Code for higher education, including:

- Subject Benchmark Statement:
  - *Art and Design*
  - *Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies*
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)
- AUB LTAF and Undergraduate Assessment Regulations

### **Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies**

The Animation Production course is taught through the practical application of animation skills in a studio-based environment, supported by theoretical instruction in the historical and cultural aspects of animation practice. It is delivered using a variety of methods, including lectures, workshops, individual and group tutorials, and studio-based practice. The initial emphasis is on developing traditional drawing skills, with a particular focus on developing animation techniques by drawing animation on paper using a light-desk. As students move through the course, they are gradually introduced to different animation techniques, including 2D digital, Stop-Motion, and 3D computer animation. In their final year students work in small production teams, mirroring professional studio practices. They adopt industry-recognised production roles to take a film project from its initial design stages into production and post-production.

The collaborative nature of animation production is a key aspect of the learning and teaching environment. Students are engaged in regular peer-assisted learning activities, such as group tutorials and production meetings, where they can share work with each other and tutors. This process gives students regular opportunities to develop skills in both giving and receiving feedback, increasing their interaction with each other and their tutors, and encouraging them to play an active role in their learning. The collaborative learning environment encourages students to work together towards a common goal, giving them a greater sense of connectivity to their peers and the broader creative community at the university.

The course takes an incremental scaffolded approach to learning, with clear staging points identified as part of the production process whereby students can receive formative feedback from tutors and their peers. This feedback is communicated through a mix of group tutorials, production meetings and individual tutorials. Formative feedback sessions build gradually towards summative assessment points at the end of each block of learning. Although students work regularly in groups, each student is assessed on their individual contribution to each project.

The use of learning agreements at Level 5 and Level 6 of the course helps students to develop greater autonomy as learners. With guidance from their tutors, students can co-create their learning and assessment. They develop the ability to critically evaluate what skills they need and can negotiate the content of their portfolio to be submitted for summative assessment. Subsequently, summative assessment feedback can be used as a diagnostic tool to prepare future learning agreements. This helps students to understand their learning as a gradual iterative process and as an on-going dialogue with their tutors.

The teaching and learning methods for AUB course units have been selected as the most appropriate for the successful delivery of the syllabus, and appropriate achievement of the aims of the unit. All units involve student contact time and independent study, which come together to indicate the total study hours requirement for the unit.

The student contact hours information provided in the unit descriptors might, on occasion, be subject to some minor variation; for example, in response to student feedback, or to take advantage of unanticipated learning opportunities that would enhance the student learning experience. No changes will be made that would be to the detriment of the unit experience, or which would disadvantage student learning.

Some teaching may be delivered online when appropriate and will count as student contact hours.

## **Student Engagement**

### **Enhanced Learning through Collaboration:**

Collaborative learning in a studio-based environment helps to prepare students for the realities of working in a professional animation studio. It gives students a greater connectivity to each other as a community of practitioners. It helps develop their communication skills and personal responsibilities when working with others. It gives them the opportunity to develop greater cultural awareness of fellow practitioners who might differ from themselves.

### **Co-design of Learning:**

Students are encouraged to engage critically with their studies through regular interaction with each other and their tutors. The use of learning agreements at Level 5 and Level 6 of the course allows them to negotiate a pathway through their units in relation to learning outcomes and professional roles and responsibilities.

### **Building a Professional Portfolio:**

The course encourages the development of an individual portfolio based on the specific interests of individual students. Students have access to professional-standard software and filmmaking equipment that gives them the opportunity to create a final body of work relevant to the technical demands of junior positions in the animation industry.

**Real-World Applications and Networking:** The final year of the course simulates a real-world production environment, where students adopt recognised production roles. Students are also exposed to contemporary practice through a range of workshops and lectures delivered by industry professionals. This helps them to understand the requirements of developing a professional portfolio. At Level 6 students have an opportunity to have their portfolio reviewed by a professional practitioner to better prepare them for pursuing employment post-graduation.

## **Assessment**

Each unit is assessed separately, and the assessment forms part of the unit. Assessment both provides a measure of student achievement and provides students with regular feedback and feedforward on how their learning is developing.

For every unit of a course, we will inform students of what they are expected to learn; what they need to submit; how their work will be assessed; and the deadline for presenting work for assessment.

A minimum of one unit at Level 4 will be assessed on a pass/fail basis, with written feedback but no numerical grade. All other units will be given a percentage mark.

Students will receive a final mark for each unit in the form of a percentage, which will be recorded on a formal record of achievement (transcript). Each component of assessment is graded using a notched marking scale, whereby only certain marks are used within each grade. The only marks available within any ten-point band are \*2, \*5 and \*8 (e.g. 62, 65, 68). These marks correspond to a low, mid, and high level of achievement within each grade band.

All learning outcomes must be passed to successfully complete the unit.

On successful completion of an Honours degree course, students will be awarded a degree classification based on their unit marks. The final classification is determined using all unit marks at Levels 5 and 6.

If a student has joined Level 6 through either the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) route or having completed a Foundation Degree (FdA), the final classification is determined using only unit marks at Level 6.

For further information on assessment, progression, awards, and classifications, please visit <https://aub.ac.uk/regulations>

### **Course Structure**

All students are registered for the award of BA (Hons); however, exit awards are available if a student leaves the course early, having successfully completed one or two levels. If students successfully complete a level of the course, they will automatically be entitled to progress to the next level.

For the award of a Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE), students must have achieved a minimum of 120 credits at Level 4. This qualification may be awarded if a student leaves the University following successful completion of the first year of the course.

For the award of a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), students must have achieved a minimum of 240 credits of which a minimum of 120 must be at Level 5. This qualification may be awarded if a student leaves the University following successful completion of the second year of the course.

For the award of a BA (Hons) a student must have achieved a minimum of 360 credits of which a minimum of 240 must be at Level 5 or above, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 6. This qualification will be awarded upon successful completion of the course.

A BA without Honours may be awarded if a student achieves 300 credits, at least 180 of which are at Level 5 or above, and at least 60 of which are at Level 6.

### **Core Values and Skills**

In developing courses, the University aims to create a curriculum that reflects its values and ethos. It should prepare students for the future not only in enabling them to have a successful career, but also empower students with the knowledge, skills, and passion to have a positive impact on the world and be an agent for change. AUB has drawn from the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>) which have informed our values of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion as well as our Graduate Attributes.

## **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)**

“We are better for our diversity. We are enriched by the depth of respect we have for each other and the strength of our relationships with our people, our places, and the planet. Through our commitment to working with those who are different to us, or challenge us, we grow stronger together, creating new synergies, global connections, and sustainable futures.” (AUB Strategy 2030)

As an organisation we have moral, social and legal obligations to fulfil in terms of EDI, and in doing so our commitment is to put EDI at the heart of every area of activity. It is not covered as a separate, stand-alone section, rather it forms an integral part of the curriculum, throughout the student’s study here.

## **Graduate Attributes (GA)**

Over recent years, there has been an increasing pace of change, technological, social, environmental. This has been further impacted by the world-wide pandemic effecting significant change in the global economy and the employment market.

In this context, the University has recognised the importance of developing AUB graduates who have the attributes to be able to build their career, adapting to different circumstances and embracing changes. A suite of attributes has been defined that we feel are particularly appropriate to the creative courses that we deliver and to AUB’s core values; during the course, both curricular and extra-curricular activities will give students the opportunity to prepare for their working career.

The course will introduce students to topics which are integrated with the curriculum at every stage of learning. This will allow the student to structure their career development journey through levels 4-6 of the degree course and consider the following stages: Self Awareness, Opportunity Awareness, Decision Making and Transitioning into Work. These align to the AUB Career Readiness stages: Explore, Focus, Engage and Achieve.

In practice, this means that each unit of the course, at each Level, will include elements of career development and these will be shown explicitly in unit descriptors and outline syllabuses. Whilst students engage with these as they go through each unit, they will all come together in the final unit at each Level. Such an approach is designed to support students in the next steps they take after graduation, in whatever direction those may be, and is fundamental to degree studies.

## **Maintaining Health and Wellbeing**

Throughout the course students are encouraged to reflect on their own health and wellbeing, and to develop themselves as a healthy creative practitioner. Students will consider how to develop study and work strategies and habits which maintain and promote their own wellbeing, and to manage their professional activities in a way which safeguards their mental and physical health.

Course staff have designed the course in order that, as far as is reasonably possible, health and wellbeing are promoted. Therefore, it is vital students maintain constructive communication with their colleagues and their staff throughout their time on this course.

## **Course Content**

This course aims to develop skills and abilities required for animation production, and to prepare students for career opportunities in the animation and related creative industries. The course takes an integrated approach to the history and theory of animation practice,

where an understanding of historical developments and modes of representation in an animation context is brought into an active relationship with practical production activity.

Each level of the course is structured within three terms over a period of thirty weeks. Each individual unit of learning has its own aims and learning outcomes specific to the activities undertaken within the unit. The aims and outcomes have been designed to be iterative across different units and different levels of the course, whereby competencies of applied research, technical abilities and aspects of professionalism are measured in a way appropriate to the different levels of study.

At the end of each unit of study there is a summative assessment point, where student achievement is measured in relation to a submitted portfolio of work. At Levels 5 and 6 learning agreements are used to allow students to negotiate a pathway through their studies and help to define their personal objectives in relation to career goals.

#### **Level 4**

At this level, students are introduced to the fundamental technical and technological disciplines of animation processes through a series of practical workshops, lectures, and seminars. The fundamental principles of animation are taught through a series of practical 2D animation exercises alongside optional workshops in stop-motion and 3D computer generated animation. This allows students to develop an ability to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their work.

Historical and theoretical assignments are embedded within practice-based units, allowing students develop essential research and study skills in relation to their practical activity.

At this stage technical and technological processes are complemented by the rigorous development of drawing ability, informed by an analytical and interpretive approach to observational drawing in a variety of media and techniques. The initial exposure to fundamental techniques and essential technology helps develop a visual and technical language necessary for progression through subsequent units at Levels 5 and 6.

#### **Level 5**

At this level students learn how to apply their skills in the context of making an animated film. Practical workshop activities are focused on the development of storyboards, animatics and production stills, relating the visualisation of characters and environments to a pre-production process. Students are given the opportunity to develop skills in a particular animation technique, either 2D drawn, stop-motion or 3D computer animation. This is negotiated through a pathway process involving elective workshops where students can co-create their learning experiences with guidance from tutors. A deeper critical knowledge of particular techniques forms a link to professional development planning, which might also include work-related learning or overseas study visits.

A rigorous drawing programme continues to advance a range of established techniques in visualisation. Drawing is used as research tool to initiate and undertake critical analysis of a production brief and to explore the limits of knowledge in a production process.

Academic assignments complement practice-based units and allow students to interrogate the cultural context of their area of study. This gives students an opportunity to develop ways of communicating their findings in a variety of forms, both practical and written. They are encouraged to use key techniques of research and critical analysis to consider issues of representation in relation to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

## Level 6

At this level, students develop a systematic understanding of key aspects of a collaborative animation production process, including the acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge of a particular animation technique. Following the development of production design skills at Level 5, students apply established techniques of analysis and enquiry in a collaborative project, taking a concept from its design stages through to final production. The diverse nature of the productions and the variance in the dynamic of each team requires tailored tutor guidance specific to each individual production.

Through their Investigative Study students engage in research activity, making appropriate use of literary and audio-visual resources in exploring the conceptual limits of their discipline.

Individual research activity also takes the form of Professional Development, where students investigate an area of contemporary practice relevant to their career ambitions. They can exercise initiative and personal responsibility in developing a portfolio appropriate for pursuing post-graduate study or initiating professional practice.

### **Specialist resources:**

- This course has a dedicated studio for 2D traditional, digital and 3D computer animation.
- Course areas dedicated to fabrication and filmmaking for stop-motion animation.
- Access to professional level hardware/software.
- Excellently resourced library.
- Specialist arts institute campus.

### **Course Units**

Unit code	Unit title	Credit weighting
<b>Level 4</b>		
ANP401	Fundamentals of Animation	40 credits
ANP402	Staging and Performance	40 credits
ANP403	Translating Animation Principles	40 credits
<b>Level 5</b>		
ANP501	Drawing as Research	40 credits
ANP502	Development of Production Skills	20 credits
ANP503	Production Research and Development	40 credits
ANP504	Critical Perspectives in Animation	20 credits
<b>Level 6</b>		
ANP609	Pre-Production	40 credits
ANP606	Investigative Study	20 credits
ANP612	Major Project	40 credits
ANP608	Professional Development	20 credits

## Course Diagram

This diagram shows the proposed start/end dates for each unit and shows teaching weeks only; holiday periods are not included.

Level 4																														
0	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
	<b>Autumn Term</b>										<b>Spring Term</b>										<b>Summer Term</b>									
Induction week	<b>ANP401 Fundamentals of Animation</b> Weeks 1-10 40 credits										<b>ANP402 Staging and Performance</b> Weeks 11-20 40 credits										<b>ANP403 Translating Animation Principles</b> Weeks 21-30 40 credits									
	Pass/fail unit																													

Level 5																														
0	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
	<b>Autumn Term</b>										<b>Spring Term</b>										<b>Summer Term</b>									
	<b>ANP501 Drawing as Research</b> Weeks 1-15 40 credits															<b>ANP503 Production Research and Development</b> Weeks 13-30 40 credits														
	<b>ANP502 Development of Production Skills</b> Weeks 1-15 20 credits															<b>ANP504 Critical Perspectives in Animation</b> Weeks 16-30 20 credits														

Level 6																														
0	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
Autumn Term											Spring Term											Summer Term								
<b>ANP609 Pre-Production</b> Weeks 1-15 40 credits											<b>ANP612 Major Project</b> Weeks 13-30 40 credits																			
<b>ANP606 Investigative Study</b> Weeks 1-15 20 credits											<b>ANP608 Professional Development</b> Weeks 13-30 20 credits																			

