



# BA (Hons) Animation

## *Programme Specification*

### **Primary Purpose**

Course management and quality assurance.

### **Secondary Purpose**

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

### **Disclaimer**

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

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## **Course Details**

### **1. Named Awards**

BA (Hons) Animation

### **2. Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)**

C1912S (W615)

### **3. Awarding Body**

University of Portsmouth

### **4. Teaching Institution**

University of Portsmouth

### **5. Accrediting Body**

None

### **6. QAA Benchmark Groups**

Art and Design 2016

History of Art, Architecture and Design 2016

Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies 2016

Computing 2016

### **7. Document Control Information**

Version 5, September 2017

### **8. Effective Session**

2017/2018

### **9. Author**

Ms Eva Palacios

### **10. Faculty**

Creative and Cultural Industries

### **11. Department**

School of Creative Technologies

## Curriculum

### 12. Educational Aims

The Programme aims to equip students to work as practitioners in the production and management of industries related to animation and visualisation, as well as providing a broad based experience of the subject. In addition, and more generally, the course aims to:

- Provide a challenging, stimulating and self-rewarding study environment.
- Enable students to broaden their studies, at Levels 4 and 5, by including study units from outside their discipline as substitutes for degree option choices.
- Develop a range of key skills by means of opportunities provided in the study units.
- Accommodate student needs in relation to maximising their career potential by enabling them to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in their chosen subject area.
- Promote career aspirations by including study topics on general professional practice and study skills.
- To develop a framework allowing students to follow a flexible and coherent programme of study
- To enable students to study a subject area and to develop subject specialist interests and knowledge
- To provide a broad historical knowledge of Animation and related Production
- To provide a detailed knowledge of the subject and its contexts
- To enable students to develop a high level of skills in critical judgement
- To enable students to develop a high standard of communication skills.

### 13. Reference Points

The major reference points were:

- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document ;
- Subject Benchmark Statements;
- National Qualification Framework;
- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

In particular the programme has been designed with the following benchmarks in mind:

Art and Design (A&D), History of Art, Architecture and Design (HAAD), Communication, Media, Film and Cultural Studies (CMF&CS) and Computing (CP).

- Generate ideas independently and/or collaboratively in response to set briefs.
- Articulate and synthesise knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills in effective ways in the context of creative practice.
- Apply learning in different contextual frameworks and situations.
- Manage and exploit the interaction between intention, process, outcome, context, and the methods of dissemination.
- Research and information retrieval skills.
- Apply resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills to support their own practice, or the practice of others.
- Explore the designer's relationship with audiences, clients, markets and/or participants.
- Employ self-management skills to set goals, manage workloads, meet deadlines and anticipate and accommodate change.
- Employ critical awareness through reflection, review and evaluation and identify personal strengths and needs.
- Articulate ideas and information comprehensively in visual, oral and written forms.

## 14. General Learning Outcomes

### Level 4

Certificates of Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study
- an ability to present, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, in order to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work
- communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments
- undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility

### Level 5

Diplomas in Higher Education are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed
- ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context
- knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject(s) relevant to the named award, and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study
- an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis
- effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively
- undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making

### Level 6

Bachelor's degrees/Bachelor's degrees with honours are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline
- an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:

- to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline
- to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline
- an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge
- the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (for example, refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline)

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects
- critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgements, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem
- communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
  - decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts
- the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature

## 15. Learning Outcomes

This course specialises in the creative aspects of animation production. It is aimed at filmmakers or 2D/3D animators with an eye for quality visual and conceptual development. It provides the relevant theoretical, practical and technical expertise. The course starts from a broad base and students are expected to develop their own specialist focus as they progress through the course.

The course provides a complete academic and practical package for those wishing to obtain a well-rounded skill set for use in animation related industries. Entertainment and animation industries are rapidly expanding sectors of product development. A successful product must capture a significant 'spirit' and societal position as well as a pertinent and adroit technological solution. In this kind of project there is a compelling need for a natural marriage between the content and the appropriate technology, which enables implementation of a vibrant and successful product. A prime example of this is the inter-relationship of animators, designers and technologists in developing computer games, film, TV, and other animation and media industry products.

The course provides an opportunity for students to develop knowledge, technical and creative skills and understanding that directly relate to these fields of employment. There is an opportunity, in the early stage, of the programme to develop a broad understanding of the creative process and technology skills.

### A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

- A.1 The value of research, concept, production, project management and production and postproduction in creative practice.
- A.2 The broad critical and contextual dimensions of the students' discipline (6.3.5 A&D).
- A.3 The major developments in current and emerging media and technologies in their discipline (6.3.7 A&D).
- A.4 The significance of work of other practitioners in their discipline (3.6.8 A&D).

A.5 The processes through which artefacts are designed and constructed in the design fields, industries, institutions and cultures studied (4.2.3 HAAD).

A.6 Values and responsibilities in production.

### **B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:**

B.1 Generate ideas independently and/or collaboratively in response to set briefs and/or self-initiated activity (6.3.1 A&D).

B.2 Articulate and synthesise their knowledge and understanding, attributes and skills in effective ways in the context of creative practice, employment, further study research and self-fulfilment (4.2.1 A&D).

B.3 Apply, consolidate and extend their learning in different contextual frameworks and situations both within and beyond animation (4.2.2 A&D).

B.4 Manage and exploit the interaction between intention, process and outcome, context and the methods of dissemination (4.3.4 A&D).

B.5 Demonstrate research and information retrieval skills, including ability to gather, integrate and organise material critically and evaluate its significance within appropriate intellectual and cultural frameworks (4.4.2 A&D).

B.6 Evaluate theoretical research and production outcomes.

### **C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:**

C.1 Demonstrate skills in the key production processes and professional practices relevant to animation and cultural and communicative industries, and ways of conceptualising creativity and authorship (3.3.4 CP, CMF&CS).

C.2 Demonstrate skills in professional, technical and formal choices, which realise, develop or challenge existing practices and traditions, and of the possibilities and constraints involved in production processes (3.3.5 CP, CMF&CS).

C.3 Explore the relationship between audiences, clients, markets and/or participants (4.3.8 A&D).

C.4 Draw as a research and concept development tool using appropriate materials.

C.5 Use and manage appropriate software and hardware to produce designed outcomes.

C.6 Project manage based on an animation brief.

### **D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:**

D.1 Communicate effectively through visual, oral and written means.

D.2 Continually develop knowledge and implementation of I.T.

D.3 Develop problem solving strategies.

D.4 Network in a professional context.

D.5 Teamwork effectively.

D.6 Promote own work and develop strategies for career development.

## **16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods**

Knowledge will be gained through formal lectures, group work and practical project work. This will be supported by professional practice, visiting speakers, festivals, industry and other cultural and technology events, which are particularly related to the subject.

Projects will provide through research, pre-production development, planning, production and post production stages a full range of experiences and opportunities to develop critical engagement and evaluation in the subject. Teaching and learning will involve group and individual work. Regular seminars and presentations during the various stages will allow the development of students' ability to the contextually position and justify their work.



Workshops in concept design software skills, team working skills, self-promotion and project management will underpin specific project as required.

Development of Key Skills is essential for successful performance in the course. Projects will demand that students develop a full range of abilities to enable conception through development to successful implementation of solutions and promotion of solutions.

This course provides, through its structure, the opportunity for students to gain an overview of the creative, cultural, theoretical and professional context within which animation is practiced in all of the potential sectors of employment. It provides an academic and practical programme for those wishing to obtain a well-rounded education for working in the animation industries. The emphasis is on creative animation productions, including film and TV. Transition through the course is marked by encouragement to progressively specialise in either: 2D or 3D Animations for Films, TV series or commercials.

Level 4 units provide a solid grounding in the core skills of visual research, drawing, 2D and 3D software skills, animation design, narrative structures and the contextual framework within which Animation industries operate.

Level 5 units build upon Level 4 by addressing specific issues related to pre-production, production and post production in either 2D or 3D, character animation, compositing and team work. This is enhanced by a further in-depth analysis of contemporary media issues in preparation for the Level 6 dissertation. Specialisation is afforded through group production that stresses identification of areas of strength and focus to maximize employability.

Level 6 units are a coherent set of units which directly address the issues of preparing for graduation and career opportunities. This is augmented by production aimed at festival submission or some other sector related to animation. This is reinforced with a final project that requires a considered and concentrated theme. The dissertation provides opportunity for consolidation and deepened understanding of a particular area of interest within animation and media related industries. Employment preparation demands careful consideration and production of a show-reel, portfolio and the other necessary artefacts related to self-promotion.

## 17. Assessment Strategy

Assessment is both formative and summative. Theoretical knowledge will be examined through a dissertation and the research and development element of each project. Research, development and production in projects will provide the major coursework elements.

Cognitive abilities will be evidenced through planning, research, justification during development and project reports. Formal project proposals, research and development dossiers, project plans, production logs, presentations, completed product and dissertations will together inform the assessment.

Subject specific skills will be evidenced through planning, concept generation, research and development and production. Research and development dossiers, project plans, production logs and completed product including a show-reel and portfolio, will together inform the assessment.

Team working and project management skills will be assessed through peer assessment and tutor observation. Communicating effectively, visual, oral and written skills along with continuous development of knowledge and implementation of I.T. skills will constitute a major part of every substantial project. Develop problem solving strategies is contained within planning research and development. Preparation for graduation will focus on the development of self-promotional material and planning an individual career path. Key Skills are embedded within project work.

The assessment strategy is part of the School's Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Support Strategy and is coherent through all the units selected by the particular student. Assessment is determined to be appropriate to the individual unit in regard to its subject area and level. A wide range of different assessment methods are embedded within the course units.

### Level 4



The assessment strategy for Level 4 units is coursework based. However, a combination of workshops, seminars, tutorial, research and problem solving exercises provides opportunity for formative feedback throughout the units. This enables students to develop skills in contextualizing their work as well as developing appropriate practical skills. Essays provide a formal opportunity for students' to articulate a considered argument in written form. Blogs allows students to produce an online employability portfolio containing relevant skills for career planning. Group activities are incorporated in many units which assist students in developing essential team working skills.

### **Level 5**

The assessment strategy for Level 5 units is coursework based assessment. There are components relating to the research and development and production stages of a project. This allows students to clearly distinguish pre-production, production and post-production and assess their abilities in each. Group projects model activity on a production pipeline which incorporates self and peer assessment; this addresses the issues related to team working, project planning and implementation. Presentation at the end of the Pre-Production stage is a vital constituent, which tests the viability of concept and relevant communication skills. It also allows differentiation within a team effort allowing the development of an individual student's focus, which they are assessed against. Essays give students a formal opportunity to articulate a considered argument in written form and tests through a combination of creative research, and development of argument, students' readiness to undertake a major dissertation in Level 6.

### **Level 6**

The assessment strategy for Level 6 units provides an opportunity for a focused and extended research in an area of students' own choice. The students' own brief provides the content against which the unit criteria are assessed in the dissertation focusing on future employability. Employment preparation is coursework assessed based on students' Show-reel, online portfolio, self-promotional material and online networking.

## **18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements**

See [Unit Web Search](#)<sup>1</sup> for full details on the course structure and units

This is a 3 or 4 year programme depending on whether a student elects a sandwich placement. The University strongly encourages the 4 year option since students gain invaluable experience from an industrial placement. The placement year usually takes place at the end of the second year and a placement student should expect to be in employment for a full calendar year.

The course normally consists of multiples of 20 credit point units, where 20 credits represent 200 hours of study. The course consists of a total 360 credits for the award and includes a 40 credit final project and a 40 credit group project.

As an alternative to the sandwich placement students can undertake a Study Abroad year under the Erasmus Scheme or with other exchange programme partner institutions.

The course includes opportunities for students to study foreign languages to increase their scope of employability.

Standard University rules apply – the regulations must be consulted for a full description of exit awards.

## **19. Employability Statement**

There is a strong core of employability development within the course developing from Level 4 developing an online presence and Portfolio, continuing through every unit in all levels with embedded employability skills, career-related development is integrated into careers-related unit.

These units provide the skills for:

- CV and personal Portfolio development

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<sup>1</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch](http://www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch)

- Awareness of Industry requirements and opportunities
- Job application skills- interviews
- Understanding of Industry context
- Understanding of online promotion and networking
- Show reels,

All the units from Level 4 are devoted to analysis of performance across and the development of strategies to improve and develop a clear focus.

Group Project unit at Level 5 develop essential group working skills. Animation Group Project is a team production process. Sharing of skills and expertise in a planned and coordinated manner which maximises production potential in a team demands a professional approach to project management of creative, artistic technical and organisational skills.

Employment preparation requires students to bring together practical work and an understanding of employment requirements to apply the finishing touch to show-reel, portfolio, C.V. and other self-promotional material. It prepares them with an online presence and the understanding of online networking. The final project and Advance Pre production at Level 6 emphasises and encourages the development of a particular strength within a chosen area of animation production. This is part of the pursuit of excellence which is a pre-requisite of employment in animation. Professional production skills are developed which form the focus of transition from pre-production to production and continuous informal appraisal of work, which takes place throughout the different stages.

The animation course has well-established links with various sectors of industry through tutors, personal industry contact and employer networks. These include companies in computer games, T.V. production, various sections of film and production and post-production. This is supplemented with visiting speakers and visits to studios. The end of year show and outside screenings provide opportunities for students to promote their work and network with potential employers. The course produces student work online, which is mailed out to a list of over 250 companies in the UK. Frame store, Sony, Studio AKA, Double Negative, Cinesite are among the 250 UK companies we provide information from our students work.

Students are offered the opportunity of a sandwich placement year between Levels 5 and 6.

On completion of the year-long work placement the student returns to full time study to complete Level 6.

## Course Management

### **20. Support for Student Learning**

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- A dedicated Study Support Centre run from within the department for additional support with assessments and tutoring.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- CCI Creative Skills Centre and CCI Academic Skills Centre.
- CCI Creative Careers Centre.
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Key Skills opportunities are incorporated into all units.

- Written feedback is provided for all assessments.
- For students that elect for a placement year there is a placement supervisor and placement handbook.
- All placement locations are carefully vetted in terms of health and safety as well as their potential to support the programme learning outcomes. This is in line with the University of Portsmouth's Code of Practice for Work Based and Placement Learning.

## 21. Admissions Criteria

### A. Academic Admissions Criteria

- 112 points to include a minimum of 2 A levels or equivalent
- Applicants will be required to submit a portfolio and/or attend.
- A range of qualifications as specified on the course page on the University of Portsmouth website.
- Applicants whose first language is not English must provide evidence of English language ability with a minimum IELTS score of 6.0 (normally with not less than 5.5 in any one component) or equivalent.
- Prior (experiential) learning may be assessed and accredited.

### B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

## 22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

### A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports
- Periodic Programme Review
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees
- National Student Survey
- National Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
- Staff Performance and Development Review
- Peer Review and Development Framework
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee

### B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course
- Head of Department
- Associate Dean (Academic)
- Associate Dean (Students)
- Quality Assurance Committee

- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners

### **C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback**

- Student Representation on Board of Studies
- Student Staff Consultative Committees
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires
- University participates in external student surveys, e.g. National Student Survey (NSS), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and International Student Barometer (ISB)

### **D. Staff Development Priorities**

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes
- New academic staff required to undertake appropriate University of Portsmouth learning and teaching programmes
- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership
- Academic staff undertake initial and continuing professional development within the Academic Professional Excellence Framework (APEX) programme which is aligned with the Higher Education Academy (HEA)'s UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
- Support staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages

## **23. Assessment Regulations**

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (see [Assessment and Regulations<sup>2</sup>](#)).

## **24. Role of Externals**

Subject External Examiners who will:

- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:

- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

## **25. Indicators of Standards and Quality**

### **A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition**

None.

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<sup>2</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/](http://www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/)

## **B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)**

The BA (Hons) Animation course participated in a successful Periodic Programme Review on 21st March 2016.

## **C. Quality Assurance Agency**

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see [Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015](#)*<sup>3</sup>).

## **D. Others**

None.

## **26. Further Information**

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](#)<sup>4</sup> and [School of Creative Technologies](#)<sup>5</sup> websites

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<sup>3</sup> [www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/](http://www.port.ac.uk/)

<sup>5</sup> [www.port.ac.uk/school-of-creative-technologies/](http://www.port.ac.uk/school-of-creative-technologies/)