

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



BA (HONS)

VISUAL EFFECTS DESIGN
AND PRODUCTION

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

Whilst every endeavour has been made to provide the course described in the Programme 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.

ARTS UNIVERSITY BOURNEMOUTH

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

The Programme Specification provides a summary of the main features of the **BA (Hons) Visual Effects Design and Production** course, and the learning outcomes that a 'typical' student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she passes the course.

Further detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching and learning methods of each unit may be found within this Handbook and the online Unit Information, which is available on your course blog.

<u>Key Course Information</u>	
Final Award	BA (Hons)
Course Title	Visual Effects Design and Production
Award Title	BA (Hons) Visual Effects Design and Production
Teaching institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Awarding Institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Offered in the Faculty of:	Media and Performance
<i>Contact details:</i> Telephone number Email	01202 363138 fomp@aub.ac.uk
Professional accreditation	None
Length of course / mode of study	3 Years full-time
Level of final award (in FHEQ)	Level 6
Subject benchmark statements	Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies Art and Design
UCAS code	245K
Language of study	English
External Examiner for course:	Davi Stein Pearson College, London
	<i>*Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact external examiners directly</i>
Date of Validation	2015
Date of most recent review	N/A
Date programme specification written/revised	2015

Course Philosophy

Visual effects production is an innovative area of contemporary design; its blending of art and technology calls for practitioners who are both technically skilled and aesthetically aware. The BA (Hons) Visual Effects Design and Production course is designed to equip you with strong observational skills and the ability to apply these skills in the composing of a final moving image. In order to cultivate these abilities, the course articulates effects practice as possessing a distinct visual language that informs the core of cinematic storytelling and production design.

The course will give you a detailed knowledge of the production context and an understanding of related disciplines that informs visual effects practice. Alongside technical knowledge of industry standard software and hardware, the course emphasizes the importance of complementary art and design skills, which will inform and enhance your abilities as a practitioner. It recognises the international aspects of visual effects practice, and the possibility for artists to work as part of a global marketplace. The resulting portfolio of skills will inform your personal aspirations in preparation for entry into postgraduate study or professional practice.

The course believes in both the development of independent study skills and the experience of team-based production processes that replicate industry best practice, thereby encouraging awareness of collaborative roles and personal responsibilities required for a successful ethical practitioner. By supporting both group and independent modes of study, the course encourages an engagement with visual effects in the broadest possible sense. It promotes the opportunity for collaboration with other disciplines, and encourages the potential for multiple outcomes beyond an immediate application in the film industry. As part of a studio-based environment at the AUB, there is a distinctive opportunity for you to explore the historical, social and cultural parameters of effects practice in relation to other areas of art and design.

The course is committed to produce creative practitioners who are aware of the demands of contemporary practice and possess finely honed artistic skills that will enable them to pursue a career in visual effects and related media industries.

Course Aims

The course has the following aims:

- To develop strong observational skills through traditional practices in art and design that complement the visual effects process
- To develop skills relevant to specialist production roles, which includes detailed knowledge of the production context in which these roles operate and an understanding of related disciplines that inform this specialist practice
- To equip each individual artist with the necessary depth of knowledge to address a range of professional visual effects problems
- To produce artists with the skills to research, analyse and communicate information as well as interpret briefs to an industry standard

- To develop knowledge and critical understanding of historical and cultural contexts that inform visual effects practice
- To develop and nurture an awareness of ethical work practices as part of a team, which informs the roles and responsibilities of artists within the visual effects and related media industries
- To equip artists with the capability to critically reflect on their personal and professional aspirations in relation to the global nature of the visual effects industry

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Confidently demonstrate strong observational skills through traditional practices in art and design that complement the visual effects process
- Demonstrate skills relevant to your specialist profile, with detailed knowledge of the production context in which you work and an understanding of related disciplines that inform your practice
- Demonstrate a depth of knowledge that allows you to address a range of professional visual effects problems
- Demonstrate skills in research, analysis and communication to interpret briefs to an industry standard
- Demonstrate knowledge and critical understanding of historical and cultural contexts that inform visual effects practice
- Demonstrate an awareness of ethical work practices as part of a team, which includes an informed understanding of the roles and responsibilities of artists within the visual effects and related media industries
- Demonstrate the ability to critically reflect on your personal and professional aspirations in relation to the global nature of the visual effects industry

Reference Points

UK Quality Code for higher education, including:

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

AUB Regulatory Framework and Undergraduate Assessment Regulations

AUB Creative Learning Plan

AUB Strategic Plan

AUB Employability Framework

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and Teaching Strategies

The study time allocated to each unit in the course incorporates a balance of formal teaching, tutorial support and independent learning. The course is structured progressively to provide increasing opportunities for independent study as you reach the later stages of the course.

Teaching is directed at supporting your individual engagement in learning. There are also opportunities to work in teams to enable experiential learning from a production environment that includes peer cooperation.

The progressive promotion of independent learning reflects your anticipated maturing as a learner, as you direct your studies towards your own specialist goals. The teaching in Level 4 is directed at providing you with the knowledge, concepts and skills to take increasing responsibility for the management of your own learning; this is a key element of the student-centred approach taken at Levels 5 and 6 and preparation for life in the work-place.

The delivery methods are informed by the University's Creative Learning Plan and share the over-arching aims:

- i) to enable each student to realise his/her potential;
- ii) to develop and support individual learner autonomy;
- iii) to promote the acquisition of transferable/key skills;
- iv) to develop and promote best practice in approaches to teaching, learning and assessment;
- v) to promote the sharing of good practice across the University, building on best practice both within the University and nationally.

Assessment

Each unit is assessed separately, and the assessment forms part of the unit. Assessment both provides a measure of your achievement, and also gives you regular feedback on how your learning is developing.

For every unit of your course, we will inform you of what you are expected to learn; what you have to submit; how your work will be assessed; and the deadline for presenting your work for assessment. This is made available through Unit Information, which is on your course blog.

You will receive a final mark for each unit in the form of a percentage, which will be recorded on your 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 (eg 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 your Honours degree course, you will be awarded a degree classification based on your unit marks. The final classification is determined using all unit marks at Levels 5 and 6 using two different algorithms, which are detailed in the HE Student Regulations. If the two algorithms produce different results, you will be awarded the higher class of degree.

If you have 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 your unit marks at Level 6.

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

Course Structure

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

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

For the award of a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), you 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 you leave the University following successful completion of the second year of your course.

For the award of a BA (Hons) you 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 your course.

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

Course Content

This course aims to develop technical skills and creative abilities required for visual effects production processes, thereby enhancing career opportunities in visual effects and related media industries. Analytical skills are developed and research methodologies are explored, enabling an appreciation of the relationship between practice, theory and history of visual effects production.

The course develops your ability to communicate and to use effective presentation skills. Alongside the development of professional management competence, the course aims to enhance visual and literary capabilities and the ability to resolve production problems.

The skills developed on this course are accompanied by general transferable skills which can be used in a range of applications. The promotion of your self-directed learning and your ability to critically evaluate your own work and that of others is fundamental to this team-based production course.

Level 4

At this level students are introduced to the underlying concepts and fundamental structural principles of visual effects work, whilst developing an ability to evaluate and interpret the application of complementary art and design skills within visual effects practice. This level exposes students to the technical and technological disciplines necessary for visual effects work, helping to develop an appropriate knowledge of 2D and 3D software in preparation to develop new skills at Levels 5 and 6. A series of practical workshops, lectures and seminars, are used to build competencies in the generation of concepts, the construction of digital assets and the processing of live action footage. Alongside processing moving imagery, aesthetic awareness is developed through observational drawing and painting, utilising both traditional materials and digital solutions. This helps to develop an ability to evaluate different approaches to solving production problems. Practice is underpinned by an engagement with historical and cultural contexts, and students develop essential research and study skills which help them develop an ability to present, evaluate and interpret information from multiple sources.

Level 5

At this level students develop a more nuanced understanding of the specialist roles involved in a collaborative production process by working both independently and as part of a team. Students will build on skills developed at Level 4, applying aesthetic awareness and technical knowledge in a production context that reflects industry best practice. Students work with increasing independence as part of a production team to take a visual effects sequence from concept and previsualisation stages through to live action acquisition, asset creation and compositing. Production roles specialising in either 2D or 3D processes are negotiated with staff members and defined through the use of Learning Agreements, and students are assessed on their individual contribution to their collaborative projects. By deploying key techniques in processing imagery from multiple sources, students will begin to develop a specialist portfolio of skills relevant to an industry context. As part of the process of becoming an independent learner, there are also potential opportunities for industry placements or overseas study visits. Students will also work independently to research and develop their own visual effects sequence in preparation for a pitch process at Level 6. This developmental work will require the application of a range of established design techniques and research methods, including a sustained piece of academic writing, to effectively communicate ideas and identify limits of knowledge.

Level 6

At this level students demonstrate a systematic understanding of visual effects practice by applying their specialist skills in a collaborative production process. The intricate nature of visual effects design and production necessitates negotiating a complex body of knowledge, drawing on both artistic and technical skills in generating a final image sequence to an industry standard. Effective team work is

paramount in successfully achieving a professional standard of production, and Level 6 develops critical awareness of co-operative roles and personal responsibilities that are required to make an ethical practitioner. There are opportunities for this collaborative production process to include working alongside other courses in the university. Students at this level work more independently in their production role, requiring effective time-management and organisational skills to evaluate concepts, make judgements and frame appropriate questions to solve production problems. Negotiated Learning Agreements are used to define the parameters of production roles and to help students independently manage a range of learning aspirations. Students are assessed on their individual contribution to this collaborative project. Through their written 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 a Professional Development Portfolio, where students investigate an area of contemporary practice relevant to their career ambitions, and develop a portfolio appropriate for pursuing post-graduate study or initiating professional practice.

Course Units

Unit code	Unit Title	Credit weighting
Level 4		
VFX410	Previsualisation	20
VFX411	Data Acquisition	20
VFX413	History and Context	20
VFX415	Modelling and Matchmoving	20
VFX414	Matte Painting and Compositing	40
Level 5		
VFX510	Specialist Production	40
VFX511	Practice as Research	20
VFX512	Concept and Look Development	40
VFX513	Effects Dramaturgy	20
Level 6		
VFX610	Production Design and Planning	20
VFX611	Investigative Study	20
VFX612	Film Production	60
VFX613	Professional Portfolio Development	20

Course Diagram

This diagram shows the proposed start/end dates for each unit and shows teaching weeks only; holiday periods are not included. Further information on the structure of each unit will be included in the online Unit Information which is available on your course blog.

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	
Autumn Term													Spring Term												Summer Term						
Induction Week	VFX410 Previsualisation (weeks 1-10) (20 credits)											VFX413 History and Context (weeks 11-20) (20 Credits)											VFX414 Matte Painting and Compositing (weeks 21-30) (40 credits)								
	VFX411 Data Acquisition (weeks 1-10) (20 Credits)											VFX415 Modelling and Matchmoving (weeks 11-20) (20 credits)																			

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
Autumn Term													Spring Term												Summer Term					
VFX510 Specialist Production (weeks 1-15) (40 credits)															VFX512 Concept and Look Development (weeks 16-30) (40 Credits)															
VFX511 Practice as Research (weeks 1-15) (20 Credits)															VFX513 Effects Dramaturgy (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						
VFX610 Production Design and Planning (weeks 1-10) (20 credits)												VFX612 Film Production (weeks 11-30) (60 credits)																		
VFX611 Investigative Study (weeks 1-15) (20 credits)															VFX613 Professional Development Portfolio (weeks 16-30) (20 Credits)															

Resources

University Resources:

Library

The course is supported by a Subject Librarian who liaises closely with the team to ensure that the Library resources are relevant and meet student and staff research needs. As part of the AUB's Information Literacy Framework, the Subject Librarian provides sessions on researching and using information, as well as individual support for students in the use of Library resources.

The Library holds an excellent range of specialist learning materials including books, journals, CDs, DVDs, and newspapers. It has subscriptions to a wide range of specialist electronic resources focusing on art, design, media and performance, including e-books and e-journals. The Library's facilities include computers, a viewing room, and a silent reading room.

The Library consistently receives high scores in both the in-house and national student surveys which are carried out annually.

Digital Learning Resources

The University provides a range of computing hardware and software applications for use in general purpose locations such as the library and computer studios, as well as high quality and specialist resources linked to subject specialisation. You will be able to use Microsoft Office and Adobe Creative Suite on the majority of computers in the University and have access to industry standard digital resources and computing appropriate for your subject in course areas.

We have a comprehensive wireless network and our new virtual learning environment (VLE) can be used on desktop, laptop and mobile devices. The VLE, called MyAUB, provides a customisable portal to a variety of course and university related information including timetables, email, course handbooks, resource booking and online learning materials.

Support for digital learning resources is provided by a network of University staff. Course related equipment is cared for by Technician Demonstrators and library information resources is supported by library staff. General computing support and advice on your own equipment is provided by our Digital Campus Services Team who provide a servicedesk facility. The Service Desk is located in the Library, and their email address is: servicedesk@aub.ac.uk.

Museum of Design in Plastic (MoDiP)

MoDiP is a registered museum of 20th and 21st century design and popular culture with a focus on plastics. Its collection is unique within the UK and has been developed to support teaching and learning at Arts University Bournemouth.

There are many ways in which MoDiP can play a part in your studies:

- as a source of inspiration – large numbers of items may be viewed, handled and explored in depth, drawn, photographed and filmed
- as the focus of a brief for products and projects relating to course work
- as an exhibition venue – your work can be displayed in relation to the collections and exhibitions and events may be mounted in the museum space

The Museum is in a purpose built space within the Library, designed with wheelchair access in mind, and has the same opening hours as the rest of the University for the viewing of exhibitions. Objects not on display can be borrowed and taken to the studio. To see what is available, go to the [MoDiP website \(www.modip.ac.uk\)](http://www.modip.ac.uk).

TheGallery

TheGallery is a major resource for contemporary visual art at Arts University Bournemouth and has received regional and national recognition. There are regular gallery events, including collections on loan from galleries and museums, as well as individual exhibitions by some of today's leading artists, photographers, designers and critical writers.

It also functions as a learning resource and is integrated into the teaching, learning, and research practice undertaken at the University.

text + work is the ethos which underpins the exhibition programme at Arts University Bournemouth. The **text + work** concept promotes and provides a forum for challenging dialogue between innovative contemporary art, design, media and performance practice and its theoretical context.

There are **text + work** gallery events, critical texts, shared and networked exhibitions and a **text + work** website.

Student Support

Academic Guidance

Academic staff are responsible for providing you with feedback on your work and your general academic progress, and for providing academic support and guidance through the course. This is provided through “critiques” and written feedback, as well as guidance on practical work and informal discussion about your concerns. These sessions may be individual or, in the case of collaborative work, in small groups.

Academic tutorials are scheduled to allow you to discuss in depth matters relating to creative or theoretical work, or the course in general. You will be entitled to at least one formal academic tutorial per term with a nominated member of the course team.

Support and advice is also provided on an informal basis throughout the course, through discussions between staff and students.

The University also has a team of Study Skills Tutors who can support you with your academic work such as essays, dissertations and presentations. This service is available to all students to access. You can book tutorials for individual or group sessions at the Student Services reception. The team also run regular lunchtime

study skills workshops and drop in sessions which can help support you in your studies.

Career Education, Information and Guidance

You will be prepared for employment, and given the opportunity to learn about the various career options available to you, through a wide range of projects which may include live briefs or external competitions. Academic staff remain very familiar with the discipline, and will often still work in the field, and are also able to advise on specific opportunities.

The Careers and Employability Service within the University offers impartial, confidential advice, support and guidance, to help you explore and develop your career ideas and manage your future career successfully. The service offers individual career guidance appointments, as well as advice on job seeking strategies, CVs and interview skills, self-employment / freelancing, and further study opportunities.

The Senior Employability Officer holds regular lunchtime lectures, which cover a range of popular careers topics, including Postgraduate study and funding, Career planning, Networking and self-marketing, and Teaching as a career. Full details and dates of forthcoming lectures are available on the Careers and Employability intranet pages (Viewpoint) and on the Student Services notice boards.

The Careers and Employability Service also offers specialist events, working in partnership with local employers, AUB alumni, and external agencies to bring together a range of art, design, media, performance and business expertise.

For more information, or to make an appointment, please contact careers@aub.ac.uk or call +44 1202 363355. You can also drop in to Student Services on campus between 8.30am and 5pm, Monday to Thursday, and between 8.30am and 4.30pm on a Friday.

Support for students with disabilities (including dyslexia)

The Arts University Bournemouth is firmly committed to a policy of equal opportunities for all students and positively welcomes applications from people with disabilities and/or additional needs. Throughout all aspects of University life, we actively encourage and support the participation of students with disabilities. We aim to support disabled students by offering needs assessments and support plans which enable you to achieve your personal goals.

The Learning Support team provides academic support for students with specific learning difficulties including dyslexia. We ask all new Home students to complete a 'Quickscan' screening programme when they join the University. This screening is designed to check your learning style (the way you learn best) and whether you might have signs of dyslexia. If appropriate, you will be referred to an educational psychologist for a full assessment.

Students with a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia are able to access individual tutorials aimed at improving your independent study skills, and are

supported in applying for the Disabled Students' Allowance, which can provide specialist equipment and, if appropriate, personal support.

The Senior Disability Officer and Wellbeing Officer provide ongoing support and advice for students with all other types of disability, including mental health difficulties, physical disabilities, medical conditions and sensory impairments. The Wellbeing service is a free and confidential service offered by the University to all students. The Senior Wellbeing Officer is based in Student Services and is able to provide specialist advice, information and practical strategies to help students manage personal concerns or concerns they may have for a friend. Accessing the wellbeing service at an early stage may prevent more serious issues developing and help students to feel more in control of their situation.

The Arts University Bournemouth has a duty to anticipate the needs of disabled students, and to make "reasonable adjustments" to ensure that these students can access education and related services. If you feel that some aspect of the learning, teaching or assessment on your course places you at a disadvantage because of your disability, please contact the Senior Disability Officer within Student Services, who will be happy to work with you and your course team to identify any appropriate reasonable adjustments. Contact wellbeing@aub.ac.uk or telephone 01202 363291.

Academic support for students for whom English is a second language

If English is not your first language, AUB has a team of specialist English for Academic Purposes (EAP) lecturers who provide personalised guidance and support with the academic aspects of your course. You can book tutorials with them for individual assistance.

At the beginning of your course you will be invited to complete an academic skills needs assessment. One of our English for Academic Purposes (EAP) team will review this with you in a follow-up tutorial. If you feel you would benefit from additional advice and support, the EAP tutor will work with you to draw up an Individual Learning Plan which will set out a structured approach to developing your use of academic language and study skills. This may, for example, include helping you to develop strategies for interpreting assignment briefs, working on the structure of your written work or developing your proof-reading skills. Your Individual Learning Plan will be reviewed periodically and shared with your course tutor, if requested, so that they are aware of the work you are doing to improve your use of language and study skills.

Throughout the academic year the EAP service also offers Study Skills Workshops. Further details can be found at:

<http://aub.ac.uk/international/english-not-first-language/international-student-support/>

Pastoral support and guidance

Support and advice on non-academic matters is provided through trained and qualified professional staff within Student Services. We have a team of professionally qualified male and female counsellors, with appointments available during weekdays. Talking to a counsellor in a safe, non-judgemental and confidential setting can enable you to work through your problems with the aim of reaching a solution. Students wanting to access the service can book by email, phone or by coming into the Student Services reception. The AUB Counselling Service is student focused and we offer single

therapeutic sessions with a counsellor for one hour. If your situation is very urgent and you are extremely emotionally distressed, we also have a crisis support service where the aim is that one of our counsellors or the Wellbeing Officer will see you as soon as possible.

Pastoral support is also available from the AUB Chaplaincy. The Chaplaincy at Arts University Bournemouth is shared with Bournemouth University and is an inclusive Chaplaincy, which welcomes people of all faiths and none. The Quiet Room and the Islamic Prayer Room are in regular use by staff and students, and meetings with ministers of any faith can be arranged.

Advice and support with practical issues such as funding, accommodation or childcare is available from the Student Advice, Funds and Accommodation Office within Student Services.

Monitoring the quality of your course

The course is subject to the University's rigorous quality assurance procedures which involve subject specialist and internal peer review of the course at periodic intervals, normally of 5 years. This process ensures that the course remains up to date, and is preparing you for a career within the creative industries while also delivering a high quality student experience.

In addition all courses undertake an Annual Course Review which takes account of relevant information such as:

- External Examiners' Reports
- Key statistics including data on application, retention and achievement
- Results of the National Student Survey
- Results of the in-house Student Perception Survey
- Feedback from Student Representatives
- Feedback from relevant employer groups, including the course Industry Liaison Group

All courses develop an action plan arising out of this exercise, which is monitored by the University. Your student representatives can keep you informed about progress against the action plan.

Staff development priorities for the course team as a whole are identified through the Annual Course Review process, and for individuals through the Staff Performance Review process.

Indicators of Quality and Standards

The Arts University Bournemouth was granted taught degree awarding powers by the Privy Council in 2008; and University status was conferred in 2013. All students on taught higher education courses are enrolled on a course validated by the University.

A new Teaching Excellence Framework has been introduced to recognise excellent teaching. AUB was given a Gold award, reflecting the high quality of the academic student experience.

The University was audited by the QAA in May 2011 and received a judgement of 'Confidence' in the management of the academic standards of its awards, and its management of the quality of learning opportunities. This is the best available outcome, and confirms that our quality assurance mechanisms are robust, meaning that we can have full confidence in the standard of course outcomes, and the quality of the educational experience we deliver.

More detailed information is available in the HE Student Regulations, Viewpoint and on your course blog