

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION

## ABOUT YOUR COURSE

### BA (HONS) VISUAL EFFECTS

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Our Visual Effects degree is a practical skills-based course tailored directly to the needs of the Visual effects, games, and other digital media industries. All our staff are active within the industry and teach students the skills that they'll need to gain employment after graduating. The course utilises a mix of lectures, hands-on workshops, tutorial classes, studio sessions and practical exercises such as 3D Modelling, Digital sculpting, 2D & 3D Compositing, Matte Painting, Motion Performance, Motion Graphics, FX & Simulation, onset VFX supervision and Virtual Production with the use of Epic's Unreal game engine.

The course fuses cutting-edge industry-standard software skills with lessons learned from over a hundred years of filmmaking and visual effects. We teach everything from the ground up, in short you do not have to have any prior knowledge or tradition artistic skill before joining the course. Our highly skilled team will support you in developing the knowledge and skills you need to thrive in industry.

#### WHY STUDY VISUAL EFFECTS AT FUTUREWORKS?

Whether your ambition is to apply visual effects to blockbuster films, commercials, TV shows, or industries like architecture, medicine, or automobiles, this program has been developed in collaboration with professional VFX artists to ensure its relevance and currency. Based in Media City, Manchester – the heart of the Northern Hub for the entertainment industry, we combine high quality teaching led by professionals who are active within industry with industry facing software and facilities to ensure that graduates are industry ready upon graduation.

We are an Epic Unreal partner institution and ensure that we provide a professional learning experience. You will develop your skills using professional, industry software such as Maya, Nuke, Unreal and ZBrush in combination with industry facing facilities.



By enrolling, you'll gain a comprehensive understanding of 3D VFX and 2D compositing, acquiring the technical and creative skills sought after by the industry. Additionally, you'll have the opportunity to develop your soft skills, build valuable industry connections, and graduate with an impressive showreel which will pave the way to a successful career.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for this course, you will require 104-120 UCAS points. This could be gained via a number of qualifications, for example:

- BCC or above at A2 Level
- DMM or above at Extended Diploma Level
- M or above at UAL Level 3 Extended Diploma Level
- A proven interest in this area

If you're unsure how many points you have you can use the UCAS tariff calculator.

Remember that qualifications such as Graded Examinations in Music Performance and Arts Award (Gold) can also count towards your UCAS points – check the [tariff calculator](#).

Applicants who do not have the required qualifications, but do have the industry experience and/or proven interest in the subject will also be considered.

All applicants are expected to have at least a grade 4 in GCSEs Maths and English Language. Non-UK applicants will need to have an English Language qualification at International Level B2 or higher, such as an IELTS of 6.0 or better (with no component below 5.5). Students with equivalent qualifications will also be accepted.

If your application is successful, you will be invited to an interview. During this, you will have the opportunity to talk about your work, influences and interests. Ideal applicants will have a keen interest in visual effects, film, TV or digital media. You will not be asked to provide a portfolio of your work as part of the application process. However, if during your interview you would like to share with us examples of any work you may have produced, we would welcome any opportunity to gain insight into your interests.



## MODULES (CREDITS)

### YEAR 1

**Introduction to Compositing** (40 credits) – Working with industry standard software and a brief provided by a local production house, you will be introduced to the core 2D compositing skill used by the leading production houses internationally. In the second semester, you will learn how to track real world cameras to invisible composite 3D asset into a filmed plate.

**Introduction to 3D Modelling** (20 credits) – You will learn the fundamentals of 3D modelling to enable you to replicate real world objects in industry standard 3D software. You will be introduced to creative and technical skills such as good edge workflow, UV mapping, texturing, lighting, and rendering to create a 3D turntable artefact, which showcases the beginnings of Photorealism.

**Content Creation** (40 credits) – This module will introduce key pre-production, production, post-production, camera, lighting techniques and technologies to give you an informed awareness of the medium and context in which your creative input as visual effects artists will be employed.

**History of Visual Effects** (20 credits) – lectures focusing on the history of film, VFX and media, giving context to the skills learned in other modules and how these emerged historically.

### YEAR 2

**Studio Project** (40 credits) – This module will introduce you to working as part of a team to replicate a studio's project pipeline for VFX. As part of an open brief, you will use creative practices to generate digital environments and environmental FX through the use of 3D modelling pipeline, virtual production with the Unreal Engine, dynamics, simulation and visual effects on set supervision.

**Character Creation and Motion Capture for VFX** (40 credits) – Will introduce you to advanced 3D modelling techniques such as digital sculpting by creating a likeness of a character from popular media in addition to this you will utilise motion performance-based animation and its integration with an animation-ready digital character.

**Motion Graphics & UI Development** (20 credits) – This module will explore the theory, creative and practical development of graphic design in relation motion graphics and as part of user interface development for film, television, and advertising. Part of this will be looking at key graphic design techniques, as well as animation principles, 3D, and simulation-based motion graphics.

**Contemporary Visual Effects** (20 credits) – A continuation of the History of Visual Effects module, only now it's focused on the contemporary moment, current issues, and trends.



## YEAR 3

**Honours Project** (60 credits) – This is your chance to showcase your skills and specialist areas, working on a project you design in collaboration with the module leader. In addition, this module focuses on industry employability: everything from CVs, websites, showreels and portfolios, to how and where to network, interview practice and how to find work as a freelancer.

**Professional Studio Project** (40 credits) – This module builds on Studio Project, with the emphasis on allowing you to specialise in areas of a group project. Your group will have full creative freedom with support from the module tutor.

**Professional Specialism** (20 credits) – In this module, you will undertake research into the historical, current, and future areas of the visual effects techniques where you take the lead within the Professional Studio Project. The module is linked to your future goals and through networking opportunities, enables you to make industry connections.

## WHAT ARE CREDITS?

As a guide, 20 credits typically represents around 52 hours of tutor contact time (e.g. lectures/workshops/feedback) and 148 hours of self-study time (usually over the course of a semester). These numbers may increase or decrease depending on the nature, length and level of the module, especially towards the end of the course.

## LOCATION OF DELIVERY

Your primary location of study will be at our Studios facility located in MediaCityUK, a few miles from the city centre.. As part of your course, some of your lessons may take place at our Riverside Campus, which is located on New Bailey Street in Manchester.

## TEACHING STAFF

Everyone who teaches on this degree is active in the industry. Whether that's creating visual effects for film, TV or streaming media, illustrating, designing, visualisation or creating motion graphics; when your tutors aren't busy teaching you, they're busy honing their craft. As a result, we are always working and teaching the most current industry workflows. We practice what we teach. We also have an extensive network of industry contacts that we can draw on for guest lectures and workshops, industry-set briefs, and as guests for our degree shows.

## METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

We don't believe in exams. All assessment takes the form of coursework, portfolios, presentations, and a limited number of essays. If you are being taught visual effects, you will submit a portfolio of



industry facing work with a focus on quality over quantity. If you are being taught how to present your work or research, you will do a presentation relevant to your project. If you are studying the history or contemporary visual effects, you will synthesise that research into an essay based around visual effect, digital media, or a related subject. In other words, all assessment is directly related to the skills being taught and directly applicable to life within industry. You will be offered feedback along the way, via formative submission points, with official summative submissions falling at the end of first and second semesters.

## COURSE DETAILS

**Award to be received on successful completion:** BA (Hons) Visual Effects

**Length of course:** 3 YEARS (FULL TIME)

**Regulator:** Office for Students ([OfS](#))

**Awarding Institution:** University of Central Lancashire

## FEES / COSTS

### TUITION FEES

Home Students: £9,535 per year

International Students: £17,000 per year

You may be eligible to apply for a student loan from Student Finance. Please see our [Tuition Fees](#) page for more information.

### EQUIPMENT & ACTIVITIES

We provide PCs to work on onsite, with Cintiqs, Wacom tablets and filming equipment; all of which can be signed out from facilities. We have onsite licenses for all software taught on the programme.

You may find it beneficial to invest in additional equipment and/or study resources to support your learning. Example costs are:

- External Hard Drive (2tb SSD): £100
- Adobe Creative Suite license (for home use): £16.24 per month (with student discount)



Additionally, there may be the option of attending events outside of Futureworks which would further enhance your studies. Example costs are:

- London Visual Effects Festival: approx. £25, plus individual travel and accommodation costs
- Bolton Film Festival: £20-40, plus individual travel costs

