

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Course record information

Name and level of final award:	BA (Hons) Animation
Name and level of intermediate awards:	BA Animation Diploma of HE Animation Certificate of HE Animation
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Teaching Institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Westminster School of Media Arts and Design (Harrow)
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Mode, length of study and normal starting month:	Three years (full time). September start.
QAA subject benchmarking group(s) :	Art and Design
Professional statutory or regulatory body:	N/A
Date of course validation/review:	21 July 2016
Date of programme specification approval:	January 2017
Valid for cohorts:	2017-18
Course Leader	Stephen Ryley
UCAS code	W615
Course URL	https://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate
Westminster course code	BAADS01F (FT)
JACS code	W600 (Cinematics & Photography)



Voyager: Adrian Russo



Course Overview

The potential for animation is evident both in design and information technology and increasingly in the entertainment industries of the internet, television, film and games.

“What is BA (Hons) Animation at the University of Westminster?”

When challenged to describe the key features of our animation degree course, the following points are often made.

- 1) We are a film making course
- 2) We empower individual self-expression
- 3) We use narrative structure as a useful launch pad, but do not insist that students make narrative work.
- 4) We believe that we learn by doing, augmented by strong analytical skills
- 5) We attempt to facilitate production through the widest possible means and modes – we are student-led in level 6.
- 6) The course team value ideas above surface polish.



Animation is not static and cannot be approached in a fixed way; its processes and contexts continue to change and evolve, and animators need to be flexible and responsive if they are to anticipate and contribute to new initiatives and market opportunities in this subject. The design of the course reflects this position by providing a learning environment which is open, broad and flexible. It supports both individual development, as well as ensuring that you gain the skills and knowledge necessary for operating in a range of professional animation contexts.

What are the minimum entry requirements for the course?

There are standard minimum [entry requirements](#) for all undergraduate courses. Students are advised to check the standard requirements for the most up-to-date information.

westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply

For most courses a decision will be made on the basis of your application form alone. However, for some courses the selection process may include an interview to demonstrate your strengths in addition to any formal entry requirements.

More information can be found here: westminster.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate/how-to-apply

Aims of the course

The course aims to provide a learning environment in which you can engage in the study and practice of Animation for both personal development and for professional life. In this context the course aims to:



Provide you with skills, knowledge, attributes and understanding in Animation practices and processes and applications

To foster creativity, innovation, and a reflective and experimental approach to learning, study and practice.

To support you in developing intellectual and critical frameworks through which to site and develop your work and your understanding of Animation.

To ensure that you are equipped with a range of key and professional skills which will support both your personal development and prepare you for professional life.

What will you be expected to achieve?

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These are threshold statements of achievement (i.e. they describe the minimum pass level), and the learning outcomes broadly fall into four categories:

- The overall knowledge and understanding you will gain from your course (**KU**)
- Professional and personal practice learning outcomes are specific skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (**PPP**)
- Key transferable skills that you will be expected to have gained on successful completion of the course (**KTS**)
- Graduate attributes are characteristics that you will have developed during the duration of your course.

Course learning outcomes are not delivered exclusively within individual modules, but the core modules identified in brackets below focus the delivery of particular course learning outcomes as shown.

We also offer a range of option modules (sometimes termed 'electives') at levels 4 and 5 to expand skills and experience in specialised aspects of the course media.

Note that individual modules have module-specific learning outcomes (identified in Module Proformas, which are published in the Course Handbook).



Level 4 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 4 you will be able to:

- KU 4.1 Demonstrate awareness of a range of key animation technologies, including for stop frame production, audio production and editing.
- KU 4.2 Demonstrate awareness of the history of animated film production, and current developments arising from changing practices and technologies
- KU 4.3 Recognise the terminology and scope of theoretical study in the fields of art and media culture
- PPP 4.1 Creatively employ a given range of animation production practices, both digital and traditional/ analogue.
- PPP 4.2 Employ given methods for the research, analysis and production of media products
- PPP 4.3 Develop and communicate ideas in response to defined themes and guidelines
- KTS 4.1 Communicate in written, oral and audio-visual modes, acknowledging academic standards, professional protocols and a range of audiences
- KTS 4.2 Manage study time and information, taking responsibility for your own learning, with external guidance
- KTS 4.3 Work effectively with other students as a member of a group, and meet obligations to your peers and to staff

Level 5 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 5 you will be able to:

- KU 5.1 Demonstrate knowledge of one or more animation technologies in depth, with an awareness of the interconnections between animation practices
- KU 5.2 Demonstrate awareness of current and emerging professional working practices and opportunities in the animation industries
- KU 5.3 Comprehend the major theories of art, media, culture and society, with some specialisation in one or more aspects
- PPP 5.1 Creatively and proficiently use one or more negotiated animation production practices
- PPP 5.2 Employ planning strategies, conceptual development methods and critical tools.
- PPP 5.3 Identify a range of responses to broad themes, and select and communicate from this range.
- KTS 5.1 Effectively communicate in written, oral and audio-visual modes, engaging with academic standards, professional protocols and a range of audiences
- KTS 5.2 Manage study time and information, taking responsibility for your own learning, with limited guidance
- KTS 5.3 Work effectively with others, demonstrating an ability to participate in an exchange of ideas and methods

Level 6 learning outcomes: Upon completion of level 6 you will be able to:

- KU 6.1 Demonstrate knowledge of one or more animation technologies in comprehensive depth, including a detailed awareness of the interdisciplinary overlaps between animation practices
- KU 6.2 Demonstrate awareness of graduation opportunities for employment or further study, including the requirement for adaptability in the changing animation industries
- KU 6.3 Understand encompassing and specialist theories of art, media, culture and society,

- with an awareness of the provisional nature of critical approaches in the discipline
- PPP 6.1 Flexibly, creatively and enterprisingly apply one or more chosen animation production practices, with an ability to appropriately make use of the interrelationships between media, and working to appropriate professional standards
 - PPP 6.2 Use planning strategies, conceptual development methods and critical tools to produce work that is situated within and critically engages with contemporary professional animation practices in diverse contexts
 - PPP 6.3 Define themes, develop a range of complex and informed responses to those themes, and select and communicate appropriate solutions
 - KTS 6.1 Effectively communicate in written, oral and audio-visual modes, meeting academic standards and professional protocols, and involving a range of audiences
 - KTS 6.2 Manage study time and information, taking responsibility for your own learning, and apply critical reflection to this process
 - KTS 6.3 Work effectively with others, recognising the varied contributions and roles that result in effective collaborative working, and offering of leadership or support as appropriate.

How will you learn?

The course provides study skill workshops in learning for level four students as part of your induction, these workshops include support with essay writing if required. For foreign students who have difficulties with written English, there are modules within 'Polylang' (see Module Choice Information – University's Essential Guide) that can be taken as a 'free' module.

The learning culture that the course fosters is based on the principle of studio practice that is students working and developing their practice in the dedicated studios on a regular basis (see key elements of the programme).

Independent Learning

Students are increasingly encouraged towards learner autonomy. Being an independent learner means that you gradually take responsibility for your own study programme and personal development. This begins with meeting deadlines, being able to research and work in a self-initiated way and being able to collect and use resources and information.

Gradually as you become more confident and skilled you will be required to structure your own study programme, outline your own projects and be able to take more responsibility for decision making, self-evaluation and managing information. By Level Six you will be less reliant on the opinions of others, be able to negotiate and reflect in an informed way and be confident in planning and directing your work and career plan.

Good studentship is also part of being an independent learner, this includes regular attendance, professional and responsible behaviour when using equipment and resources, and respecting the rights and needs of other users and learners.



How will you be assessed?

The BA (Hons) Animation and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's

Academic Regulations, including the Modular Framework for Undergraduate Courses and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).

All students should make sure that they have and keep for reference a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster, and the Handbook of Academic Regulations. The following course specific requirements should be read in conjunction with the Modular Framework for Undergraduate Courses and sections 11 to 19 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations.

The full texts of all Academic Regulations may be read on-line at the Academic Registrar's homepage at: www.wmin.ac.uk/academicregistrars

Our assessment strategy reflects the philosophy of the course, aiming to develop the creative, flexible and thoughtful media practitioners of the future. Assessment is integral to the overall learning process, and we offer a range of assessment methods on both practical and theoretical modules. This allows our students to demonstrate their skills and understanding in a variety of ways. The benefit is that this provides a range of activities in which to excel, so supporting and encouraging a variety of preferred learning styles. All modules are assessed through coursework (we do not use exams).

Practical modules are typically assessed through a combination of crits (presentations of practical work to staff, normally with other students present), and submitted media artifacts and planning / research material (e.g. sketchbooks / production folders / blogs etc).

Theoretical modules (and some practice-theory modules) draw upon a range of assessment methods, including written work, seminar presentations, research plans, visual essays and online study tasks.

Clear Assessment Criteria are stated in module documents, and these are linked to the module Learning Outcomes.



Employment and further study opportunities

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e., employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students.
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements which will inform the service delivered to students.

Your Skills need to be “Future Proof”

The animation course is, at heart, vocationally focused; all of our modules are designed to expand and develop your professional skills to meet the needs of a rapidly evolving and vibrant market place. This work is underpinned by theoretical studies, giving you a deeper understanding of the context within which you will be operating.

Vocationally-focused courses need to ensure that their graduates are equipped to compete effectively now, and in the future. The bedrock of our animation degree is a set of transferable core skills that are common to all animation practice; these skills were pioneered more than 100 years ago, and are still directly relevant today, so we can claim with some confidence that they will continue to be valuable in future years, regardless of shifting platforms, lifestyle changes and emerging technologies. This bedrock of core skills provides a solid and reliable starting point, upon which you can build your own distinctive “brand”.

Central to the course is the conviction that successful practitioners need to be flexible problem solvers, able to adapt swiftly and effectively to the changing needs of the industry. The course sets a variety of challenges which test and stretch you, enriching your skill sets and broadening your horizons.

The programme culminates in the production of a “Graduation Project”; where a major piece of work is developed to act as “evidence” in support of job applications, pitching for freelance work, or application to further study. By this stage in the process, you will have a clear sense of the direction you would like your future career to take, and can design this major project accordingly, as an opportunity to strategically develop and display your particular skills and interests.

There is not a centralised monolithic animation industry, so course content is enriched by contact with a variety of industry sectors; we regularly engage in live projects, we invite industry speakers to present case studies, we hold master classes, and students are encouraged to conduct work experiences in a wide variety of sectors.

The course has been generating graduates since 2005, and alumni now contribute to most sectors of the animation industry. Destinations include; *LucasFilm, The Mill, Wega Digital, double negative, Ubisoft, Lupus films, moving picture co, Apple computers, Picasso Pictures, Bin Weevils, Moshi Monsters, and Frontier developments*. Some students have become successful in the freelance sector, with clients including; *U2, Sade, the Kooks, Coca-Cola, Channel 4, C-beebies, Nickelodeon, Sky, Nokia, Vodafone, oracle, Samsung and Apple*.

Graduate Attributes are oriented towards your employability after completion of the course, and are aligned to the Course Learning Outcomes as follows:

Table 1: Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Course Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attribute	Evident in Course Learning Outcomes
Critical and creative thinker	KU 4.1, KU 5.1, KU 6.1 KU 4.2, KU 5.2, KU 6.2 KU 4.3, KU 5.3, KU 6.3 PPP 4.1, PPP 5.1, PPP 6.1 PPP 4.2, PPP 5.2, PPP 6.2 PPP 4.3, PPP 5.3, PPP 6.3 KTS 4.2, KTS 5.2, KTS 6.2

Literate and effective communicator	KU 4.2, KU 5.2, KU 6.2 KU 4.3, KU 5.3, KU 6.3 PPP 4.1, PPP 5.1, PPP 6.1 PPP 4.2, PPP 5.2, PPP 6.2 PPP 4.3, PPP 5.3, PPP 6.3 KTS 4.1, KTS 5.1, KTS 6.1 KTS 4.2, KTS 5.2, KTS 6.2 KTS 4.3, KTS 5.3, KTS 6.3
Entrepreneurial	KU 4.2, KU 5.2, KU 6.2 PPP 4.1, PPP 5.1, PPP 6.1 PPP 4.2, PPP 5.2, PPP 6.2 PPP 4.3, PPP 5.3, PPP 6.3 KTS 4.2, KTS 5.2, KTS 6.2 KTS 4.3, KTS 5.3, KTS 6.3
Global in outlook and engaged in communities	KU 4.3, KU 5.3, KU 6.3 PPP 4.2, PPP 5.2, PPP 6.2 KTS 4.1, KTS 5.1, KTS 6.1 KTS 4.3, KTS 5.3, KTS 6.3
Socially, ethically and environmentally aware	KU 4.3, KU 5.3, KU 6.3 PPP 4.1, PPP 5.1, PPP 6.1 PPP 4.2, PPP 5.2, PPP 6.2 PPP 4.3, PPP 5.3, PPP 6.3 KTS 4.1, KTS 5.1, KTS 6.1 KTS 4.3, KTS 5.3, KTS 6.3



Yousif Al-Khalifa (center) class of 2009 collecting his Best Animation BAFTA

We have a strong record in preparing graduates for postgraduate study.

Graduate employment and opportunities in the media industries are constantly shifting, and

graduates from this course have demonstrated their responsiveness to these changes. We regularly monitor graduate career destinations, and reflect on this information in the planning of the course curriculum.

Employability & Skills Strategy

The course has an Employability & Skills Strategy, published in the Course Handbook. This is intended to provide a framework to guide you through your studies and prepare you for employment and further study.

All course modules incorporate Key Transferable Skills, which are also integral to the course Employability & Skills Strategy. Key Transferable Skills support you in seeking entry into the media industries, as well as into a broad range of other professions & employment.

A further element of our Employability & Skills Strategy is the use of Personal Development Planning (PDP). This enables you to reflect upon personal and career goals, and the means by which these may be achieved. We build this process into the Personal Tutorial system.

Work Experience and Live Projects

Where possible students are encouraged to engage in professional work experiences, competitions and live projects. This newly revalidated course structure contains a number of production / collaboration option modules to flexibly facilitate this work.

Pitching and presentation are key skills common to all successful practitioners, and we offer a variety of opportunities to practice and perfect your presentation skills.



Collaboration stretches beyond the university; our students regularly assist in the production of graduation projects at the Royal College of Art and National Film and Television School.

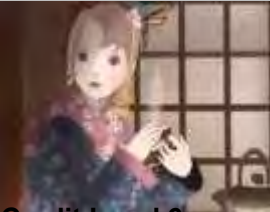
Many of the time-based outcomes of the course are intended for submission to Festivals, as the course recognises the value of such showcases to kick-start your reputation and thereby start your career.



Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year. Note that course structures can be subject to change each academic year following feedback from a variety of sources, and in response to practical variations.

					
Credit Level 4					
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS	mode
4ANIM002W	Classic Narrative Film Development: Film One	Core	20	10	YEAR
4ANIM005W	Experimental Film Development: Film Two	Core	20	10	YEAR
4ANIM001W	The Animatics Bootcamp: Theory of Practice One	Core	20	10	SEM1
4ANIM004W	Pioneers of Animation Bootcamp: Theory of Practice Two	Core	20	10	SEM2
4ANIM003W	Production / collaboration	Core	20	10	YEAR
4ANIM006W	Production / collaboration A	Elective	20	10	YEAR
	Westminster Electives	Elective	20	10	SEM
Award of Certificate of Higher Education in Animation available					
					
Credit Level 5					
Module code	Module title	Status	UK credit	ECTS	mode
5ANIM002W	Interpretation and Adaptation for Animation	Core	20	10	YEAR
5ANIM005W	Documentary Film Development	Core	20	10	YEAR
5ANIM001W	Digital Aesthetics (CGI 1)	Core	20	10	SEM1
5ANIM004W	Digital Pathways (CGI 2)	Core	20	10	SEM2

5ANIM003W	Production / collaboration B	Elective	20	10	YEAR
5ANIM006W	Production / collaboration C	Elective	20	10	YEAR
TBC	Media Explorations 2 (<i>strands: Animation; Code Art; Sonic Art</i>)	Option	20	10	SEM
5MEST006W	Scriptwriting for Media	Option	20	10	SEM
5MEST004W	Live Projects: Curating Commissions and Work	Option	20	10	SEM
5WSEL001W	Art/Science Collaboration (offered across several courses)	Option	20	10	SEM
TBC	Creative Encounters (offered across several courses)	Option	20	10	SEM
5MEST005W	Transmedia Practices (offered across several courses)	Option	20	10	SEM
Award of Diploma of Higher Education in Animation available					
					
Credit Level 6					
Module code	Module title	Status	credit	ECTS	mode
6ANIM001W	Film Five: Minor Project Development	Core	20	10	SEM1
6ANIM005W	Animated Documentary Research Presentations	Core	20	10	YEAR
6ANIM003W	Graduation Project Development	Elective	20	10	YEAR
6ANIM004W	Major Project Production	Core	40	20	YEAR
6ANIM002W	Production / collaboration D	Elective	20	10	YEAR
	Free choice	Option	20	10	SEM
Award BA Animation available					
Award BA (Hons) Animation available					

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

Academic regulations

The current Handbook of Academic Regulations is available at westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations



How will you be supported in your studies?

Course Management

BA Animation is managed by a Course Leader, and is grouped with a number of other courses in the Faculty of Media, Arts and Design on the Harrow Site. The Dean of Faculty and other senior Faculty staff provide support and management at their respective levels, enhancing the specific role of the Course Leader.

We also have Level Coordinators who oversee details of delivery at each level of the course (i.e. years one, two and three). The staff team also collectively support the management of the course through responsibilities for individual modules, workshop areas and contributions to planning. The Animation Facilities and their resources are managed by a dedicated specialist Animation Technician, who works in close collaboration with academic and support staff.

The professional and research practice of course staff is employed in improving the delivery of the course to ensure that we reflect current and emerging real-world concerns and demands. Regular staff meetings ensure this, as well as formal and informal interaction between the staff and outside industry professionals. All course staff participate in annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by their colleagues. This can inform staff development through course or conference attendance and research / professional activity.

The BA Animation is taught within the Transmedia undergraduate cluster, Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design. The management structure supporting the course is as follows:

- Stephen Ryley is the Course Leader responsible for the day-to-day running and overall management of the course and development of the curriculum. Peter can be contacted by email: S.Ryley@westminster.ac.uk
- Sarah Niblock, Head of Undergraduate Studies, holds academic responsibility for the course and for the other undergraduate courses run within Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design.
- Kerstin Mey, Dean of the School, holds overall responsibility for the course and for the other courses run by Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design.

The Course Leader will be responsible for:

- Admissions
- Approving students' programme of study
- Organising tutorials, supervisory support and pastoral care
- Co-ordinating final project supervision
- Co-ordinating marks for assessment boards
- General management of the course.

Academic Support

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce you to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which you will be studying, the Library and IT facilities, additional support available and to your Faculty Registry Office. You will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Each course has a course leader or Director of Studies. All students enrolled on a full-time course and part time students registered for more than 60 credits a year have a personal tutor, who provides advice and guidance on academic matters. The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students

Learning Support

The Academic Learning Development Centre supports students in developing the skills required for higher education. As well as online resources in Blackboard, students have the opportunity to attend Study Skills workshops and one to one appointments.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at that site. Students¹ can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books). Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

Support Services

The University of Westminster Student Affairs department provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers, specialist advice for international students and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The University of Westminster Students' Union also provides a range of facilities to support students during their time at the University.

How do we ensure the quality of our courses and continuous improvement?

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2001. The Panel included internal peers from the University, academic(s) from another university and a representative from industry. This helps to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers.

The course is also monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from Course Committees, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. Each Faculty puts in to place an action plan. This may for example include making changes on the way the module is taught, assessed or even how the course is structured in order to improve the course, in such cases an approval process is in place.

A Course review takes place periodically to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Students meet with review panels to provide feedback on their experiences. Student feedback from previous years e.g. from Course Committees is also part of the evidence used to assess how the course has been running.

How do we act on student feedback?

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways.

- Through Course Committees students have the opportunity to express their voice in the running of their course. Student representatives are elected to Committee to expressly represent the views of their peer. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the student representatives.
- Each Faculty also has its own Faculty Student Forum with student representatives; this enables wider discussions across the Faculty. Student representatives are also represented on key Faculty and university committees.

¹ Students enrolled at Collaborative partners may have differing access due to licence agreements.

- All students are invited to complete a questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced.
- The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey which seeks the opinions of students about their course and University experience. Final year Undergraduate students will be asked to complete the National Student Survey which helps to inform the national university league tables.



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For more information about this course



Course Leader: Stephen Ryley ryleys@wmin.ac.uk
Admissions & Marketing Office: harrow-admissions@westminster.ac.uk
020 7911 5903

Please note: This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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