



## PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



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.

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION**

The Programme Specification provides a summary of the main features of the **MA 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 within this Handbook and the online Unit Information, which is available on your course blog.

<b><u>Key Course Information</u></b>	
Final Award	Master of Arts
Course Title	Animation Production
Award Title	MA Animation Production
Teaching institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Awarding Institution	Arts University Bournemouth
Offered in the School of:	Graduate School
Contact details:	
Telephone number	01202 363706
Email	<a href="mailto:graduateschooloffice@aub.ac.uk">graduateschooloffice@aub.ac.uk</a>
Professional accreditation	n/a
Length of course / mode of study	53 weeks full-time 105 weeks part-time
Level of final award (in FHEQ)	Level 7
Subject benchmark statement(s)	QAA Master's degree characteristics
Language of study	English
External Examiner for course:	To be confirmed
<i>Please note that it is not appropriate for students to contact external examiners directly.</i>	
Date of Validation	2013
Date of most recent review	2019
Date programme specification written/revised	September 2019

## **Postgraduate Ethos**

The Master's course recognises individuals and their aspirations, and celebrates ideas, making, and creative risk-taking. Our guiding principle is to offer distinctive, exciting and challenging opportunities for you to engage in your respective subject disciplines in order to critically engage with, and redefine, your particular approaches to your practices and position them within your chosen external, creative, economic, and cultural environment.

We support this principle through our passionate engagement with interdisciplinarity and collaborative practices, with the integration of theory and practice, with our understanding of the particularities of individual practitioners and the broader world, global view, and with an attitude to career development which places professionalism and risk taking in dialogue.

Such a context affords possibilities to engage with fresh, often unpredictable and certainly challenging methodologies and techniques with which you can research, test, develop, progress, interrogate, take risks, make and confidently reflect on your own practice and subject discipline. Whilst you will be encouraged to develop your own themes, relationships between the aesthetic, the political, the ethical and 'value' are ever-present and the courses support your engagement with what are often difficult contemporary issues.

Crucial to the courses and their inherent multifaceted, creative, artistic outcomes, is that you demonstrate a committed passion for your practice and the particular media within your chosen subject discipline. Each course devises specific discipline-focused project work to enable you to be suitably informed in taking the right path towards your chosen career in a diverse range of professions /industries or progress to further study at doctorate level. This discipline focus is, however, enhanced by your experience of interdisciplinary and collaborative approaches and activities which enrich your journey. Our focus on the relationships between personal professional development and the development of communities of practice through sharing and collaboration is underpinned by the unique AUB reputation for truly collaborative working across disciplines, i.e. the practice of complementarity. Through involvement in cross-course groups, shared lectures and other MA activities you will have opportunities to work together with other MA students to form a 'postgraduate network' that will facilitate a wider dialogue around art and design, sustainability, ethics, the political and the often-global reach of creative industries and professions. Our ethos focuses on not only developing your systematic and critical understanding of knowledge and of the application of that knowledge in an appropriate, professional context but also in having the resolve, the skills and the acumen to exercise initiative and personal responsibility in a world which is asking many questions of all of us with respect to our abilities and desires in coexisting with a global community.

In other words, our ethos focuses on the ability for our graduates not only to develop their careers and be employable but also to be engaged in the redefinition of what employment might look like in what are times of tremendous social, political, economic, and ecological change, and indeed upheaval.

## **Course Description**

This MA course is all about enabling you to develop a specialist practice within the diverse field of animation — whether in 2D/drawn, CG, stop motion or other forms of animation — and produce excellent work that synthesises the ‘strands’ of theory, practice and professionalism.

Your engagement with the MA may involve pre-production, production or post-production specialisms such as character design, storyboarding, concept work, or other specialisms such as puppet-making, or costume design for Animation. You may choose to make an animated film as your final ‘outcome’, or develop a body of work through one of these other forms of specialist practice. The structure of the MA enables you to interrogate your ideas across practical, theoretical and professional modes of understanding, bringing your work to fruition in the *Masters Project 2* unit.

Through a combination of lectures, staff- and student-led seminars, group critiques and other activities (e.g. studio visits, festivals) you will interrogate your ideas and refine how you think about animation. The MA encourages collaborative work where possible, with other MA students (on MA Animation Production and other MA courses) and with BA Animation Production students. You will devise a Study Plan that outlines and structures how you will approach your specialist practice, and how you will interrogate it through critical analysis of the theoretical, historical and professional facets of your specialism. There will be regular one-to-one support from tutors and guest lecturers, augmenting the lectures, seminars and other activities noted above. As befits study at postgraduate level, you are also expected to organise and direct your own studies for much of the time, with the support of the tutors/Course Leader.

As well as a 1-year full-time route, the MA is offered on a part-time basis. The part-time route offers an ideal opportunity for people who are already working in industry to further develop their specialist skills and practice, and complete a major body of work across a 2-year period. For both full-time and part-time routes, we strongly encourage applicants who want to interrogate their professional practice, and develop their understanding of the workplace. The full-time and part-time students will share some of the sessions (lectures, seminars and crits), where appropriate, though there will clearly be times when full-time students are in and part-time are not. Where possible, the overlaps between full-time and part-time routes will be used to positively reinforce everyone’s experience on the course. For example, the part-time students will be able to ‘sit in’ on full-time students’ crits for the first unit of study, and benefit from this experience prior to undertaking the part-time route’s version of the same unit critique later. Subsequently, as the part-time students move into their second year of study, they will welcome the new cohorts of full-time and part-time students, and be able to help induct the new students into the ethos of the MA. In this respect, the MA offers a strong synthesis of tutor/mentor-assisted learning, direct practical experience, and peer-assisted learning.

The alumni of AUB Animation have gone on to work at Aardman, ILM, Lupus Films, Framestore, Pixar, the Moving Picture Company and many other companies. We are proud of the network of AUB graduates who are now employed in animation – many of whom return to talk to current students as Visiting Tutors. A key part of your course ‘journey’ on the MA is to seek out and interact with those working in your specialist field in animation. (See ‘Course Content’ below for further details.)

## **Statement of Student Entitlement**

- Tutorials – three supervisory tutorials per 60 credit unit; totalling 9 over the course. In addition, each student is entitled to assessment feedback tutorials on the Strategies for Practice and Master's Project 1 units. A tutorial time of 45 minutes is allocated.
- Group Critique – three critiques; one near to the middle of each unit.
- Staff and student-led lectures and seminars.
- Regularly timetabled group meetings with MA Course Leader and/or relevant tutors.
- Access to the Quiet Study Room during Library hours.
- Access to relevant resources agreed through your Course Leader.
- Agreed attendance on undergraduate workshop/darkroom/resource area inductions.
- Agreed access to relevant studios as required for assessments purposes.
- Postgraduate show where appropriate.
- Agreed access to discipline-related and cross-discipline lectures/seminars on undergraduate programmes.
- Attendance at Gallery events, Research days and other appropriate AUB events.

## **Course Aims**

1. Provide a forum for high-level critical debate and interrogation of approaches to Animation practice.
2. Support students in instigating new directions in their work and developing their practice, research and professional/entrepreneurial understanding.
3. Encourage individual students to critically reflect on their work and contextualise it in relation to wider Animation production cultures.
4. Enable students to develop professional maturity and apply this in the changing world of work.
5. Support students in their in-depth exploration of their chosen research area/specialism, thereby preparing them for a range of employment opportunities in the creative industries or further study at Doctoral level.

## **Course Outcomes**

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

1. Produce advanced individual or collaborative work that acknowledges current practices within the wider creative arena of Animation.

2. Demonstrate an in-depth ability to investigate, understand and critique current issues in Animation and provide original insights into contemporary practice.
3. Demonstrate and apply highly developed conceptual, practical and professional understanding of theories, techniques and processes in Animation.
4. Evaluate your individual practice in relation to critical research at the forefront of the discipline and articulate this through the completion of a body of work and its appropriate contextualisation.
5. Clearly evidence that you have acquired new skills and abilities in communication, presentation, research and independent learning.

### **Reference Points**

UK Quality Code for higher education, including:

- Subject Benchmark Statement: QAA's Benchmark Statements for (a) Art and Design (February 2017) and (b) Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (October 2016)
  - Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ Level 7)
- AUB Regulatory Framework and Postgraduate Assessment Regulations  
AUB Creative Learning Plan  
AUB Strategic Plan  
AUB Employability Framework

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

#### **Learning and Teaching Strategies**

The MA course uses a range of delivery methods including lectures, seminars (staff-and student-led), individual and group tutorials, critiques, workshops and presentations. There is also scope for students, during their professional engagement and industry liaison, to look at ways in which a placement, internship or other engagement could form part of their MA work: in these cases, the Learning Agreement/Study Plan for the unit would be used as the mechanism for ensuring that such work meets the requisite Learning Outcomes for the MA.

The study time allocated to each unit in the course therefore includes formal teaching, tutorial support and independent learning, with the balance of these in line with what would be expected of PGT/Level 7 provision.

Learning outcomes for units are designed to capture the appropriate student activity, including both developmental and research-based activity, the quality of final outcomes, time management and organisational activity, and engagement with academic protocols.

#### **Postgraduate network**

While students at undergraduate level are encouraged to learn through their peers, at MA Level this is an imperative through peer learning and group work. Each member

of the MA cohort across the Graduate School is an active participant in learning and teaching, and through this postgraduate network, the sharing of good practice is established. Through involvement in cross-course groups, shared lectures and other MA activities you will work together with other MA students to form the postgraduate network that will facilitate a wider dialogue around the Arts, sustainability, ethics, the political and the creative industries.

## **Full- and Part-time Study**

The full-time and part-time modes of study are linked in order for both groups to interconnect and generate a vibrant post-graduate course community. The programme is driven by the individual student's research and practice. Whether they are studying full-time or part-time, they will negotiate with their supervisor how to contextualise their research interests within the structure of the course.

There are many of points of contact between full-time and part-time students, and there are also points at which they diverge. During these periods the part-time students are required to work independently. Autonomous learning is an underlying principle of post-graduate study and students opting for the part-time route allow themselves further space in which to develop their practice and thinking. Both full-time and part-time students' progress is monitored regularly via the tutorial system and through interim group critiques. The course seeks a specific commitment from students in which they are able to balance periods of independent study with the demands of seminars, discussions, group critiques, tutorials and presentations.

The part-time and full-time critiques and presentations will be held together whenever possible to encourage the exchange of ideas and views. Through such activities both of the two modes of study will make a positive contribution to the course by enriching individuals' learning experiences. The course is committed to developing a broad base of students all able to make valuable contributions based on their differing perspectives, which will enhance the experience of the whole cohort. Therefore, the structure of the course encourages valuable knowledge transfer enriching both groups' potential for career and creative development.

All new full-time and part-time cohorts will be welcomed by existing part-time students in their second year of study and will be able to learn from their experiences of the course and of the University.

## **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 (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.

A Master's Degree with Distinction may be awarded. Only units at Level 7 contribute towards the determination of a Distinction.

For further information on assessment and awards, and the criteria for the award of Distinction please visit: <https://viewpoint.aub.ac.uk>

### **Course Structure**

All students are registered for the award of Master of Arts; however, exit awards are available if you leave the course early.

For the award of Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) you must have achieved a minimum of 60 credits at Level 7; and any specific requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook.

For the award of Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip), you must have achieved a minimum of 120 credits at Level 7; and any specific requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook.

For the award of Master of Arts (MA), you must have achieved 180 credits, of which a minimum of 120 credits must be at Level 7; and any specific requirements of the course as outlined in the Course Handbook.

### **Course Content**

The main driver of the students' work on the MA is their self-identified practice/research focus: this is at the centre of all of their activity, and is what underpins what they do as they take their ideas from initial development, through deeper exploration and contextualisation, to a final resolved body of work. This means there is a deliberate development and critical dialogue between the work produced in each of the three units. Indeed, it is part of the point of the Level 7/MA outcomes, that students should be able to demonstrate initiative, independent learning ability, and a systematic conceptual understanding that can be applied across a range of practical and professional contexts. It is precisely this synthesis of approaches that equips the successful student with the skills to prosper in the 21<sup>st</sup> century creative industries. It is this synthesis that underpins all the work on the MA.

In terms of specific 'content', this is framed as advanced intellectual engagement with a range of appropriate methodologies for understanding, challenging and developing the precepts of Animation Studies as a discipline, and animation production in particular. Examples of such advanced engagement are:

- Critical and theoretical approaches to understanding 'production cultures' of animation (and how animation necessarily overlaps with and 'feeds' other disciplines and industries);

- Detailed recognition of the different aspects of the animation production pipeline and how it functions across a range of appropriate contexts (e.g. through 2D, CG, stop motion, experimental forms, so-called ‘concrete’ animation<sup>1</sup> etc);
- Nuanced engagement with how the ‘stages’ of pre-production, production and post-production are actually formed of mutually inter-penetrating processes, any of which can be the focus of MA inquiry, as a specialism (e.g. character design, modelmaking for animation, storyboarding, notions of performance in the animation process, the use of animation in VFX/post-production for live action);
- Discursive analysis of what ‘entrepreneurialism’ actually means and a properly critical examination of the entrepreneurial and professional opportunities offered by the field of Animation.

The three units of the MA build and develop the complexity of the students’ ideas, leading to a final outcome/body of work that reflects the expectations of M-Level study.

### **Course Units**

The units of study are:

- Defining Practice, Theory and Professionalism (60 credits);
- Master’s Project 1 (60 credits);
- Master’s Project 2 (60 credits).

**Study Hours:** The designated weekly study hours for part-time students are half of those for full-time students, and for reasons of parity, access to Subject Area resources and academic support must be understood commensurately. The longer study periods (x2) of each unit for part-time students ensures that parity is clearly evident and accounted for between the two modes of study. In this way, the overall study hours and proportionate access for each unit sustains parity of experience for both modes.

**Contact Time:** Full-time MA students will have one to two days contact a week with a tutor, depending upon the week through the 45 weeks of the course. Part-Time students will have one day a week contact for the first 15 weeks of the course and then one day every other week for the remainder of the course, which is 90 weeks in total. Contact time with a tutor is stated on a weekly basis in the course timetable.

<b>Unit Codes</b>	<b>Unit Titles</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>F/T</b>	<b>P/T</b>	
ANF761	ANP761 <b>Defining Practice, Theory and Professionalism</b>	60
ANF762	ANP762 <b>Master’s Project 1:</b>	60
ANF763	ANP763 <b>Master’s Project 2:</b>	60

---

<sup>1</sup> See Griffin (2007; 2013)

## Course Diagram

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

Level 7 Full-time mode of study (45 weeks over 53 weeks)													
	Term One				Term Two				Term Three				
0	Weeks 1-15				Weeks 16-30				Weeks 31-45				
	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	
Induction	<b>ANF761 Defining Practice, Theory and Professionalism (60 credits)</b>				<b>ANF762 Master's Project 1 (60 credits)</b>				<b>ANF763 Master's Project 2 (60 credits)</b>				
	Assessment				Assessment				Assessment				

<b>Level 7 Part-time mode of study (90 weeks over 105 weeks)</b>												
	<b>Term One</b>			<b>Term Two</b>				<b>Term Three</b>				
0	Weeks 1-15			Weeks 16-30				Weeks 31-45				
	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP
Induction	<b>ANP761 Defining Practice, Theory and Professionalism (60 credits)</b>								Assessment	<b>ANP762 Master's Project 1 (60 credits)</b>		

Level 7 Part-time mode of study (90 weeks over 105 weeks)												
	Term One				Term Two				Term Three			
0	Weeks 46-60				Weeks 61-75				Weeks 76-90			
	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP
	<b>ANP762 Master's Project 1 (continued) (60 credits)</b>				<b>ANP763 Master's Project 2 (60 credits)</b>							
	Assessment				Assessment							